

12-2008

Taxonomy of knowledge management research in hospitality and tourism

Henner Nehles
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations>



Part of the [Hospitality Administration and Management Commons](#), [Management Information Systems Commons](#), and the [Technology and Innovation Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Nehles, Henner, "Taxonomy of knowledge management research in hospitality and tourism" (2008). *UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones*. 626.
<https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations/626>

This Professional Paper is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Scholarship@UNLV with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Professional Paper in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Professional Paper has been accepted for inclusion in UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.

TAXONOMY OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT RESEARCH
IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

by

Henner Nehles

Bachelor of Science in Hotel Management

University of Nevada Las Vegas

Graduated in 2006

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Master of Science in Hotel Administration

William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

Graduate College

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

December 2008

TAXONOMY OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT RESEARCH IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

PART ONE

Introduction

The hospitality industry is operating in an ever increasing knowledge-based economy, where hotels have to increase customer satisfaction and retention levels, lower employees turnover rates and operating expenses, maximize profits and strive to gain a sustainable competitive advantage. “Knowledge management caters to the critical issues of organizational adaptation, survival, and competence in the face of increasingly discontinuous environmental change. Essentially, it embodies organizational processes that seek synergistic combinations of data and information processing capacity of information technologies, and the creative and innovative capacity of human beings” (Civi, 2000, p.166).

Knowledge Management (KM) is not a new concept. It has its origins back in 1959 when Peter F. Drucker created the term “the knowledge worker” (Haag, 2000). Since the 1995 introduction of knowledge management to the business and hospitality industry, different interpretations, concepts and definitions are used to best describe the main idea of knowledge management.

Many scholars have published different definitions of knowledge management and emphasized the importance of continued KM research (Groff & Jones, 2003; DiMattia & Oder, 1997; Skyrme, 2002). However, there is no clear consensus on the definition of KM as a process nor there is an established theme on KM research to describe the direction and the impact of findings of published research on this topic.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the use of various research approaches in published knowledge management studies. It will incorporate the analysis of knowledge management research themes that emerge from the review of scholarly articles in hospitality and tourism research journals that are published in the last ten years. Content analysis will be used to categorize the different research approaches presented across the ten year scope of this review. The identified research methods, applications of KM practices, and findings will be discussed.

Statement of Problem: Over the last decade, the research in and practice of knowledge management has expanded tremendously due to economic, social and technological factors and trends. The hospitality and tourism industry lacked the ability to adjust to these trends/factors in knowledge management and neglected to close the gaps between hospitality/tourism and researchers. Furthermore, hospitality/tourism responded negatively to an adoption of KM and therefore created a “hostile knowledge adoption environment”. The attainment of the knowledge management through positive interaction of research and hospitality/tourism would allow closing the gap and opening doors of new applications for the hospitality and tourism industry (Cooper, 2006).

Statement of Objective: The research objectives for the study include the following:

1. To provide an in-depth content analysis of current knowledge management practices
2. To identify and organize KM research study themes in hospitality research
3. To discover (if any) emerging patterns in hospitality KM research
4. To provide direction for future hospitality research in KM by identifying and describing published research studies’ suggestions and implications

Justification: Knowledge management has risen to become one of the most contested and debated concepts in the general business world. However, unlike in other fields, the hospitality and tourism industry were unable to reach the same level of applications and empirical research (Hallin & Marnburg, 2008).

Constraints:

1. Given the criteria for the study, a limited number (10) of research journals were included in the content analysis
2. Time period 1998 to 2008
3. Lack of consensus on the use of KM as a term to describe knowledge acquisition and organization process
4. Key term usage – only two terms were used: knowledge management and knowledge management systems
5. Taxonomy methodology is limited because it is dependent on the interpretations of content by the researcher. Thus, there is an objectivity bias introduced by the researcher

Glossary

Knowledge Management: There are many approaches towards knowledge management and an universal definition does not exist. For the purpose of this study, the most suitable definition is the one by Emin Civi. He defined “Knowledge management caters to the critical issues of organizational adaptation, survival, and competence in the face of increasingly discontinuous environmental change. Essentially, it embodies organizational processes that seek synergistic combinations of data and information processing capacity of information technologies, and the creative and innovative capacity of human beings” (Civi, 2000, p.166).

