

Knowledge management practices in five star hotel: a study of Radisson Hotel

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Abstract

Knowledge management is needed designed and adopted, successfully in every organization. The hotel industry cannot be an exception to this. The major objectives of the study are to analyze the factor influencing knowledge management in hotel industry. The study applied is survey method, for this questionnaire of closed and open nature were distributed to 120 respondents based on quota sampling within the Radisson Hotel, Kathmandu. Both empirical and descriptive statistics were used to analyze and present the data. The main obstacle seemed in the hotel is the absence of sharing ideas among the employees, with the GM and the board of directors. The absence of sharing has made knowledge management practices poor.

Keywords: knowledge management, culture, structure, human resources

1. Background of study

Hospitality companies can benefit from knowledge management (KM) activities and systems in respect to development of knowledge networks among clusters of enterprises (Hallin and Marnburg, 2008). A country like Nepal has tremendous potential in tourism and hospitality growth. Knowledge management practice can be a milestone in gaining more tourists and their useful promotions to develop the tourism and hospitality sectors. With the advancement of the knowledge and its practices by the people from the relevant industry would definitely help a country like Nepal to flourish its hospitality as well tourism industry to its fullest for the betterment of the industry.

The five star hotel of Nepal is getting severe shortages of competent manpower in different departments of the hotel as well the acute problems in the overall hotel services. The lack of frequent training and development in the hotels as well the lack of exposure to modern and existing practices of the star hotels and update in the functioning of the tools and equipment results in the lack of confidence. The knowledge in delivering the products and services, shows the complete lacking of the people having competent people.

Knowledge management initiatives result in the creation of value for the enterprise, its employees and finally to the society (Crnjar and Dlacic, 2014). The term knowledge management refers to the practices that can be implicit or explicit, used by a firm to acquire new knowledge, rearrange and diffuse existing knowledge within the firm. Nowadays knowledge management has acquired its recognition as the fundamental doings for gaining, developing and making long lasting academic knowledge for the institutions (Ozlgbo, 2015).

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2. Problem statement

In a country like Nepal there have been rooted practices of differences among employees based on positions. The communication pattern between senior and junior through upward and downward communication is different. Open discussion between senior and junior on the problems seen in the recent past is hardly done. The compulsion that senior is right and hesitation to learn from junior have created problems in the management of knowledge. The concept that everyone has experienced in their respective field and can be used in the process of planning and decision making is somewhere found to be missed. Each and everyone's experience is to be recorded and retrieved is not practiced in the organizations.

To what extent these practices and culture exist in the hotel industry is to be studied because knowledge management practices in Nepalese five star hotels have not been found studied.

3. Research questions

Taking into consideration the background of the study and missing link, the researcher has composed a set of four research questions (RQs). The essential examination inquiries of this study addressed the particular issue of KM practice in star hotels in Nepal.

RQ 1: How KM is practiced in Nepalese hospitality industry?

RQ 2: What are the influencing factors in implementing KM practice in star hotels?

RQ 3: How knowledge management practice is affected by organizational culture, structure and human resource?

4. Significance of the study

This research provides updated information in regards with knowledge management practices in Nepalese hospitality industry. This study explores and analyzes the resource gap in Nepalese context and the trend and structure of knowledge management which may be helpful for the future plans and policies implementation. Hence its significance is obvious.

This part of the study discloses the theory and practices for all who are interested in knowledge management and its uses in their respective organization. The hotel industry faces growing global competition and rapid and dynamic change in its environment. Despite the vital role of KM in the hotel industry, there is very limited study to explain its role in the hospitality industry. This study is the first epidemic study of KM in the hotel industry in Nepal. It helps both practitioner and academics to understand present situation of KM practices in the hospitality industry of Nepal. Star hotels in Nepal must have the overall capacity to compete both nationally and globally. Practitioners and researchers will be able to use the results to evaluate the impact and effects of various practices of KM in the hotel industry.

