

EFFECT OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE OF LISTED FOOD AND BEVERAGES COMPANIES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Most challenges faced by businesses, especially the food and beverages companies in Nigeria are how to perform and expand in order to compete with foreign companies through quality, efficiency and effectiveness. Also, customers continue to battle with less quality of products and services rendered by food and beverages companies, which have left many of its customers unsatisfied. This study therefore sought to examine knowledge management elements of knowledge creation and knowledge acquisition and how it affects the performance of listed food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design whereby structured 5-point likert scale questionnaire were administered to a sample of three hundred and seven (307) top and middle level staff of listed food and beverages companies in Lagos State. Partial Least Square (PLS-SEM) statistic was employed to test the hypotheses formulated of which the study found a positive and insignificant effect of knowledge acquisition on performance, knowledge creation affect performance positively and significantly on performance of food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Amongst others, the study recommends on-the-job training, workshops, conferences, and other learning programs for employees, and also the inclusion of employee in applying of knowledge and initiative to work and decision making.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Knowledge Creating, Knowledge Acquisition, Employee Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, the manufacturing sector plays a significant role in the development and growth of every economy. Performance of business organizations worldwide has elicited concerns from professionals particularly in the manufacturing segment of most economies. However, these trepidations are debatable because of the progressively essential role the manufacturing sector in the economy globally. Knowledge has become a major source of wealth, and employees are the assets (Chuma, 2019). An essential issue for both individual and organizations is how to manage this knowledge (Wang & Wu, 2016). According to Olja *et al.* (2017), organizations built on labor and capital are gradually being substituted by the ones built on knowledge capabilities since their accomplishment and survival is acclimatized by creating new, innovative, and better services and products.

Generally, to sustain growth, innovation and competitive edge, organizations are required to manage knowledge effectively. Knowledge management certainly facilitates innovation, which in turn leads to organizational performance (Abbas & Lagraa, 2017). Many organizations focus on continuous performance because it is the only way they can grow and develop. Yang and Chen (2009) submit that an organization needs to engender an environment that integrates organization performance with knowledge management to enable creation, sharing, application and knowledge conversion if they are to succeed.

The Knowledge that organization possesses is one of the most important assets that helps them in attaining competitive advantages, even in some cases, it becomes more important than the financial resources and all other tangible assets (Chawla & Joshi, 2018). Additionally, knowledge management can be attributed as a portfolio of strategies and activities that is related to the process of acquiring, transferring, and sharing knowledge with all organization's people (Battistell, & De-Toni, 2018). A firm can also achieve superior performance on the basis of its ability to generate new knowledge and utilize the existing base more effectively and efficiently than its competitors. Knowledge management is predominantly becoming an essential and significant component in business strategy (Iyer & Ravindran, 2019).

Performance is how far businesses achieve its goals devoid of being constrained to debilitate its means or place extreme pressure on the workers. It is also the assessment of the elements that evaluate the competence and aptitude of a business to attain the constituents' aspiration heights through effectiveness, efficiency, or social significance standards (Jenatabadi, 2015). Performance can be put into two sub-constructs, financial and non-financial performance. Khan (2015) identifies the financial measures as including profit, sales and market share, the non-financial measures comprise productivity, quality, efficiency, and attitudinal and behavioral measures such as commitment, intention to quit and satisfaction. The operational measures include production flexibility, product cost, product quality, number of customers and product delivery. The performance in this study concerned itself with is the non-financial performance in terms of productivity, quality, effectiveness and efficiency.

The annual report of the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA, 2021) showed that more than eight hundred (800) manufacturing firms in Nigeria fold up within the period of 2019-2021. The report indicated that the main reason for the closure of these firms was the dynamism of the business environment. NACCIMA (2021) further noted that the sustainability of the Nigerian manufacturing firms could not be ensured, since more than half of the surviving firms were rated as "ailing" as at 2021. The report also showed that knowledge utilization in the sector fluctuates between 30-45% within the period under review. This lack of utilization of available knowledge in the sector has hindered the competitiveness of these firms' products and services, while further reducing the contribution of the industry to the country's GDP.