Knowledge Management Systems: Many scholars have published different definitions of KMS. "Knowledge Management System (KM System) refers to a (generally IT based) system for managing knowledge in organizations, supporting creation, capture, storage and dissemination of information. It can comprise a part (either necessary or sufficient) of a Knowledge Management initiative" (Maier, 2007).

Learning organization: Defined as "a learning organization is one in which processes are imbedded in the organizational culture that allow and encourage learning at the individual, group and organizational levels, and allow learning to be transferred between these levels" (Abel, 2008, p.17).

Tacit knowledge: "Tacit knowledge (Knt) is the descriptive term for those connections among thoughts (neuronal patterns) that cannot be pulled up in words. It is a knowing of what decision to make or how to do something that cannot be clearly voiced in a manner such that another person could extract and re-create that knowledge" (Bennet & Bennet, 2008, p.24). The importance and relevance of tacit knowledge in correlation to knowledge management has increased over the last years and represents one of the key variables in order to better understand knowledge management.

Explicit knowledge:

In contrast to tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge (Kne) is "the process of calling up information (patterns) and processes (patterns in time) from memory that can be described accurately in words and/or visuals (representations) such that another person can comprehend and recreate that knowledge (Bennet & Bennet, 2008, p. 24)

Human Capital:

Each employee working for any kind of business organization has to be considered and seen as asset to the company. “There is no doubt that part of an organization’s knowledge resides in the people who form it. The employee’s knowledge value depends on their potential to contribute to the achievement of an organizational competitive advantage” (Ordonez de Pablos & Lytras, 2008, p.48). The human capital is considered to be very difficult to duplicate and therefore helps an organization to achieve a sustained competitive advantage over competitors.

PART TWO

Introduction

In Part One, a brief introduction to knowledge management was presented, as it is perceived in the hospitality and tourism industry. The term knowledge management was defined and its relevance to business world was described. In Part Two of this study, related literature was included to allow further in-depth research on the topic of knowledge management in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Literature Review

1. History and Definition of Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management has its origins back in 1959 when Peter F. Drucker, who was a scientist, business consultant and teacher, created the term “the knowledge worker”. In his belief, a knowledge worker is one who works primarily with information or one who develops and uses knowledge in the workplace. A knowledge worker helps to develop business intelligence and increases the significance of intellectual capital. These knowledge workers can create an atmosphere in which any company will gain insight into customer preferences. “Due to the

constant industrial growth in North America and globally, there was an increasing need for an academically capable workforce. In direct response to this, Knowledge Workers are now estimated to outnumber all other workers in North America by at least a four to one margin (Haag et al, 2006, pg. 4)".

In 1966, Michael Polyani, a British-Hungarian scientist and philosopher, created the term "tacit knowledge". By definition, tacit knowledge is knowledge that people carry in their minds and is, therefore, difficult to access. Often, people are not aware of the knowledge they possess or how it can be valuable to others (Smith, M.K., 2003). By making this tacit knowledge accessible to others in the company, not only are repeated mistakes reduced, but efficiency is streamlined because employees are empowered and encouraged to share their personal "know-how" of how to best satisfy customers' expectations. Additionally, employees' contribution and management recognition will hasten the process of achieving corporate goals and improve standards.

In order to further understand the roots of knowledge management as a process, one needs to explore intangible assets of an organization. The term "Invisible Balance Sheet" first used by Karl-Erik Sveiby introduced three families of intangible assets: internal structure, external structure and individual competence. The term "Internal Structure" deals with five main components: computers, patents, concepts, models and administrative systems. All five components are utilized by the employees and are consequently "owned" by the company. Both the employees (human capital) and the internal structure represent what is generally called the "organization". The components of the "External Structure" consist of brand names, trademarks and company reputation (image) and the relationship between customers and suppliers. The created value of these assets is mainly affected by how well the company deals with solving

customers' problems. Lastly, the term "Individual Competence" describes the ability of employees to act and react effectively in diverse service encounters. Individual competence consists of work related skills, values, education, experience and social skills. These components of competence cannot be owned by any company but can be contributed by any employee who possesses them. As stated by Sveiby (1997), people are the only true agents in business. All assets and structures whether tangible physical products or intangible relations, are the result of human action and depend ultimately on people for their continued existence. The focus on competence, skills, human capital, and the learning organization lead to a growing emphasis on organizational knowledge and the management of expertise.

