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THE INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING ON SUSTAINABILITY OF SUGAR COMPANIES IN KENYA**ALEX ABONYO AKOKO****Ph. D. RESEARCH SCHOLAR****SCHOOL OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP, PROCUREMENT & MANAGEMENT
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KENYA****ABSTRACT**

Knowledge sharing as an aspect of knowledge management practices (KMPs) has been known world over for more than two decades (Drucker, 1959) for its outstanding contributions in influencing corporate performance and sustainability. Surprisingly, the same have been implemented by sugar companies in Kenya with disappointing outcome. As their performance persistently remain below the countries domestic and exportable surpluses; with some companies being privatized as others put in receivership. Researches have been done on KMPs' with intention to improve the companies' performance but few have completely deemed the impact of knowledge sharing on the sustainability of the Kenyan sugar companies. The purpose of the research was to explore the influence of Knowledge sharing on sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya. The study used null hypotheses to test the objective. A sample of 250 respondents was studied from the companies using descriptive survey. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied in the analysis of the collected data. The findings of this study is expected to bring reform in KMPs' especially knowledge sharing to usher in sustainable growth of sugar subsector in Kenya as well as provide invaluable literature to be used as reference materials by forthcoming researchers. The study reveals from its Descriptive statistics that Knowledge sharing has a mean score =3.55 and standard deviation = 0.46 indicate that it has influence on sustainability. Inferential statistics also reveal that Knowledge sharing registers $r=0.292$ and a p -value of 0.000 at 95% confidence interval, accounted only for 8.5% ($R^2=0.085$) of variation level of sustainability. The ANOVA Table shows $F(1,248) = 23.055, p < .05$] further confirms that it is a weak predictor of Kenya's sugar companies' sustainability. On the basis of the test, the research rejects the null hypothesis that 'Knowledge sharing has no substantial influence on sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya; and concludes that the companies should encourage knowledge sharing culture and experience-based promotion policies. The study thus advocates that the government should initiate the policy of knowledge sharing to help empower the stakeholders in industry by encouraging inter-company benchmarking both locally and abroad and the companies to adopt knowledge sharing practices by identifying and rewarding experiences through implementation of group based promotion systems.

KEYWORDS

knowledge management practices, sustainability.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Knowledge management practices (KMPs) have fundamentally helped to transform America, just like the rest of the whole world, at the close of the 20th century by capitulating to the needs of the period of knowledge, alongside the rise of industrialization. Their growth relied on the contemporary knowledge economy- the degree of imparting of knowledge (PPI, 2008). It is a key aspect, as well as the ecological (environmental) aspects, (Wagner, 2005) alongside the customs of a company that affect an organization's competitive advantage, hence its ability of sustainability.

In countries such as Italy, Pakistan and Malaysia, the study of KM conducted amid international and pharmaceutical corporations indicated that it had relationship with improvement in performance (Rizwan and Mohamud, 2012). Other isolated studies such as Susan & Kasim (2010) on significant role of KMPs' on organizational performance revealed that the processes are important determinants of organizational performance.

Mills & Smith (2011) also in examining the effect of KM Processes (structures and acquisition) in their study also revealed direct relationship to organizational performance. Studies conducted by Dingsoryr (2002) in Norway also revealed that KM practices have the ability of affecting growth and performance. Knowledge management should therefore help corporate management to cut down on organization layers, increase flexibility of enterprise and contribute to sharing infrastructure (Huosong Xia, Kuanqu, Du and Shuquin, Cui, 2003).

In their study of KMPs' from the perspectives of organizational capability, Gold et al., found that KMPs' are vital drivers to organizational effectiveness, while Lee and Choi, (2000) in their study that examined correlation between KMPs'(sharing) and organizational creativity, concluded that sharing are significant predictors for organizational innovation which is a basis for organizational growth and performance.

In Nigeria, IFAD (2007) pointed out that KM became one of the key deliverables for corporate actions that enhanced organizations dramatic transformations in agriculture and industry, and served as a means of alleviating poverty amongst the poor Rural Nigerians.

This means that Knowledge enables man to develop flexible behaviour in understanding and adjusting to the world around him as well as transforming it to suit his needs and that it is capable of helping humans become subjects rather than objects of change (Scaruffi, 2003).

According to Prusack & Leissers, (2010) and Ahmed et al (2002) adoption of prudent KM based competencies in firm’s human capital should lead to companies’ efficient utilization of resources, reduction of wastages, improved competitive edge, wider market share, profitability which are elements of growth and sustainability. In Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China KMP (knowledge acquisition) made it possible for people to make better their environment, accustomed it to reduce its impact on their civilization (Jean, 2010).

According to Odek (2003) setting up of sugar industries became vital and was described as a ‘political product’ hence drew much attention from the Kenyan government, and was a warded technical and financial support to achieve its goals. Despite the forgoing supports the industries’ continued to achieve below public expectations. The state of the country plummeted as demands by locals exceeded the level of production, which led to rise in imports from 4000 tonnes to 249,336 tonnes, between 1984 and 2001 from the Brazil, UK and Mexico (KSB, 2007). This condition made the industry a center of debate in the Kenyan parliament (Wanyande, 2010).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Knowledge sharing as an element of KMPs’ is deemed to be the core of the global economy, and its proper management by organizations are imperative for their sustainable growth in the world (Acier, 2006). Its introduction in management in 1959 (Drucker, 1959; Kellogg, 1986), have led Sugar companies in ushareing knowledge resources in their workforce to improve their performance and sustainability, but have continued to realize dismaying results. As companies such as muhuroni closing down while Miwani in full receivership; Nzoia, Chemelil and Sony continued to suffer dismal performance; thus bringing them under keen attention and debate in the Parliament of Kenya (Wanyande, 2010), and were shortlisted for privatisation.