According to The National Bureau of Statistics (2019) fourth quarter report, growth in Nigeria's manufacturing sector shrank to 19.2 percent in the ending quarter of the year. The Bureau presented the sector's nominal GDP growth for the quarter of 2019 at 19.12 percent (year-on-year), this was 13.28 percent lower than the corresponding period of the previous year which was reported at 32.40 percent. The sector also had a decline in growth of a 2.46 percent less than that of the preceding quarter of the year. In a related report by the Central Bank of Nigeria (2021), industrial production in Nigeria declined as much as 6.60 percent during the middle of 2021 as measured against the previous year.

Many manufacturing firms in Nigeria are facing high failure rate caused by huge funds wastage, unproductive management plan and financial crunches (Nwonyuku, 2016). These may possibly be accredited to poor knowledge management strategies among workers and the firm. As a result, it is difficult for several of these companies to keep up to the volume of contribution that will retain them in business. With these existing problems, knowledge management is essential in recent threshold of organizations if they are to flourish in their performance (Chawla & Joshi, 2017).

The inability of companies to properly create, share, apply and convert knowledge strategies between the employees and customers to give the organization a preferred image has been a problem in food and beverages industries. According to Adebisi and Abatunde (2021), manufacturing industries in Nigeria are faced with the challenge of customer shortage because of unsatisfactory management of knowledge within the organization. The problem turned out to be more noticeable by globalization and all that go along with it. Nigeria has also turned into a discarding ground for all categories of foreign products (Anwarul et al., 2017). Some products and services of the manufacturing sector in Nigerian, according to Anwarul *et al.* (2017), cannot contest favorably globally with goods from advanced countries most especially Europe and America. The pursuit of developing new innovations is not given serious attention in Nigeria among food and beverages companies (Adebisi & Babatunde, 2021). Hence, there is need for strategic innovation through knowledge creation capability, which is a crucial factor for industrial development. Based on the above problems, the effect of knowledge management on innovation among food and beverages firms in Nigeria is being investigated.

Studies such as (Chucks & Eric, 2018; Ahmed et al., 2020; Ngoroge et al., 2020) established a link between knowledge management on manufacturing firm, educational institutions and hospital sector, but none of these studies examined how knowledge management can affect performance (as it relates to productivity, quality, efficiency and effectiveness) of business more especially food and beverages companies. Also most of the studies were conducted in foreign and advanced economies and as such their findings cannot be used for effective decision in Nigeria context. Furthermore, the few studies ([Egena](#), & [Rajenthyan](#), 2020; Bayo & Hamilton, 2019) conducted in Nigeria produced mixed findings leaving the area amenable to further studies. This study sought to fill the gap by examining the effect of knowledge management on performance of listed food and beverages companies in Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study

Ho1: Knowledge creation has no significant effect on performance of listed food and beverages companies in Lagos state, Nigeria.

Ho2: Knowledge acquisition has no significant effect on performance of listed food and beverages companies in Lagos state, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Knowledge Management

Knowledge management has its origins in a conceptual perspective based on theory developed by Cohen and Olsen (2015) that involves the absorptive capacity of employees to be more innovative. Knowledge management focused on extracting knowledge from technology, competitors and investment in Research and development that generate productivity in an organization (Caragliu & Nijkamp, 2012). Knowledge is acquired from both inside and outside the company using a spiral model suggested by Nonaka and Takauchi (1994). This model involves the members of all lines of the organization and allows them to gain competitive advantage (Chen et al., 2009, porter, 2011; Zack et al., 2009). Other theories solely consider explicit knowledge as the means to generate innovation and productivity in an organization (Elhassan et al., 2021).