5. Literature review

Knowledge can be described as either tacit or explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is the expertise and

experience that resides in the minds of individuals and have not been formally documented, whereas explicit knowledge is what has been documented and can be shared with others (Polanyi cited in Downes, 2014). Explicit knowledge represents content that has been captured in some tangible form such as words, audio recordings, or images. Moreover, tacit knowledge tends to reside “within the heads of knower's,” whereas explicit knowledge is usually contained within tangible or concrete media (Dalkir, 2005).

Heisig's (2009) study mentioned four main control factors of KM; the human factor including the categories culture, people and leadership; the dimension organization with structure and process; the dimension information technology; and the dimension management processes with strategy and control. Wiig (1993) built a model through the four major terms build, hold, pool and apply knowledge. The first phase of the model, build, includes obtaining, analyzing, reconstructing (synthesizing), codifying, and organizing knowledge.

Organizational culture represents “how things are around here.” It reflects the prevailing ideology that people carry inside their heads. It conveys a sense of identity to employees, provides unwritten and often unspoken guidelines for how to get along in the organization, and it enhances the stability of the social system that they experience (Cameron and Quinn, 2006). Cooper and Ruhanen (2004) suggested that, if organizations are to remain competitive in this changing era, the adoption of a knowledge management approach will be required to transform research and intellectual property into capabilities for the sector. Malaysian hotel product and service quality depend strongly on the ability of management executive to acquire, develop, accumulate and share knowledge assets (Mohammed et al., 2014).

6. Research methodology

In order to carry out research following steps were adopted. Methods include information source, instruments, sampling and analysis. Mainly primary data were used.

1. Review of literature is done from the secondary sources and through the observation of the places where I am working in the same hotel.
2. A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed to different level of employees working in the Radisson Hotel, out of which 80 respondent actively participated, while 25 of them are from executives and managers and the rest 55 are of staff or sub ordinates level.

6.1 Research design

The research design in the study is Descriptive Research Design which helps to identify the factors affecting knowledge management practices in five star hotels. Also, casual comparative research design is used as the hypothesis is formulated to represent inferential statistics.

6.2 Population and sample

This study is taken to the employees of five star hotels where interview schedule is given. The sampling population is all the employees of Radisson five star hotels. Target population is all middle level and top level managers of Radisson Hotel. The sampling frame is list of all five star hotels. The sample size is 120 for the study.

6.3 The sampling procedure

The data shall be generated by both primary and secondary data where a questionnaire has been generated to ask respondents.

The sample area is within Kathmandu valley. All the list is of employees of five star hotels. The study is to be conducted on the individualization of data through interview schedule to respondents and questionnaire.

6.3.1 Data collection strategy

The data for the study is collected from November and December, 2017 .Participants includes from different level. The primary data has been collected by developing a questionnaire and secondary data through online websites, journals article and other relevant sources.

6.3.2 Analysis of data

All the unusable surveys were removed and all the variables were coded .The survey contains several set of questions which consist of multiple choices. Likert Scale is to be used in the study. These questions are scaled in five different Likert Scale strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. All the data collected were analyzed through cross tabulations, correlations of different factors, and also reliability and validity are checked through SPSS.

6.4 Hypotheses

The study applied the survey method and questionnaires were distributed to 120 respondents within the organization for the study. 80 respondents submit the questionnaire. The study also emphasizes to explore the relationship between culture and adoption of knowledge management in the hotel industry. Here, the research design in the study is Descriptive Research Design which helps to identify the determinants of knowledge management in the hotel industry. The study shall use structure questionnaires both open and closed ended question and interview to collect data. This study is taken to the employees of Radisson Hotel thorough quota sampling and the interview schedule where taken. Some required data are gathered from library, website of Hospitality Association of Nepal (HAN) publications of Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS).