Up to the present time, the industries have not achieved adequate surpluses for both domestic and export, nor have they instigated their plans on continued growth approaches; instead they are scaling down on employees as they get slumped in burdens of debt and troubled by financial constraints (KSB, 2005; KSB, 2010). This situation weakens the countrys’ vision for growth and sustainability of the sector. Whereas researches done in Italy, Pakistan and Malaysia, amid international and pharmaceutical companies reveal that there was a relationship between KMPs’ and improved performance (Rizwan & Mohamud, 2012), others conducted in Norway by Dingsoryr (2002) likewise reveal that KMPs’ has the ability to affect performance and growth. The question of sustainability consequently remains elusive as these investigations did not conversely show that KMPs’ (sharing) could as well lead to sustainability. These prior studies were conducted on international and pharmaceutical companies; and little study appear to have been conducted in the Kenyan sugar industry concentrating on the influence of Knowledge Sharing on sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya. It is on the basis of forgoing claims that this study is purposed to explore the influence of Knowledge sharing on sustainability of Sugar companies in Kenya using descriptive survey.

1.3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To determine the influence of Knowledge sharing on sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya.

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H₀₂: Knowledge application has no statistical significant effect on sugar companies’ sustainability in Kenya.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The recommendations by the study may be used by the county governments in apportioning funds as to advance human capital resources to realize the aims for the economy’s sustained growth and other aims which led to the company’s establishment.

This report is anticipated to increase supply of valuable literature for reference by researchers who may, in future, venture to do studies in correlated field.

It is also visualised that research will provide Management of sugar corporations with helpful knowledge management-based practices and learning principles which could well be implemented in addition to physical and touchable capital resources to nurture collaboration for improved performance, growth and sustainability.

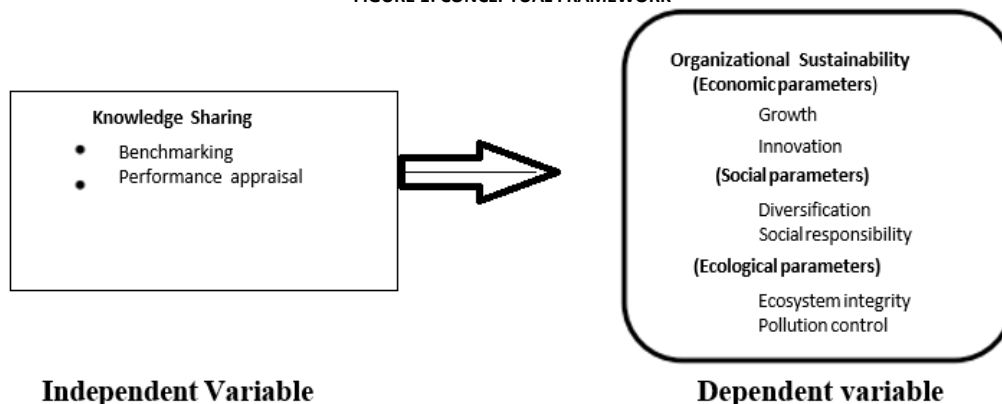
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW

Theoretical framework concerns the theories which underlines the study and which explains the research problem (Blumberg, Coopewr &Schindler, 2014). This study is guided by three theories that have informed this study include Human capital theory and intellectual capital theory and Resource Based theory.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



The framework was developed from suggestions of Islam & Clarke (2005), Sharma & Buud (2003) and Guest (2010) and blended by suggestions of Fugate et al., (2009), Cho et al.,(2008) and Verfaile & Bidwell (2000) which measures sustainability against Triple Bottom Line (TBL) parameters such as economic, social and ecological factors whose indicators are illustrated by the framework. It illustrates the relationship between knowledge sharing and sustainability.

2.3 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.3.1 KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SUSTAINABILITY OF SUGAR COMPANIES

Knowledge sharing or dissemination is a process of distributing explicit and implicit knowledge amongst employees within an organization (Bose, 2004; Tiwana, 2003). It involves information sharing or using qualified performance data. Knowledge sharing may take form of benchmarking which provides an opportunity to blend tacit and explicit knowledge possibly through socialization processes to produce innovative outcome (Nonaka &Takeuchi, 1995). This practice thus helps

organizations in transferring knowledge resources by recognizing and categorizing significant information and spreading it so that learning can take place. According to Foucault (1980) and Leonard (1999) the new Knowledge based economy positions an eminent significance on knowledge dissemination and utilization of information as well as its formation. It is an organization Knowledge capacity in terms of skills, intelligence and expertise that give an organization its peculiarity, competitive performance and sustainability.

Knowledge sharing is key in enhancing innovation and capability of firms (Saenz et al., 2009) the reason Stein & Riddestrale (2001); Winter & Sculanski (2002) argued that Knowledge Management is insignificant and valueless if sufficient processes of dissemination are not structured in position.

Teece (2001) and Schampeter (1934) also added to the argument that in an economy where creative destruction and new combinations predominate, it is the thoughtful, careful integrations of knowledge creation and efficient dissemination that promotes performance of a business, as well as its economic growth. Benchmarking on the other hand is an important way of Knowledge sharing. Swart & Kinnie, (2003) indicates that firms perform well when they share knowledge with others, form network to provide integrated quality products that enable them to gain large market share and profitability. It is the process of comparing performance of what the employees are doing in one organization with the colleagues in a competing firm. Well disseminated knowledge by an organization creates intellectual capital base.

Knowledge is sourced from many areas; explicit knowledge from socialisation (Brainstorming, e- learning, community of practice and informal meetings); internalization sources (documentations and reports, seminars and trainings and informal meetings) and externalization (Workshops, seminars and trainings and informal visits) while Tacit knowledge may be sources from externalization, socialisation and internalization, Takeuchi (1995), and He & Li, (2010).

Taminiau and De-launge (2009) also assert that the most significant course to innovation is the culture of sharing of informal knowledge because it has operational benefits which helps people to direct labour savings and reduce staff turnover. It also increases employees' job satisfaction and effectiveness and promotes process benefits which help to increase Productivity. Fowler & O'Gorman, (2005) suggest that mentoring is also a knowledge sharing mechanism and it involves providing emotional guidance, coaching and role modelling cultures friendship which in effect improves employees' motivation, work relationship, commitment and job performance.

Performance appraisal has also emerged as an important knowledge sharing methodology, IRIS Employment Trend (2003) indicates that it focuses on empowering, motivating and rewarding employees best practices. It helps organisations to correct mismatch in performance and this gives an organization competitive and sustainable advantage. Knowledge diffusion may also be enhanced by interaction between social capital and organization capital (Armstrong, 2006).