The first business conference on Knowledge Management was held in 1995. The topic was "Building Awareness of KM". The concept of knowledge management related to the global business world is only twelve years old but its significance is steadily increasing.

Since the 1995, many scholars have published different definitions of knowledge management the industry to best fit the purpose of their studies. Some of these research papers include definitions that utilize different aspects of knowledge management. One widely used definition of KM is one by Groff and Jones: "Knowledge management is the tools, techniques, and strategies to retain, analyze, organize, improve, and share business expertise" (Groff and Jones, 2003). This definition mainly focuses on the Information Technology and processes that are needed for a company to achieve the capture of explicit knowledge and does not include the human factor. Another definition of KM by David J. Skyrme emphasizes the human component in the KM process: "Knowledge Management is the *explicit* and *systematic* management of *vital knowledge* - and its associated *processes* of creation, organization, diffusion, use and exploitation" (David J. Skyrme, 2002). This definition explicitly focuses on the human capital

itself and does not incorporate the concept of technology that helps to capture, store and distribute the knowledge within a company.

The most suitable definition for the purpose of this paper is the one by Emin Civi: “Knowledge management caters to the critical issues of organizational adaptation, survival, and competence in the face of increasingly discontinuous environmental change. Essentially, it embodies organizational processes that seek synergistic combinations of data and information processing capacity of information technologies, and the creative and innovative capacity of human beings” (Civi, 2003). His definition supports the idea of combining the human capital and technical aspects in the knowledge management process to not only identify knowledge created by the human capital but also to describe the technical process to capture, store and distribute the gained tacit knowledge in explicit form.

2. Knowledge Management and Networking

In the last ten years, knowledge management has been often correlated and associated with networking and is called knowledge management systems in the hospitality industry. The term networking can be defined differently depending on the purpose behind networking. In a social context, one widely used definition is the following: “Networking is making links from people we know to people they know, in an organized way, for a specific purpose, while remaining committed to doing our part, expecting nothing in return” (Jack Chapman). This definition focuses outside the business world and emphasizes networking among individuals who communicate through a web of familiar individuals who try to collect information to gain the level of knowledge they are striving for. This network can be described as “social networking” or “relationship networking” because networking is established without expecting anything in return. It can be observed that this definition mainly utilizes the human factor without integration

of technology or other equipment to make information sharing more feasible to others. Another noteworthy definition that only focuses on the technical side of networking is: “In information technology, networking is the construction, design, and use of networks, including the physical (cabling, hub, bridge, switch, router, and so forth), the selection and use of telecommunication protocol and computer software for using and managing the network, and the establishment of operational policies and procedures related to the network” (Searchnetworking.com). This definition places its importance on the technology that is needed to install a communication network among properties that are separated by a large physical distance. The human factor does not play any role in this definition, even though humans are the ones who operate these networks.

These are general definitions of networking and are not specific with regards to networking applications in the business world. To better understand the purpose of business networks and why businesses have networks in place, you have to know the following definition by Susan Ward: “Business networking is the process of establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with other business people and potential clients and/or customers” (Susan Ward, 2002).

Business networking supports the idea of a “mutually beneficial relationships” between individuals, businesses and even large organizations. All parties involved in this network exchange information in order to increase business revenues and take advantage of the available speed of knowledge transfer to be more competitive in the hospitality market in which they operate.

The above stated definitions of networking all describe a different concept, goal or purpose. In order to find the best definition for “business networking knowledge management”

you have to combine these three definitions, identify the resources of knowledge and locate them in a knowledge management network that specifically targets the needs of the business organization.

3. Knowledge Management Research in Business and Management

A review of several business research articles published in non-hotel related academic journals indicates that knowledge management is becoming a very important and essential topic in the general business world over the last 13 years. Findings emphasize the idea that knowledge management is mainly implemented through a knowledge management system that utilizes internet technology and networking by identifying knowledge management as one of the most important organizational resources (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Clark, Jr., Jones, & Armstrong, 2007; Massey, Montoya-Weiss, & O'Driscoli, 2002; and Schultze & Leidner, 2002).

Additionally, all research articles state as their objective that future research is needed to guarantee reliability for the success of knowledge management and knowledge management systems.