Two general categories of analysis will be applied in this research. One is descriptive statistics for mean, median, correlation. And the second set of analysis will be regression, ANOVA, t-test. With help of SEE, it is possible to ascertain how good and representative the estimated regression coefficients are as a description of the average relationship between two series.

7. Data presentation, interpretation and analysis

This chapter presents the data presentation, its interpretation and discussion over findings. The data are based on research objectives and knowledge management practices in five star hotels of Nepal.

Table 1. Cross tabulation on monthly salary with respect to education level

Particulars		Monthly salary				Total
		15000-20000	20000-25000	25000-30000	Above 30000	
Education level	Intermediate	0	10	0	0	10
	Bachelor's degree	22	10	20	0	52
	Master's degree	0	10	0	8	18
Total		22	30	20	8	80

In Table 1, it represents the cross tabulation in the monthly salary in relation with the education level, in case of intermediate level the 10 respondents get the salary between 20000 and 25000, whereas in case of bachelor's degree 22 gets 15000-20000, 10 as 20000-25000 and 20 as 25000-30000. Also, in case of master's degree 10 get 20000-25000 and 8 of the total respondents get above 30000.

Table 2. Cross tabulation on education level with respect to gender

Particulars		Education level			Total
		Intermediate	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	
Gender	Male	0	32	8	40
	Female	10	20	10	40
Total		10	52	18	80

In Table 2, it represents the cross tabulation of education level with the gender, the total number of male, who have completed the bachelor's degree is 32 and 8 of them have master degree whereas 40 female respondents have 10 intermediate level, 20 bachelor's degree and 10 of them have master's degree.

Table 3. Cross tabulation on years working in organization with respect to the age level

		Years working in organization			Total
		Less than a year	1-5	5-10	
Age level	25~30	22	15	15	52
	30~35	0	0	10	10
	35~40	0	10	0	10
	Above 40	8	0	0	8
Total		30	25	25	80

In Table 3, the age 25-30 includes 22 respondents working less than a year and 15 of them for 1-5 years and 5-10 years. Also, the age 30-35 has the experience of 5-10 years and the age above 40 has 8 respondents working less than a year.

Table 4. Cross tabulation of best result for the practice of knowledge management with respect to gender

Particular		Best result for the practice of knowledge management					Total
		Improving competitive advantage	Improving customer focus	Innovation	Revenue growth	Better decision making	
Gender	Male	0	8	20	0	22	50
	Female	10	10	0	10	0	30
Total		10	18	20	10	32	80

In Table 4, this represents the practices of the knowledge management to get the best result with respect to gender where 8 male respondents show improving customer focus, 20 show innovation and 22 show better decision making. Similarly, 10 female respondents' indicate improving the competitive advantage, 10 customer focus and 10 female respondents indicate revenue growth.

Table 5. Reliability test

Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	Number of items
.914	.925	4

Inter-Item correlation matrix

Particulars	My company uses latest technology	The latest technology is updated	I have been given training to use the technology in my workplace	Innovation is done to enhance the technology development
My company uses latest technology	1.000	.768	.768	.633
The latest technology is updated	.768	1.000	1.000	.682
I have been given training to use the technology in my workplace	.768	1.000	1.000	.682
Innovation is done to enhance the technology development	.633	.682	.682	1.000

In Table 5, Cronbach's alpha is calculated to test the reliability or internal consistency of series of questions or scales that is 0.914. Thus, it can be calculated that the data collected have been consistent and more reliable for the test. Also, the correlation between each item is nearer to 1 which represents the positive correlation.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of use of technology in knowledge management

Item statistics			
Particulars	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
My company uses latest technology	3.0000	.58222	60
The latest technology is updated	2.6333	.75838	60
I have been given training to use the technology in my workplace	2.6333	.75838	60
Innovation is done to enhance the technology development	2.3667	.91996	60

In Table 6, it indicates that the respondents are satisfied with the technology used, they also think the technology is updated, regular training is given and very satisfied with the innovation done towards the technology developments benefits.