Sharing involves orienting information to fit culture and skills which are specific to organizational requirements; for this is fundamental to improved performance and sustainability. According to Huosong Xia et al., (2003) Knowledge Management especially sharing may significantly help corporate management to cut down on organization layers, increase flexibility of enterprise and contributes to its efficiency.

In addition, they pointed out that KM also helps in reducing time wastage required to capture correct information or make decisions, reduce production costs, improves success rate and potentially reduce research and development costs and product development cycle time. Organizations' performance and sustainability depends on its capacity to manage its human capital competencies' (Knowledge) which is possible through varied practices such as mentoring, performance appraisal and bench marking which makes knowledge sharing feasible.

According to Davenport & Prusak, (2000) where a firm has efficient KMP such as adoption, sharing and application there would be competitive advantage as the firm acquire larger market by delivering competitive intelligence to make it withstand competition. Finally, Matzler & Mueller, (2011) argue that effective knowledge sharing is able to expedite organization innovation and learning since prior to coalescing new knowledge, related knowledge must first be attained and then integrated into existing knowledge bank. In conclusion they assert that knowledge sharing is vital in creating a company's competitive advantage.

2.3.2 SUSTAINABILITY

According to the Brundtland Commission of 1987, WCED,(1987) World Bank,(2005), Kuckartz &Wagner (2010), Sustainability is the "meeting of the requirements of the present world without compromising ability of later generations to gratify their own needs, by responding to the present-day economic and social environmental challenges" The intent of sustainability is to make better the economic and social environments (Bos Brouwers, 2010) to improve future organizational survivability and make them self-supporting.

A sustainable firm is that which presents product and services that meet the needs of the society, at the same time taking into account its social, ecological and economic effects on the occupants of the earth, and without making vulnerable the necessities of its later generations and heirs, (Azapagic & Perdan,2000; Welford, 2000). DETR, (2000) furthermore reasoned that sustainability is all about guaranteeing improved quality life for each and every single one at the present and for the future generations by means of social progress whilst meeting the demands of people, safeguarding the ecosystem, guaranteeing of wise utilization of natural resources and upholding and preserving a stable economic growth as well as empowerment.

Roy, (2003) reasoned that the importance of sustainable development is established by the people and is ascribed to changes of the people's mindsets and behaviours. According to Hennicke (2000) the sustainability of a company may well be measured by means of economic, social and ecological parameters; the accomplishment which depends on the wise implementation of KMPs' in organisations as well as the overall country's political good will.

In summary, the main purpose of sustainable development is to come up with the means to help the destitute to uphold and advance their natural capital (natural resources) at the same time fostering their human capital (human resources) as well as their manmade capital (investment infrastructure, social capital, cultural bases and political systems) which enables the society to perform (Cellisr & Jean- Louis, 2004). In particular, sustainability matters are aimed on making companies more independent in their social, economic and ecological growth and developments.

The study on KM had been conducted in developed countries such as Italy, and Pakistan by Rizwan and Mohamud, (2012) and in Malaysia amongst multinationals Pharmaceutical companies and Microsoft & Hewlett Packard where it proved to have positive relationship to performance. Similar study had also been done in Norway by Dingsoryr (2002) in medium sized companies where it established that an intranet based KMPs' for knowledge cartography and knowledge repository for larger software was significant in influencing performance and growth. Even though Rizwan and Mohamud (2012) studies confirm that there is significant association between KMPs' with performance, it was based on Multinational firms while this study would be based on national context with different structural perspectives.

Doo et al., (2005) also indicated that many firms lack understanding of how to develop KMPs' and sharing strategies that are capable of driving the firms to innovation and sustainability, a challenge that this study investigated. These previous studies linked KMPs' influence to firm's economic sustainability but were blatantly silent on whether the same KMPs' could also influence firm's ecological and social sustainability. It implies however that lack of empirical verification of a strong link between KMPs' and organizational performance and sustainability in diversity exist which thus fuel the urgency for this study. Although the previous researchers who obtained empirical support used case studies (Zaim, 2007) and survey indicated positive relationship, their results and conclusions lacked consensus for generalised application on extensive population.

Elsewhere in the world, researchers had centred their interest on relationship between KMPs' and the firms' economic sustainability and very little interest had been put in studies linking KMPs' to corporate sustainability in diversity. This thesis on influence of Knowledge Sharing on Sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya fills these gaps.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted descriptive survey design in collection of data from all the operational sugar companies owned by the government in Kenya. It is a blue print of collecting, measuring and analyzing data (Kothari (2008)). Design is often chosen and used in research process to provide a basis upon which the study is based and in which all aspects of research are linked to provide meaning (Kothari, 2008; Laurel, 2011).

The relevance of research design is to provide direction of what methodology is to be used to collect and analyze data to answer research questions.

3.2 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF STUDY

This target population for the study was 1200 administrative employees from all the functioning sugar companies owned by the state in Kenya. From this, a size sample of 300 respondents was achieved by employing Yamane’s (1967) formulae at a 95% confidence level with 5.0 error margin as given by;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: N - population sample; n - sample size; e - level of precision (confidence)

This obtained Sample size translates to 25% of the population, which was deemed illustrative and enough to minimize the probable error in generalizing results of the investigation, given that it is more than 10% (Saunders et al., 2005).

The sample was distributed as below:

TABLE 1: POPULATION SAMPLE, MANAGERIAL STAFF AND SAMPLE SIZE DISTRIBUTION

Sugar Companies	Sample Population	Managerial Staff	Sample Size
Mumias	1860	300	60
Sony	1700	280	60
Muhoroni*	800	180	60
Nzoia	1685	270	60
Chemelil	795	180	60
Miwani **	-	-	-
Total	6840	1200	300

Source: Companies HR Depts., (2016) * Partial receivership ** Full receivership.