KM has been described as a multidisciplinary and complex concept which came about as a convergence of several factors and remained implicit and fundamentally based on the apprentice-journeyman-master model (Wiig, 1999b). There seem to be as many definitions of it as there are many researchers, depending on the various disciplines and interests. O'Dell and Jackson (1998) define KM as a strategy that can be developed within a firm to ensure that knowledge reaches the right people at the right time; and these people should share and use information to improve organizational functions. KM is the process of acquiring, organizing and communicating both tacit and explicit knowledge of employees so as to improve productivity (Sodiya et al, 2006). KM is also viewed as an organizational capability which identifies, locates, creates or acquires, transfers, converts and distributes knowledge for competitive advantage (Walters, 2002). KM refers to "the tools, techniques, and strategies to retain, analyze, organize, and share business expertise (Groff & Jones, 2003).

Knowledge creation

Knowledge creation is defined as the act of making knowledge created by individuals available, amplifying it in social contexts, and selectively connecting it to the existing knowledge in the organization (Nonaka & von Krogh, 2006).

Knowledge creation refers to the continuous combination, transfer, and conversion of different kinds of knowledge. This occurs as users interact, practice and learn. Put simply; it is the creation of ideas, which is at the heart of a company's competitive advantage (Nonaka, et al., 1994).

Lim (2009) defined knowledge creation management is the process of sharing, creating, using, and managing an organization's knowledge and information. It is a multidisciplinary approach to making the best use of

knowledge or information. Knowledge creation management efforts usually focus on company objectives such as innovation, R&D, and greater productivity. It also focuses on competitive advantage, integration, the sharing of lessons learned, and the ongoing improvement of the business.

Knowledge Acquisition

Knowledge acquisition refers to the process of creation and formation of the knowledge and its components within the organization, and so implicit knowledge is transformed into explicit knowledge (Alrubaiie et al., 2015). Knowledge acquisition encompasses the process of obtaining and learning proper knowledge from diverse internal and external resources, such as relevant documents, experts, experiences, and plans. The most familiar techniques for knowledge acquisition are concept mapping, observing, interviewing, process mapping, laddering, training, and educating (Gholami et al., 2013). The acquisition affects organizational performance through program instrumentation, documentation, self-report, knowledge engineering, and network (Tubigi et al., 2013). Knowledge can be acquired from within and outside of the organization (Schulze & Hoeg 2016). In order to survive in competitive environment, organization are depending more on knowledge acquisition. Effective knowledge acquisition process helps to deliver unique product in other to create value for customers and also helps in gaining and sustaining competitive advantages (Hanif & Gul, 2018). Those organizations that take part in implementation of knowledge acquisition process can perform financially, operationally and socially better than others; not implementing it. Knowledge acquisition is a crucial resource for the enhancement of organizational performance (Plessis, 2017).

Choo (2014) viewed knowledge acquisition or generation as the activities that increase the stock of organizational knowledge. Knowledge acquisition can be enabled through an organization's external and internal networks to promote employee self-actualization within the organization to make employees more motivated and more committed and to improve their work satisfaction. For example, customer feedback systems, data mining, business intelligence and collaboration with partners and research institution are characteristic highly developed knowledge acquisition practices.

Concept of Performance

Jenatabadi (2020) sees performance as how far an organization achieves its goals devoid of being constrained to debilitate its means or place extreme pressure on the workers. It is also the assessment of the elements that evaluate the competence and aptitude of an organization to attain the constituents' aspiration heights through effectiveness, efficiency, or social significance standards. Syafarudin (2016) adds that it is the result of real consequence shaped by an organization which is evaluated and compared with the anticipated results.

The idea of organizational performance is central to organizations since the main purpose of firms is to make profit (Olanipekun et al., 2015). Daft (2013) described the performance of an organization as the capacity to reach its goals by efficiently and effectively using their resources. Organizational performance describes how efficient a firm has been in its mission to attain specified goals, which includes how well its resources are deployed, how well goals fixed are achieved, how effective is the Board (; Suryanto, 2017).