Table 7. Correlation between influencing factors and use of technology

Particulars		Influencing factors	Use of technology
Influencing factors	Pearson Correlation	1	.597**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Use of technology	Pearson Correlation	.597**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

In Table 7, as the correlation is .597 which is nearer to one so influencing factor has positive correlation with the use of technology.

Table 8. t-test for significant difference between male and female respondents with the influencing factors in knowledge management

Particulars	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p value
Influencing factors	Male	2.0933	.25587	.04672	.000
	Female	2.4667	.09589		

In Table 8, it is inferred that p value of influencing factors is 0.000 in which alternative hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it is concluded that there is significant difference between male and female respondents with the influencing factors in knowledge management.

Table 9. Model summary of organizational culture with career success

H1: There is a significant impact of Organizational Culture and Career Success.

Model summary

Model	R	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.293 ^a	.086	.070	.23886

a. Predictors: (Constant), organization_culture

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	.312	1	.312	5.461	.000 ^b
	Residual	3.309	58	.057		
	Total	3.621	59			

a. Dependent variable: CAREER_SUCCESS

b. Predictors: (Constant), organization_culture

Table 9 clearly indicates that the impact of organizational culture with that of career success. It has obtained using regression model summary and ANOVA. According to Table 9, the degree of relationship between organizational culture and career success is 86 percent. The R-Squared value 86 percent indicates this percent increase. To check cases of overstatement in R- Squared, adjusted R-Squared was then used. Since the adjusted R-Squared value was the same as that of R-Squared, it means the strength of relationship between the two study variables (86 percent) is actual and realistic. Thus, if the organization puts more emphasis on organizational culture then their productivity in the workplace is likely to increase by 86 percent. In using ANOVA, it can be confirmed that the degree of strength between the organizational culture and its career success is actual very strong. A very high sums of squares .312; mean squares .312 and F value of 5.46 confirmed the strength of this relationship. The model of relationship between the study variables is highly significant at the 0.000 level. Thus, it can be concluded that the regression equation be run to diagnose the strengths of relationship between organizational culture and its impact on career success. It is clear that there is significant emphasis of organizational culture and career success.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.517	.319		4.759	.000
	organization_culture	.273	.117	.293	2.337	.023

a. Dependent variable: CAREER_SUCCESS

CAREER_SUCCESS is considered as dependent variable Y and organization_culture is taken as an

independent variable. The regression model has been estimates as;

$$\begin{aligned}
 Y &= a + b X \\
 &= 1.517 + (.273 X) \\
 t &= (4.759) (2.337) \\
 P &= (0.0000) (0.000) \\
 R^2 &= 0.86, \text{ Adjusted } R^2 = 0.86, F = 5.46 \\
 P\text{-value for overall significance} &= 0.000
 \end{aligned}$$

The calculated value of F equals 5.46 and p-value is 0.000. It reveals that F-value is significant at 5% level of significance. The regression model in the research is fit. Thus, organizational culture affects career success in knowledge management practices among five star hotels.

Findings on the relationship between organizational culture and career success using regression co-efficient as indicated Table 9 also portrays that organizational culture has significantly contributed to career success at (Beta = .293, t = 4.759, P < .000). Thus, it can be confirmed that there is a significant impact of organizational culture on their career success. This finding demonstrates that the research hypothesis, there is a significant impact of organizational culture on their career success is accepted and confirmed.