3.3 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The investigation adopted non probability sampling method and specifically purposive random sampling method which enabled it emphasize on respondents with dependable experience more so at the business firm who meets the purposes of the study. This sampling technique has also been chosen because its cost and time saving to use in data gathering (Oso & Onen, 2005). As per Kumar (2011) and Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) sampling is a method which requires picking out a few respondents (sample) from a larger group (sampling population) so as to turn out to be the foundation of approximating or envisaging the commonness of occurrence of unknown portion of information, condition or result concerning the grander population in the investigation. It increases researchers’ scope and flexibility in coverage in spite of the constraints of time and resources (Kathuri & Pall, 1993).

According to Purposive technique is relevant and popular with experienced studies like this one that required specific information from specific individuals (Kinoti (2009)), the reason choice of these techniques of sampling were made. It is further justified by Onen & Osoo (2005) that random and purposive concentrate the investigator’s concentration on the envisioned respondents as well as permitting him/ her value the economy of time, and they every so often lead to gathering of precise, correct information.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

The instruments are means which aided the researcher in data gathering. The study used questionnaires and interview guide for the collection of data.

3.4.1: QUESTIONNAIRES

These were used for collection of primary or qualitative data. Questionnaires were developed in structured (Open-ended) and semi-structured (Closed- ended) forms. Meaningfully, the structured questionnaires limited respondents to theoretical interpretations and opinions. Besides open-ended questionnaires, the investigator utilized Semi structured (closed ended) questionnaires since they are appropriate in boosting responses from the clientele (Pettit and Frances, 2000). Open as well as closed ended questionnaires were created and dispensed with the aid of “collectors” to a sample of respondents to further help in collection of primary data (Orodho, 2003). Suggestively, the selection of questionnaires was grounded on the point that they did not necessitate loss of much time, they needed but low training cost for assistants in the research as well as general administrative cost (Vinten, 1995).

3.4.2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview guide was also self-administered. According to Robison (2002) such interview questions were established in advance but whose phrasing could be reviewed and edited, clarification given for as well as supplementary question added or left out with the process that was acceptable and suitable to realize desired responses. Parallel to what was gathered through questionnaires, the interview questions assisted researcher to provide scholarly focus and built his intellectual ideas.

Interview schedule comprised of structured questions were as well employed to interview 20 managers from the companies. This was in line with Mason (2010) who acknowledges that a sample of between 10-20 respondents is ideal for qualitative interview. Easterby-smith et al., (2002) suggested that interview schedule makes it straightforward simple to understand concepts used by interviewees as a foundation of their views and viewpoints on various matters.

Interview guide were appropriate for this study since it enabled the scholar to examine against vagueness and insufficiency in the main mechanism (Igwe, 2005). Finally, it also allowed the study to collect in-depth respondents’ feelings and attitudes which could not however been captured by the questionnaire alone. They were also suitable for this study since they were easy to analyse, investigated interviewee’s impartial opinions, provided respondents liberty and autonomy, naturalness of answers as well as making better the validations of hypotheses (Vinten, 1995). According to (Onderi and Makori, 2012) these instruments derive their significance also in diversifying responses and reducing clientele’s question fatigue.

3.4.3: DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

The researcher also collected secondary data through the review of past empirical studies in journals, published thesis and companies’ documentaries sources which had to be acknowledged in the reference to avoid blames of plagiarism (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). These helped the researcher to relate is findings for purposes of making informed decisions.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The study ensured that dispensation of research tools was in conformation with the ethical standards such as necessitating the keeping of the respondents’ identity in concealment, and using the collected information for its predestined academic intention (Gatara,2010; Hoyle et al., 2002).

In particular, the investigator obtained authorization from all sugar companies where he was to conduct the study as well as permit for examination from National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The investigator likewise ensured that respondents took part freely in the research without coercion and their safety from any physical and mental injuries was guaranteed, as their rights and dignity were acknowledged and obeyed (Hennik et al., 2001).

The researcher also ensured that secondary data were collected through the review of past empirical studies in journals, published thesis and companies’ documentary analysis sources which had to be acknowledged in the reference to avoid blames of plagiarism (Mugenda & Mugenda,2003). The strength of using questionnaires in data collection was based on their convenience and cost effectiveness.

3.6 PILOT STUDY

The researcher made a pre-visit to companies that were intended for the study before a full scale study was mounted. This made it possible for the pre-test and re-test instruments to ensure that they were reliable so that they justify the claims on what they were able to measure (Saunders et al., 2008).

3.6.1: Reliability of Research Instruments

According to Kerlinger (1986) reliability is the non-appearance of faults of extent or the precision of the measuring tool. To guarantee reliability, the tools were pilot tested and re-tested (test re-test method) and degree of internal evenness of the pieces in each sub-scales of the questionnaire were used and these permitted necessary modifications on the instruments using the test-retest method where questionnaires were administered to the same group at two time intervals of a period of one month, correlation between scores were computed using Pearson's Product Moment formula;

$$r = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{N \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

Where: N is number of respondents; x is test 1; y is test 2 and Σ is summation.

The correlation value which was computed between the scores at the two different times gave r- coefficient value 0.778 which on the word of Orodho (2008) and Field (2009) is considered sufficiently high to authenticate the instruments' reliability and suitability.

3.6.2: Internal Consistence of the Items

Internal consistency involves the dependability of the test modules; in order for a test to be internally consistent, approximations of dependability were grounded on the mean connections amongst all the distinct items within a test (Kumar, 2011). To ensure this, Cronbach's alpha (α) using SPSS coefficient was computed as indicated in 3.2 below.

TABLE 2: INTERNAL CONSISTENCE: CRONBACH'S ALPHA RESULTS FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items
Knowledge sharing Sustainability of Sugar Companies	8	.811.730	.766.643

Source: Author (2016)

Table 2 shows that the internal consistency for the subscale in the questionnaire was adequate enough for the study. The subscale showing knowledge sharing which consisted of 8 items had the Cronbach's Alpha (α) =.811 which according to Orodho (2008), was above > 0.7 is adequate measuring internal consistency.

3.6.3: Validity of Research instruments

This is the degree to which the tools are projected to quantify the gist, probe matters and churn out results they are supposed to produce. To validate the legitimacy of the instruments, the investigator scrutinized again the questionnaires and removed ambiguity in them with the intention of realigning the questions with the objectives of the study.