4. Knowledge Management Research in Hospitality and Tourism

Chronological descriptions of knowledge management research studies that have been published in the last ten years have indicated that there is a lack of consensus in knowledge management research. However, (results have indicated that) content analysis of 19 articles in 10 relevant hospitality and tourism related academic journals did not only indicate the lack of appearances in terms of volume but also the lack of clear consensus and guidance on how to approach and study knowledge management in the hospitality and tourism industry. "Knowledge management (KM) has emerged over the last decade to become one of the most debated

management concepts, but in the hospitality industry KM has not achieved the same scale of applications and empirical research as in other fields” (Hallin & Marnburg, 2008).

Bouncken (2002) compared the relevance of knowledge management in the hospitality industry to the importance of knowledge management practices in other industries. Therefore the author identified and provided evidence of knowledge and analyzes different dimensions/approaches of knowledge management in the hospitality industry. Her findings indicated that knowledge management plays a major role in the overall performance of hotel operations and is of great assistance for quality improvements for hotels. She also suggested that further research is needed that concentrate specifically on knowledge management practices that will help expanding and supporting the findings/results of her article.

In the same year, Bouncken (2002) published another article dealing with achieving competitiveness advantage through knowledge management. She stated that “reuse of already proven knowledge and readiness of knowledge to use are the major benefits of knowledge management. Bouncken compared papers of fellow editors and researcher about knowledge management and offers a discussion of feasible applications of knowledge management. Because most of the papers included in this study are compared to each other, Bouncken concluded that this study should not only contribute to the overall understanding of knowledge management but also to ongoing progress/advancement in research areas and research methods.

Gronau (2002) proposed a knowledge management system that will help to gather information from customers and capture this gained information (tacit knowledge). This knowledge will then be stored in knowledge management system which is called “The Knowledge Café”. He stated that “knowledge management is identified as a key success factor in

most industries today. While data or information can be stored independently from people, knowledge is bound to people who use it for their interactions”. The most important step in this knowledge management progress is to properly integrate customers and their representatives’ needs and experiences through open discussions without “surrendering proprietary business information”. Following, the gained information/ knowledge will then be shared among employees, management and franchise operation so that a return on investment is guaranteed.

Hattendorf (2002) introduced a research study dealing with “Knowledge Supply Chain Matrix Approach for Balanced Knowledge Management: An Airline Industry Firm Case”. His evaluation showed that most knowledge management projects lack of concepts which overstress the importance of one single factor, such as information technology and failure to pay attention to other variable such as structures, strategies and processes. Hattendorf’s introduced knowledge matrix tool originated from a “generic business model and four knowledge management processes”. The author portrayed how his tool is incorporated within knowledge management projects in the airline industry. He concluded that overall his proposed model seemed to be a fitting tool and is definitely able to balance and structure knowledge management initiatives.

Yang and Wan (2004) addressed the issue of employees’ turnover rate in the hospitality industry for a number of years. Whereas past studies have shown that researchers and practitioners mainly concentrated on practices and program preventing employees from leaving their jobs, Yang and Wan examined a different approach. This approach mainly focused on the opportunity to share and retain employees’ knowledge/information, which resided in their minds. In order to conduct data, the authors implemented semi-structured interview in four International Five-Star hotels in the Taiwan area. The authors’ goal was to identify to which extent the hotel company implement knowledge management practices. The study concluded that knowledge

management practices, including cultures and programs, supported “knowledge acquiring, sharing and storing”, which can benefit the hotel in question.

Frechtling (2004) published a study with the title “Assessment of Tourism/Hospitality Journals’ Role in Knowledge Transfer: A Exploratory Study”. He examined 13 popular hospitality, tourism, and related academic journals to researchers, managers and additional practitioners in the United States hospitality and tourism industries by addressing the assessment of knowledge transfer. The study was conducted by a sample survey of members of two major organizations: the Travel Industry Association of America and the Travel and Tourism Research Association, which both covered these above mentioned populations of hospitality and tourism industries. The author found out that “the two populations differ in their proportions that read any journals and specific journals, that there are preferences for journals that vary by occupation and tourism sector, and that relatively little transmission of knowledge is taking place from leading journals to industry practitioners”. Additionally, Frechtling listed recommendations for further research that if the knowledge-transfer was neglected managers, researchers, educators and operators should redress this deficiency so that the quantity of academic journals in the tourism and hospitality could actually be of value to everyone.