Table 10. Model summary of use of technology with influencing factors

H1: There is a significant impact of use of technology and influencing factors

Model summary

Model	R	R-Squared	Adjusted R-Squared	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.597 ^a	.356	.345	.21738

a. Predictors: (Constant), use_of_technology

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	1.515	1	1.515	32.066	.000b
	Residual	2.741	58	.047		
	Total	4.256	59			

a. Dependent variable: INFLUENCING_FACTORS

b. Predictors: (Constant), use_of_technology

Table 10 clearly indicates that the impact of use of technology on influencing factors. It has obtained using regression model summary and ANOVA. According to Table 10, the degree of relationship between use of technology and influencing factors is 59.7 percent. The R-Squared value 35.6 percent indicates this percent increase. To check cases of overstatement in R-Squared, adjusted R-Squared was then used. Since the adjusted R-Squared value was almost the same as that of R-Squared, it means the strength of relationship between the two study variables (59.7 percent) is actual and realistic. Thus, if the organization puts more emphasis on use of technology then influencing factors in the workplace are likely to increase by 59.7 percent. In using ANOVA,

it can be confirmed that the degree of strength between the use of technology and its influencing factors is actual very strong. A very high sums of square 1.515; mean squares 1.515 and F value of 32.066 confirmed the strength of this relationship. The model of relationship between the study variables is highly significant at the 0.000 level. Thus, it can be concluded that the regression equation be run to diagnose the strengths of relationship between use of technology and its impact on influencing factors. It is clear that there is significant emphasis of use of technology and influencing factors.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.655	.114		14.518	.000
	Use_of_technology	.235	.042	.597	5.663	.000

a. Dependent Variable: INFLUENCING_FACTORS

INFLUENCING_FACTORS is considered as dependent variable Y and use_of_technology is taken as an independent variable. The regression model has been estimates as;

$$\begin{aligned}
 Y &= a + b X \\
 &= 1.655 + (.235 X) \\
 t &= (14.518) (5.663) \\
 P &= (0.0000) (0.000) \\
 R^2 &= 33.6, \text{ adjusted } R^2 = 0.356, F = 32.066 \\
 P\text{-value for overall significance} &= 0.000
 \end{aligned}$$

The calculated value of F equals 32.066 and p-value is 0.000. It reveals that F-value is significant at 5% level of significance. The regression model in the research is fit. Thus, the use of technology affects the influencing factors in knowledge management practices among five star hotels.

Findings on the relationship between use of technology and influencing factors using regression co-efficient as indicated Table 10 also portrays that use of technology has significantly contributed to the influencing factors at (Beta = .597, t = 14.518, P < .000). Thus, it can be confirmed that there is a significant impact of use of technology, on their influencing factors. This finding demonstrates that the research hypothesis, there is a significant impact of use of technology on their influencing factors is accepted and confirmed.