This research correspondingly used the Content Validity Index (CVI) formula to compute and verify the rationality of the used instruments:

$$CVI = \frac{NrV}{TniQ}$$

Where;

NrV - Number of questions rated as relevant.

TniQ - Total number of the items in the questionnaire.

Using Content Validity Index (CVI) formula the numbers of questions valued as significant were divided by the aggregate number of items in the questionnaire and this yielded forth a CVI of .811. Since the CVI was (more than) > 0.7 which is the acceptable minimal threshold adequate validity according to Hair et al., (1998), it was concluded that the instruments were of adequate validity levels.

3.7: DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

This research made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods that involved both descriptive as well as inferential statistics in the data analysis. These involved the logical placement which identified relationships between the independent (IV) and the dependent variables (DV) which consequently made up the data interpretation in addition to creation of explanations of facts by means of inductive reasoning (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Kothari, 2008). Therefore, Pearson's Coefficient correlation method was employed in the analysis because of its capability of testing the hypotheses on the characteristics of influence of independent variable on dependent variable (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Kothari, 2008) The study developed a model to aid data analysis upon which the intervening variables were also regressed on independent variables to determine their effects on them (Aiken & West, 1991). The regression Analysis was used due to its capability of testing the hypotheses on the characteristics of influence of independent variable (Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Kothari, 2008).

The following model was used to analyse the variables:

Model 1

It is a regression of the dependent variable and the independent variables

$$P_j = a + \beta_1 X_{1ij} + e \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where: P = Organizational Sustainability j

X = KMPs' measured by (KAj; KSj KAppj and ICj) in which

KAj = Knowledge acquisition j

KSj = Knowledge sharing j

KAppj = Knowledge application j

ICj = KMPs' implementation

i and j represent the variables and organizations respectively

e = error term

β 1 = regression co-efficient.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

An 83 % questionnaire response rate (QRR) was realized. This was deemed to be sufficiently high to assure reliability because it was more than 50% (Baibbe, 2002). This is shown in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3: SUMMARY OF RATE OF RESPONSE

Respondents	Questionnaire administered	Questionnaires returned	Return rate %
1200	300	250	83/3

Source: Survey data (2016)

From the 300 questionnaires given out to the employees 250, of them were brought back for data analysis, which interprets to 83.3% rate of response. On the word of Oso and Onen (2011) a satisfactory response rate for survey questionnaires doled out by an individually by the investigator is realized when the questionnaire return rate is no less than 80%. A lower response rate may pose threat to content validity.

4.2 RESPONDENTS' GENDER DISTRIBUTION

The gender of the respondents was summarized, as in Table 4.

TABLE 4: RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	230	92.0
Female	20	8.0
Total	250	100.0

Source: Survey data (2016)

Table 4 indicates that 250 respondents participated in the investigation were made up of 230 (92%) males and 20 (8.0%) females. This implies that there is imbalanced gender representation in the arrangements given that it does not mirror affirmative action rule which require at least 30% female representation in a public organization.

4.2.1: Respondents by Age

Table 5 shows the age distribution of the administrative employees of the sugar companies owned by the state in Kenya as represented by the ones who were sampled for the survey.

TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age (Years)	Frequency	F (%)	Cumulative %
24-34	75	30.0	30.0
35-45	113	45.2	75.2
46-56	57	22.8	98.0
> 56	5	2.0	100.0
Total	250	100.0	

Source: Survey data (2016)

It is apparent from Table 5 that a noteworthy proportion, 113 (45.2%), of the employees of the state owned sugar companies in Kenya are in the age group of 35-45. Only 5 (2.0%) and 75 (30.0%) were aged above 56 years and under 35 years, respectively. This implies that majority of the managerial employees are people who are still youthful are amenable to implementation of knowledge management practices that are geared towards achievement of sustainability in the sugar companies.

4.2.2: Respondents Work Experience

Table 6 shows the distribution of the managerial employees work experience in terms of years.

TABLE 6: RESPONDENTS BY WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE COMPANY

Age (Years)	Frequency	F (%)	Cumulative %
0-5	63	25.2	25.2
6-11	75	30.0	55.2
12-17	105	42.0	97.2
>17 years	7	2.8	100.0
Total	250	100.0	

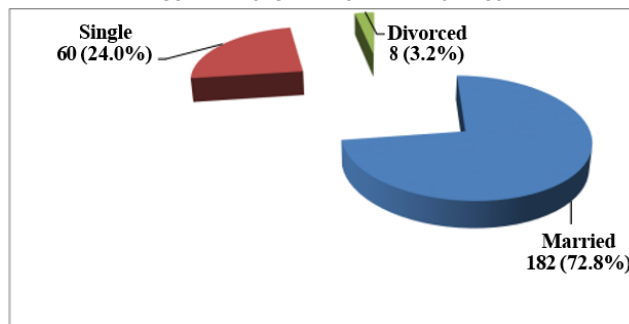
Source: Survey data (2016)

The outcome of the study revealed that majority of the managerial staff of the state owned sugar companies are of adequate work experience, as reflected by a proportion 105 (42%) of the employees who participated in the survey who had 12-17 years of work experience. This means that many of the employees had the ability to effectively apply improvements and approaches achieving the sustainability of the companies. Similarly, some workforce, 5 in number (3%) its had worked for more than 17 years and were able to present the incentive technical proclivity and initiation to the newly (0-5 years) employed workforce making up a number of 63 (25.2%) of the administrative personnel.

4.2.3: Respondents' Marital Status

The marital status of the managerial employees the operational state owned sugar companies who sampled for the study was shown in Figure 2:

FIGURE 2: RESPONDENTS MARITAL STATUS



The data revealed that many 182 (72.8%) of the managerial employees in the sugar companies were married implying that many of the managerial staff were responsible and able to demonstrate commitment to the strategic goals of the organizations. Only 60 (24%) and 8 (3%), who were single and divorced respectively, could suffer job-family role conflicts and psychological stress.

4.2.4: Respondents' Academic Qualification

The summary of respondents' academic qualifications was summarized in Figure 3. This information was considered vital for this study because academic qualification is requisite quality of employees in regard to their capability of implementing KMPs'.