Empirical Review

Jamshed and Majeed (2023) investigated how a leader's emotional intelligence (EI) in a prevailing team culture can nurture the creation of knowledge and enhance team EI that influences team performance. The authors used multisource data representing a sample of 195 teams (735 respondents) to examine the hypothesized relationships by using the analytic strategy of partial least squares-structural equation modeling. This study bridged the methodological gap by using the repeated indicator approach that includes the reflective-formative second-order hierarchical latent variable model. The results revealed a significant relationship between knowledge creation and team performance. The findings of this study may not replicate the current study which will be carried out on manufacturing sector.

Kenneth et al. (2022) investigated the influence of Knowledge Creation Practices on Employee Performance in private technical vocational education and training institutions in Kenya. The study was anchored on Unified Model of Dynamic Knowledge Creation propounded by Nonaka, Toyama & Konno in the year 2000. The study used a positivism philosophy and a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised of 11 polytechnics in Kenya. The unit of inquiry comprised of 265 administrators comprised of both academic and non-academic heads of department. Primary data was collected using structured self-administered questionnaires. The reliability of the research instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. Validity was established using content and construct validity. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with aid of SPSS 26. Descriptive analysis used includes; frequencies, mean, standard deviation and percentages while inferential analysis involved correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis to test the hypothesis at a significance level of 0.05. Regression analysis indicated that knowledge creation ($P=0.000$) has a significant influence on employee performance. The study concluded that knowledge creation practices significantly influence employee performance in TVETs. This study was carried out in Kenya, therefore its findings may not be replicable to the current findings which will be carried out in Nigeria.

Migdadi (2022) studied a unified framework which integrates knowledge management processes (knowledge creation, sharing, storage and documentation and acquisition), innovation capability (product, process, marketing and organizational and organizational performance (operational, financial and product quality). Then empirically tested the effect of knowledge management processes (KMP) on innovation capability (IC), the effect of IC on organizational performance (OP) and the impact of KMP on OP through the mediator (IC). A questionnaire was designed and addressed to the general managers of the Jordanian companies making up the target population. Statistical techniques employed included confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM) using AMOS 24 to test the hypotheses. The results show that KMP influences IC, IC affects OP and KMP impacts OP through the mediator (IC). The study lacked a specified population as such its findings may not be applicable to the current studies.

The Knowledge Based View

A knowledge-based perspective of the firm builds upon and extends the resource-based theory of the firm initially promoted by Penrose (1959) and expanded by others (Barney 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984 as cited in Alavi & Leidner, 2001). The KBV presents 'knowledge' as the most valuable resource of the firm (Halawi, 2006; Spender, 1996). The knowledge resident in human capital allows firms to improve distinctive competencies and discern innovation opportunities (Hansen et al., 1999; Hsiu 2010; Nonaka, 1994). When firms engage on improvement of their management processes and develop new products, they require the ability of human capital to produce creative ideas, develop innovative approaches, and exert new opportunities (Scarbrough, 2003). The KBV of the firm therefore holds that the firm's capability to create and utilize knowledge is the most important source of a firm's SCA (Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Grant, 1996a). In the current economy, where the only certainty is uncertainty, the one sure source of lasting competitive advantage is knowledge (Nonaka, 1991). As Sher & Lee (2004) puts it knowledge is gradually becoming the most important factor of production, next to labour, land and capital.

The knowledge-based view recognizes knowledge as the utmost important resource of an organization where every other resource hangs on (Hassan 2021). Knowledge-based view explains how organizations generate, obtain process, use, guard, and transmit knowledge inside the organization and its capacity to build competitive edge for the organization and its stability. The theory is pertinent to this work since the knowledge-based view theory recognizes knowledge as the utmost advantageously key resource of any organization (Barney, 1996). Organizations are therefore obligated to distinguish the knowledge they process to comprehend what creates greater performance. An organization may have exclusive and treasured knowledge but may not be able to generate and withstand a competitive edge to improve performance unless it uses what it has effectively. The Significance of this study is that it takes into consideration all cost associated with the development of employees as investments geared towards improving the competence and productive capacity of individual

workers which in turn creates competitive advantage of which the resultant effect may be increase in quality, customers' satisfaction and loyalty.