8. Relative comparisons between Yak and Yeti, Annapurna and Radisson hotels

Figure 1. Age level at five star hotels

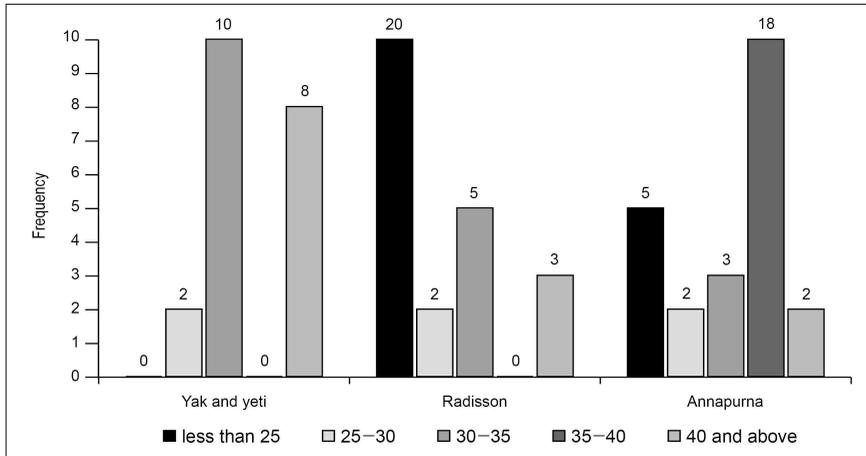


Figure 2. Current status of knowledge management at five star hotels

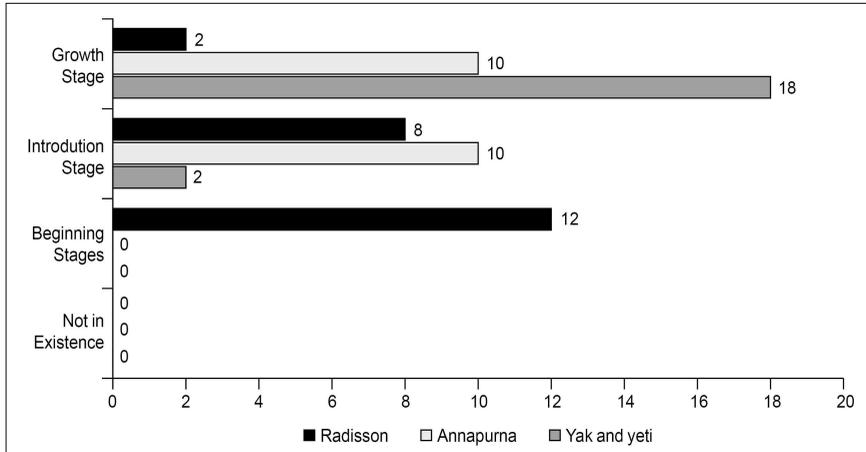
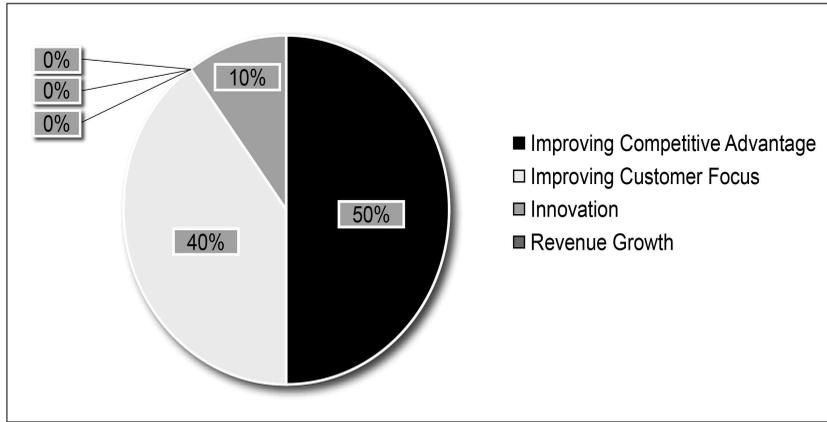


Figure 3. Significant role for best result in Yak and Yeti, Annapurna and Radisson



8.1 Data analysis

The gender and age group of the respondents are summarized in the Table 11.

Table 11. Cross tabulation of gender and experience

		Exp				Total
		1-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15 above	
Gender	Male	3	6	4	1	14
	Female	19	3	1	0	23
Total		22	9	5	1	37

Table 11 describes the cross tabulation of gender and experience of the respondents. Most of the females are less than 5 years of experience. In total there are 14 males and 23 females.

Table 12. Respondents by their job function

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	General management	6	16.20
	Accounting/Finance	2	5.4
	Front office	11	29.72
	Food beverage	7	18.91
	Human resource department	5	13.5
	Information technology/Engineer	4	10.81
	Security	2	5.4
	Total	37	100.0

The Table 12 shows 37 respondents' job functions. This study will not try to understand the pattern of assigning one or more job responsibility to single employee, which is not the scope of this study. 29.72% of the respondents have the job function of front office. There were 4 respondents from information and technology.

Table 13. Reliability test

Reliability statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	Number of items
.614	.625	7

The reliability test result of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.614 which shows the data are reliable to examine.