FIGURE 3: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' BY QUALIFICATIONS ACADEMIC

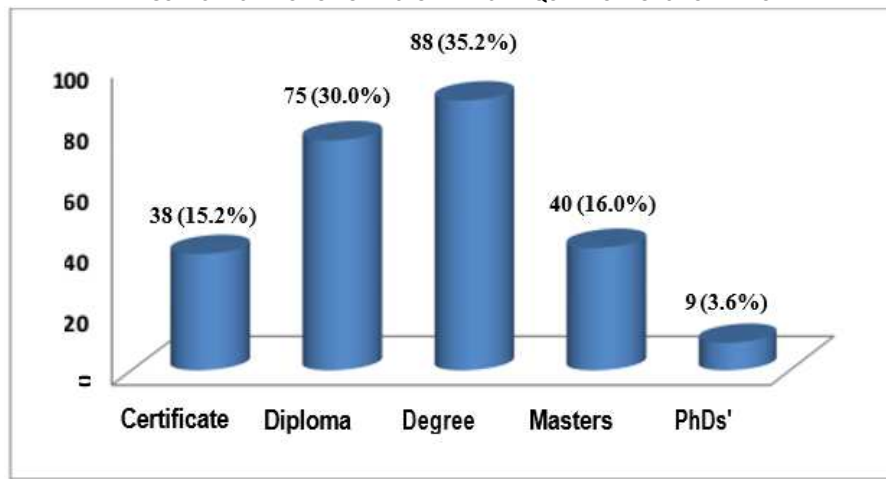


Figure 3 indicates that the sampled managerial employees of the state owned sugar companies were comprised of nearly a fifth 19.6% who were holders of Masters or PhDs' degrees. Those who held bachelor degrees were 88 translating to 35.2% of management team and 75 (30 %) held Diploma in academic qualifications. This finding implies that most of the employees had adequate managerial qualification for effective supervisory roles to steer the industry towards effective performance and sustainability. However, it emerged that 38 (15.2%) of the employees only had certificate academic qualifications. The implication of this finding is that the companies ought to develop skills and competencies of their junior managerial staff in sugar technology through scholarship and internship training in world leading sugar producing states which include Brazil, South Africa and Mauritius.

4.3: THE LEVEL OF SUSTAINABILITY OF SUGAR COMPANIES IN KENYA

The study investigated the sustainability level of the Kenyan sugar industries. This was necessary because it was the dependent variable. The managerial employees were presented with Five- Itemed-Likert-scaled questionnaire whose constructs were based on the indicators of sustainability. The respondents were to rate their degree of accord on the accounts from strongly be in agreement to strongly in disagreement. The indicators of sustainability explored included; improved growth of the industry, product diversification, institutional infrastructure development, withstanding competition and expansion of product market. The findings are presented and discussed from following Table:

TABLE 7: SUSTAINABILITY OF SUGAR COMPANIES (n=250)

Item Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
There has been improved growth of this company over the years as reflected in its ability to assist the community maintain and improve their natural resources.	37 (14.85)	123 (49.2)	50 (20.0)	14 (5.6)	26 (10.4)	3.24	0.65
Our company has registered expansion of product market in the recent years.	44 (17.6)	106 (42.4)	32 (12.8)	38 (15.2)	30 (12.0)	3.92	0.95
This company has made tremendous infrastructure development.	93 (37.2)	100 (40)	6 (2.4)	60 (24.0)	20 (8.0)	3.41	1.26
There has been product diversification signifying growth of this company.	58 (23.2)		22 (8.8)	25 (10.0)	45 (18.0)	3.74	1.12
The company has made efforts to withstand competition resulting from liberalised market	61 (24.4)	89 (35.6)	34 (13.6)	41 (16.4)	25 (10.0)	2.87	1.08
						3.43	0.85

Note: Figure's in () are percentages

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree and SD-Strongly Disagree

Source: Survey data (2016)

From the results of the research, it is evident that the sugar companies in Kenya are moderately (mean=3.37; standard deviation=0.83) sustainable, with the managerial employees whose views were taken rating indicators of sustainability between 2.87 to 3.92, as shown in Table 7. It emerged that nearly two thirds 160 (64.0%) of the respondents accepted that there has been improved growth of their company over the years, which they argue was reflected in their company's ability to assist the community in maintaining and improving their natural resources.

The finding of the study concurs with DELTA (2000) who had reasoned that sustainability is all about guaranteeing eminent life by means of social advancement while having the people's needs met, looking after the environment, guaranteeing wise utilization of natural resources whilst upholding a steady economic growth and empowerment. Similarly, 150 (60.0%) of respondents affirmed that their company had registered expansion of product market in the recent years.

In addition to expansion of product markets, the findings of the study established that there has been product diversification in the sugar companies signifying growth of the companies, as indicated by 158 (63.2%) of the employees who took part in the survey. Only 40 (16.0%) of the respondent did not believe that their company had registered any significant improvement. However, it was established that many of the sugar companies have made efforts to withstand competition resulting from liberalized market. This was confirmed by 150 (60.0%) of the managerial employees who believed that many of the sugar companies have tried to counter the effects of liberation of the sugar market.

These findings are supported by Lu, Wang, Tung & Lin (2010) who believe that companies that face tough competition ought to increase their value creation processes to attain competitive advantage. On the contrary, some respondents believed that their company had not acquired adequate level of sustainability. For example, whereas majority of the respondents believe their company enjoy product diversification which signifying growth of the company, 70 (28.0%) of the managers who took part in the survey rejected the assertion that their company enjoy product diversification. On the same note, 69 (26.4%) of the respondents said their company had not made enough efforts to withstand competition occasioned by the liberalization in the sugar industry. In fact, 68 (27.2%) respondents alluded that their company had not registered any expansion of product market in the recent years.

4.4: THE INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING ON SUSTAINABILITY OF SUGAR COMPANIES IN KENYA

The purpose of the research was to establish the effect of Knowledge sharing on sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya. This objective was addressed by use of eight-itemed Likert scaled questionnaire (Appendix 1) which was used to investigate the opinions of the respondents on knowledge sharing and its influence on sustainability. The views of the respondents were summarized in Table 8 showing descriptive statistics.