KBV can provide food and beverage companies in Lagos State with a competitive advantage by enabling them to leverage their knowledge and intellectual capital to drive performance improvement and achieve sustainable growth.

While the Knowledge-Based View (KBV) has several benefits for employee performance in food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria, there are also some criticisms that should be considered. These include: Difficulty in measuring knowledge, Dependence on human capital, Limited applicability, and Overemphasis on internal knowledge.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the survey research design. The population consists of 820 top and middle level staff of selected food and beverage firms (Nestle Nigeria Plc, Unilever Nigeria Plc and Honeywell Flour Mill), in Lagos State, Nigeria. These companies were selected based on their size, industry reputation, and market share. Purposeful sampling technique was adopted for this study. The study employed Taro Yamane (1967) formula for determining the minimum sample size of 307. Therefore, 307 copies of questionnaires were distributed. Samples were drawn from each of the selected food and beverages companies proportionately to their sizes. The study utilized of primary source of data and well-structured five-point likert scale close-ended questionnaire was used to obtain data from selected food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. To ensure content validity and instrument reliability, the study underwent a pilot test. Cronbach's alpha was employed to evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire. The variables were independently tested to verify the questionnaire used for the study is sufficiently reliable. The reliability of responses to instrument elements is analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient aided by the use of SMART-PLS3. All variables tested show alpha values greater than 0.6 recommended points.

In addition, the data collected were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the aid of SmartPls3. SmartPls3 has two models, the measurement model and the structural model, also known as the outer and inner model respectively. The data collected further undergone some analysis so as to be certain the data show reliability, convergent validity and discriminate validity before running Partial Least Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM was used to test the research hypotheses of this study. The following explains how the study carried out these pre-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistic

	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness
KC	4.55	4.8	3	5	0.63	1.57	-1.44
KA	4.48	5	3	5	0.67	0.20	-1.00
PERF	4.30	4.8	2	5	0.80	1.56	-1.20

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2023

Table 4.2 above provided statistical description of the variables as expressed in the data collected in terms of the mean, minimum, maximum, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis values. Knowledge creation (KC) had minimum and maximum values of 3 and 5 respectively. The average value stood at 4.55 and a standard deviation value of 0.63, while skewness and kurtosis values stood within the normality range. Knowledge acquisition (KA) showed minimum and maximum values of 3 and 5 respectively with an average value of 4.48

and a standard deviation value of 0.67. Performance (PERF) also had minimum and maximum values of 2 and 5 respectively, mean value of 4.30 along with a standard deviation value 0.80.

Convergent Validity

This explains the extent to which constructs converge to explain the variance of its items. It is assessed by evaluating the average variance extracted (AVE). The minimum value of the AVE should be higher than 0.50. All the constructs satisfied this requirement as shown in the table below and as such are valid for the study.

Table 4.2: Construct Reliability and Validity of the Indicators

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Av. Variance Extracted (AVE)
KA	0.799	0.830	0.857	0.546
KC	0.768	0.786	0.841	0.517
PERF	0.879	0.889	0.911	0.673

Source: SMART PLS Output, 2023

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is the extent to which a construct is empirically distinct from other constructs in the structural model. Traditional methods such as Fornell-Larcker and cross loadings were used to assess discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker 1981).