8.2 Result

Assess the concepts of organizational culture: commitment to the organization's values; sharing, learning and trust (Downes, 2014). More than 60% of the respondents agreed that: the primary concern of staff is delivering the organization's mission; what is good for the organization, not what is good for themselves individually; mistakes are accepted as opportunities to learn and develop; openness, honesty and concern for others encouraged; and the organization values creativity, innovation, experimentation and lateral thinking. However one question was negative word: there is lack of trust in people because they misuse knowledge or claim credit. More than 50% of the respondents disagree in that statement.

There were 3 negative worded questions. 73% of the respondents disagree that their organizational structure does not impede knowledge sharing. 70% disagree to the statement that their organizational structure does not empower people. 53% believes that there is strong evidence of hierarchical position based status and owner. PCA analysis gave two components.

The first component includes: impedes the sharing of knowledge; and does not empower people. This component is called suitability for knowledge sharing. The correlation between the items was 0.847, KMO of 0.5 with Bartlett's significance of 0.00, commonalities of 0.923 from both items and eigen value of 1.847. There is strong evidence of hierarchical, position-based status and power within the organization; and work processes are centered around teams rather than on individuals.

8.3 Analysis and discussion

Analysis shows that organizational culture is significantly correlated with the KM extent. However there is negative correlation between culture and KM extent. None of the correlation coefficient of organizational structure shows a significant result. All the measures of the managerial infrastructure is significantly positively related with the measures of KM extent except for knowledge sharing (one of the composite measure of knowledge transfer).

To understand the extent of KM practice in hotels an index was created and rated in very low, low, moderate and high. 67.5 % of the respondents have indicated that hotels involve in KM practices. 8.8% of the respondents were not sure of the KM practices and 23.5% of respondents show moderate practice of KM. The mean of the of KM extent was 3.588 with minimum and maximum values, 2.00 and 4.00, respectively.

89.7% of the respondents in high rank shows that the KM practices have improved the performance, improved the communication and improved the collaboration in hotel. 6.9% are not sure that the KM practices

have increased the KM effectiveness.

Organizational culture and organizational structure did not have significant correlation with any of the KM practices. Organizational culture shows negative but significant correlation with the KM activities. Organizational infrastructure shows significant and positive correlation with all the KM practices except for the knowledge sharing. Managerial infrastructure has 0.044 correlations with the transfer of knowledge. This shows impact of managerial infrastructure in knowledge transfer. Technological infrastructure has 0.068 correlations with transfer of knowledge. In hotel the transfer of knowledge is very dependent upon the technological infrastructure. HR has moderate of 0.068 correlations with the knowledge creation.

9. Conclusion

The term knowledge management is generally used to refer to the practices, implicit or explicit, used by a firm to acquire new knowledge and to rearrange and diffuse existing knowledge within the firm. However, knowledge management has been recognized as the fundamental activity for obtaining, growing and sustaining intellectual capital in organizations as it helps practitioner and academics to understand present situation of KM practices in the hospitality industry of Nepal. The study mainly focuses effectiveness of KM practices to identify the gap between knowledge retention and knowledge transfer. Appropriate knowledge management could contribute considerably to the effectiveness and efficiency.

Thus the research questions were explored and it was found that people working in five star hotels are acknowledging the knowledge management into practices. Several indicators were analyzed and overall it is found that factors affecting knowledge management is positively related with the use of technology. Also the study shows that knowledge management and its implications lead to productivity as it depicts efficiency and effectiveness in their work. This research shall provide an assistance to upcoming researchers and also give some general ideas. Besides it may possess some limitations as this study is based on some five star hotels only, so generalization cannot be done.

This is the first study conducted for understanding the KM practices in Nepalese hospitality industry. The major objectives of this study were to identify the KM practices in Nepalese hospitality industry. This study explores the KM practices in Nepalese hospitality industry with examination of relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The study was designed in positivist paradigm to examine the relationship between KM extent and KM activities. The effectiveness of KM was examined through improving collaboration, performance and communication.

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