TABLE 8: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: KNOWLEDGE SHARING ON ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY (n=250)

	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.
Ks1	37 (14.8%)	203 (81.2%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.6%)	6 (2.4%)	4.04	0.65
Ks2	14 (5.6%)	166 (66.4%)	2 (0.8%)	68 (27.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3.50	0.95
Ks3	93 (37.2%)	71 (28.4%)	6 (2.4%)	60 (24.0%)	20 (8.0%)	3.63	1.39
Ks4	50 (20.0%)	160 (64.0%)	2 (0.8%)	25 (10.0%)	13 (5.2%)	3.84	1.02
Ks5	41 (16.4%)	146 (58.4%)	24 (9.6%)	20 (8.0%)	19 (7.6%)	3.68	1.08
Ks6	88 (35.2%)	79 (31.6%)	5 (2.0%)	55 (22.0%)	23 (9.2%)	3.62	1.39
Ks7	23 (9.2%)	165 (66.0%)	16 (6.4%)	24 (9.6%)	22 (8.8%)	3.57	1.07
Ks8	26 (10.4%)	22 (8.8%)	87 (34.8%)	30 (12.0%)	85 (34.0%)	2.50	1.32
Total Average Mean						3.55	0.46

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, N-Neutral, D-Disagree and SD-Strongly Disagree

Source: Survey data (2016)

From the study and scrutiny of the respondents' views the study established that knowledge sharing as an aspect of Knowledge Management Practices has considerable effect on the Kenyan sugar companies' sustainability, as was indicated by the respondents' overall agreement average of 3.55 with a standard deviation of 0.46. Specifically, the study confirms that the companies share their endowed knowledge through its public open day education, benchmarking programs and performance appraisal of its staff.

It emerged that most companies' public open day education fora and benchmarking programs has positive influence on their sustainability. This was confirmed by a note worth greater number of 240 (96.0%) of the managerial personnel who took part in the study. This implies that through the company's public open education days it improves its public image with consequent expansion in product market. Furthermore, benchmarking of company's staff with foreign firms was established to have positive effect on sustainability, as indicated by 180 (72.0%) of the respondents. They believe that sharing knowledge with foreign based firms not only brings cultural re-orientation that leads to institutional growth and development but also enhances environmental control. On the same note, the findings also reveal that many 164 (65.6%) of the respondents concur that performance appraisal as well as new staff induction leads to innovation and reduced staff mobility. The findings suggest that increased knowledge sharing through performance appraisal and efficient staff induction not only leads to innovation but also reduces staff turnover in the sugar companies. This finding is in accord with that of Saenz et al., (2009) which had shown that knowledge sharing is vital in enhancing innovation and capability of firms. This confirms human capital theory which acknowledges that the growth of an institution depends on the cumulative skills and knowledge in employees which may be attributed to knowledge sharing.

Equally, these findings support De-lounge (2009) who had indicated that the route to innovation is informal knowledge sharing since its through which way the operational costs and staff turnover are reduced to help organization to increase employees' satisfaction and the firms' productivity. Bench marking as a knowledge sharing methodology is important in influencing company's sustainability. Although, many 87 (34.8%) of the respondents were undecided on the importance of bench marking, 48 (19.2%) of them observed that benchmarking with foreign firms has brought cultural re-orientation that has led to institutional development of their company. Similarly, the findings of the study confirm that knowledge sharing has led to product diversification leading to the growth of the companies, a point supported by 187 (74.8%) of the managerial employees who took part in the study.

On the same note, sharing knowledge with foreign based firms and immediate social environment was proved to enhance environmental control and to fulfil social responsibility obligations of the companies. This supports Swart & Kennie (2003) who established that 'a firm is able to perform well when they share knowledge with others and form network that makes them provide integrated quality products thus gaining large market share and profitability'; which are fundamental drivers for organizational sustainability.

These findings oscillate with the views of the study participants who were interviewed by the investigator. For instance, some respondents remarked:

"I agree that our company's open day's education has created good public relations with other stakeholders but I am not very sure if this has really translated to direct economic benefit to the company. I do not think open days has any positive influence on sustainability in economic sense".

Respondent number 7

This implies that the respondent believed that open day in a company is only useful for creating public relations and image of building but not sustainability.

"Benchmarking is very powerful knowledge sharing practice because most of my colleagues who have been taken to foreign firms have come back with relevant skills and knowledge towards their areas of operations".

Respondent number 5

This statement means that the respondent holds that benchmarking is very important knowledge sharing practice and that their company has taken it seriously. The respondent confirms that a number of their colleagues who have been taken for bench mark with other foreign firms have brought with them relevant skills and knowledge to the company worth the desired innovation, operational efficiency and growth of the companies.

"Last year a number of our staff in the waste management department were taken to South Africa to learn new methods of waste management, we having started seeing that their ideas are working towards enhancement of environmental control".

Respondent number 1

It is evident from the statement that waste management improved as a result of bench marking exercises. This finding is in support to the study conducted by Huosong Xia, Kuanqu, Cui, Du & Shuquin (2003), which had pointed out that KMPs' help in reducing time wastage required to capture correct information or make decisions, reduce production costs, improve waste management, potentially reduce research and development costs and product development cycle time. Similarly, the respondents confirm that firms have gone into innovation as a way of managing waste products Burgess by using them in manufacturing Brickets (charcoal) and chipboards, for example the tenth respondent submitted as follows;

"That Last year a number of our staff taken to South Africa to learn new methods of waste management, in Brazil and Mauritius, on return proposed the ideas that Burgess could be used to manufacture charcoal and chipboards to generate additional profits to help in both ecological and economic sustainability of the companies".

Respondent number 10

Inferential statistics: Hypothesis Testing –Objective 2

H₀₂: Knowledge sharing has no statistical significant influence on sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya. To investigate if there was any statistical substantial impact of sharing of knowledge on sustainability of the Kenya sugar companies, the null hypothesis was tested. This was done using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis, using the scores computed from frequency of responses. The p-value was set at .05, where the null hypothesis was rejected when the p-value was less than .05 but it was accepted when the p-value obtained was greater than .05. as shown in Table 9 Correlation analysis results in SPSS output.