Table 4.3: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	KA	KAP	KC	KS	PERF
KA					
KC	0.953	0.810			
PERF	0.727	0.861	0.428	0.881	

Source: SMART-PLS Output, 2023

Test of Hypotheses

The table below showed the path coefficients, t-values and p-values used to test the first four null hypotheses of the study:

Table 4.4: Path Coefficient of the Model

Variables	Beta	T Statistics	P Values	Decision	F ² Values
Knowledge Acquisition -> Performance	0.021	0.299	0.765	Accepted	0.000
Knowledge Creation -> Performance	0.106	2.517	0.012	Rejected	0.016

Source: SMART-PLS Output, 2023

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Knowledge acquisition has no significant effect on performance of food and beverages Companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

The result from table 4.8 shows that knowledge acquisition has positive and insignificant effect on performance of food and beverages company in Lagos State, Nigeria, with $\beta = 0.021$ and $p = 0.765$. Thus, hypothesis one was supported and therefore accepted at 5% level of insignificance. Since there is enough statistical evidence to accept the alternative hypothesis, the study concludes that knowledge acquisition has positive and insignificant effect on performance of food and beverages Companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Knowledge creation has no significant effect on performance of food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

The result from table 4.8 shows that knowledge creation has positive and significantly affects performance of food and beverage company in Lagos State, Nigeria, with $\beta = 0.106$ and $p = 0.012$. This result does not support the null hypothesis three and was therefore rejected at 5% level of significance. Since there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis, the study therefore concludes that knowledge creation has significant positive effect on performance of food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study examined the effect of knowledge management on performance of food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. The findings from the analysis above indicate that the model is adequately fit to measure the relationship between knowledge management and performance of food and beverages companies. Based on the foregoing, the study tested two hypotheses and evidenced were provided by the study results that knowledge management affects performance of food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria moderately as indicated by the coefficient of determination (R^2). The findings on the specific independent variables and how they affect performance are discussed below:

The first finding revealed that knowledge acquisition has a positive and insignificant effect on performance. This implies that increase in knowledge acquisition will lead to positive and insignificant increase in performance of food and beverages companies. This finding is consistent with that of Okoli (2020), who found similar findings that knowledge acquisition has insignificants effect on performance of manufacturing company in Onisha, Anambra State. Contra to this finding is the work of Daniel (2021) who revealed that knowledge acquisition has significant effect on the performance of banking sector. This finding also aligns itself with porter's competitive advantage model which holds that a combination of resources and capabilities gives a firm competitive advantage over rivals.

The second findings reviewed that knowledge creation showed a positive and significant effect on performance of food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. This implies that increase in knowledge creation will lead to increase in performance of food and beverages companies. This finding agrees with the findings of Yusuf, et al., (2022) and Musa (2019) who found positive and significant effect of knowledge creation on performance but the finding however, disagreed with that of Onuh and Peter (2020) who found negative effect on performance while studying the relationship between knowledge creation and performance of banks in Kogi State, Nigeria. This finding also aligns itself with the knowledge based view theory which holds knowledge as the most valuable resource of the firm and knowledge resident in human capital allows firms to improve distinctive competencies and discern innovation opportunities

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the effect knowledge management on performance of selected food and beverage companies in Lagos State, Nigeria. Drawing inference from the chapter four of this study, the study therefore concluded that firms' internal activities of knowledge management to a very large extent affects the performance propensity especially in the area of product quality, customer satisfaction, effectiveness, efficiency and continuous growth especially among food and beverages companies in Lagos State, Nigeria.

From the first hypothesis, the finding from the study concludes that knowledge acquisition affects performance of firms but not to large extent and that little level of knowledge acquired by employees can help employees to perform their task. This indicates that an employee with minimal level of knowledge can perform if he/she is guided.

The study concluded from the findings of the second hypothesis that knowledge creation has positive and significant effect performance, this indicates that industries who prioritize knowledge creation improving their overall performance. This can be achieved through investing in employee training and development, encouraging knowledge sharing and collaboration among employees, and leveraging technology to support knowledge creation and management.

Based on the findings and conclusions above, the study recommends thus:

- i. Food and beverages companies should encourage their employees to engage in continuous learning and provide them with opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills. This can be done through training, workshops, conferences, and other learning programs.
- ii. Food and beverages companies should create a platform where employees can learn new and improve technology, as well as to be innovative, initiative and creative. This will give employees a better chance to create knowledge in other to contribute to the performance of the company.

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