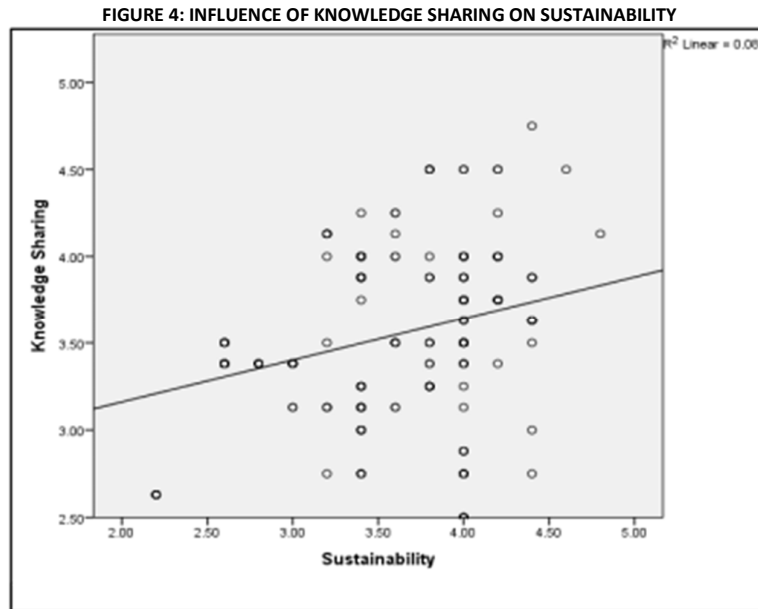
TABLE 9: INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND SUSTAINABILITY (n=250)

		Sustainability
Implementation of Knowledge Sharing	Pearson Correlation	.292**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

**correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

The results of the research illustrate that there was statistically substantial positive connection (r =.292, n=250, p<.05) between knowledge sharing and sustainability of sugar industries; and increase in implementation of knowledge sharing results into increase in sustainability of sugar companies and vice-versa. Established on the agreement the test rejects the null hypothesis; "there is no significant impact of implementation of sharing of knowledge on sustainability of sugar companies", and concluded that implementation of sharing of Knowledge has positive effect on sustainability the Kenyan of sugar companies. However, it was weak.

To additionally demonstrate this connection, a scatter plot was generated as illustrated in following Figure:



The scatter plot reveals that was some positive connection was present between knowledge sharing and sustainability of sugar companies. This is because the coordinate points were scattered around tend line (TL) forming almost a visible pattern showing that the two data sets were agreeing. However, to approximate the degree of effect of implementation of knowledge sharing on sustainability, a coefficient of determination was calculated by use of regression analysis as shown in the following table:

TABLE 10: MODEL SUMMARY ON REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF INFLUENCE KNOWLEDGE SHARING ON SUSTAINABILITY

Model	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.292 ^a	.085	.081	.53417

a. Predictors: (Constant), Knowledge Sharing.

The model shows that implementation of knowledge sharing accounted for 8.5% (R²=.085) of the variation in levels of sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya. However, to determine whether knowledge sharing was a significant predictor of sustainability of sugar companies, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed as shown in Table 11 below.

TABLE 11: ANOVA –INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING ON SUSTAINABILITY

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6.578	1	6.578	23.055	.000 ^b
Residual	70.764	248	.285		
Total	77.342	249			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), Knowledge Sharing

From Table 11, it is evident that knowledge sharing was a significant predictor of sustainability of sugar companies [F (1, 248) = 23.055, p <.05]]. This further confirms that knowledge sharing significantly influence sustainability. From the results it was clear that implementation of knowledge sharing explains a considerable amount of the variance in the level of sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1: SUMMARY

This research encompassed a sample n=250 (83.3%) of respondents from all the operational sugar companies owned by the state. It examined the impact of Knowledge sharing and its influence on sustainability. This research discovered that administrative staffs in all the Kenyan sugar companies in have well standing academic and experiential qualifications to guarantee knowledge sharing. The investigation implemented both descriptive and inferential statistics in the analysis of both the quantitative as well as qualitative data. Specifically, the investigation adopted Pearson Correlation Coefficient, multiple regression and descriptive statistics in the analysing of differed data.

The investigation employed null hypotheses to validate the effect of KMPs’ and in the analysis, 2- tailed test (ANOVA) was adopted that yielded a 0.00 significance (p-value) at 95% confidence interval which was used to reject (failing to accept) the null hypotheses. Similarly, in establishing the influence of Knowledge Sharing on Sustainability, knowledge sharing measurements computed in a regression analysis table revealed that knowledge sharing indicators such as companies’ open day public education, staff benchmarking and staff appraisals computed in a regression analysis revealed a weak positive statistical significance at r= 0.292 and [(F 1(1,248) =23.055, p<.05)] respectively. Implying that increased Knowledge sharing activities may influence companies’ performance, growth and sustainability on which premise the study rejected (failed to accept) null hypotheses that Sharing of Knowledge has no correlation to sustainability of sugar firms in Kenya.

5.2: CONCLUSION

This study found out that knowledge sharing registers positive significant contribution to sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya but the practices appeared to have been impaired by employee’s fears of loss of superiority and power. This study thus concludes that the sugar companies should encourage knowledge sharing culture and experience based promotion policies.

5.3: RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1: To the Government of Kenya

The government should create culture of knowledge sharing amongst the sugar companies by encouraging inter-company benchmarking and with other companies abroad.

5.2.2: To the management of sugar companies in Kenya

Sugar companies to apply and adopt tactical KMPs’ that allow knowledge sharing such as boosting group discovery and innovation by setting up of collaborative culture.

The industries' staff should be motivated to freely share their knowledge and experiences without reservations due to fear of loss of superiority and power by implementing fair promotional practices.

The sugar companies should develop unique reward schemes that motivate employees towards effective knowledge sharing.

6.0 SCOPE FOR THE FURTHER RESEARCH

Given that the research has discovered and exposed a weak positive correlation between Knowledge sharing on sustainability, it is worthy to recommend further research on institutional based factors that influence relationship between Knowledge sharing and sustainability of sugar companies in Kenya.

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