In 2005, Pyo published a research study with the title “Knowledge map for tourist destinations—needs and implications”. The study aimed to identify ways how to make knowledge easily accessible for employees through an organized computer database, called knowledge mapping. Knowledge mapping can be described as “blueprints to help find knowledge. Knowledge maps with visual representation (using circles, images connected by lines) conceptualize hierarchies of data, information and linkages. Further, the study tried then to compare knowledge maps of four different of four regional areas, including city, mountain,

historic and island resort tourism areas) and recommended different mapping schemes. The data collecting process was done by both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires. The author concluded that each destination has distinctive knowledge requirements and, therefore, the structure of each individual knowledge map should be built to meet the expectations/needs and preference of supporters of knowledge maps.

Clark and Scott (2006) suggested to value knowledge management in the strategy making process and to highlight the importance of an organizations knowledge management program in assisting the overall strategic planning process. The main theme of this study was the strategic planning in a “State Tourism Organization” (STO). It mainly supported the idea of knowledge management being the key to a successful strategic planning exercise. In order to do so, the authors seek to develop a framework “on which the capability of a STO to implement a knowledge-based agenda in strategic planning can be assessed”. Because of limited knowledge management research in the tourism field, a literature review was used to describe a three-point framework of assessment with the main elements being “integration of knowledge management objectives with strategic imperatives, planning approach that balances top-down (outcome focused) with bottom-up (process focused) planning process, and organizational capacity, including leadership, people and culture, process, technology, content and continuous improvement”. This framework was then tested through applying a practical case study scenario which focused on “A planning initiative undertaken by a leading tourism STO in Australia”. This proposed framework and study showed that it was useful to analyze/evaluate an organization’s capability in knowledge-driven strategic planning training exercise and could be of use for future projects that also will be focusing on strategic planning.

Hawkins (2006) noted that the Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism and knowledge sharing is not clearly defined and explored. Therefore, his study approached this topic by mainly concentrating on the part higher education takes when transferring knowledge into practice. He defined knowledge as “an understanding of something and the ability to use that understanding through study and experience”. The author’s main goal was to combine knowledge with networking processes by identifying the knowledge needed, capturing the knowledge, and sharing the gained knowledge information through networking so that the potential can be optimized for the tourism industry. “In an age when knowledge has surpassed capital as the strategic factor driving the global economy, KM deserves some portion of the enormous effort now expended on accounting, financial analysis, capital investment and the vast infrastructure devoted to sheer money” (Hallal, 2006). The best sources for this process are higher educational institutions where teaching, research, service scholarship. This can lead to the transfer of knowledge to practice through the function of discovery, integration, application, and education. Therefore, the study concluded that higher educational institutions when incorporating e-learning and networking practices in their knowledge identification, capturing and sharing process play a major role.

Lebe’s (2006) study was based on an international project about developing Wellness Tourism in four regions of central Europe by placing emphasis on knowledge management and partnerships. The goal was to campaign the image of these four regions to become the heart of the European quality wellness market. “The problems experienced in this project range from a lack of a common language to inclusion of different stakeholders”. Therefore, management had to create a system that implemented educational and training programs for its diverse workforce. Knowledge sharing of experiences of single partners is then made possible and integration of

local traditions and culture can be initiated. In conclusion, the authors stated, “further knowledge sharing is required in how to develop systematic plans for penetrating new markets using the knowledge of unique partners that have already gathered valuable experience in those markets”. Additionally, it was found that the ultimate goal would be that knowledge management and partnerships, even if diversified, can lead to a totally new entity which is then called “Wellness Destination”.

Lemelin (2006) published a case study, which dealt about the organization of research in Quebec. This study embodied the “best practice in tourism research dissemination”. The author identified that knowledge sharing in the tourism industry has emerged to one of the most important topics in the tourism industry. No longer do research units within organizations are faced with cynical attitudes and management seeks their support so that companies can foster their company’s and destination’s competitiveness. “A destination may be considered as a network of organizations and stakeholders” (Cooper and Scott, 2005). It was concluded that within this network knowledge sharing will create competitiveness advantage, while the development of new innovations and knowledge must be guaranteed so that maximizing the wealth of companies’ stakeholders is guaranteed in the long-run. Share the knowledge, disseminate the knowledge and the tourism industry will enjoy a more increased competitiveness and a more successful cooperation. In conclusions, Lemelin introduced a knowledge sharing system that is brought into organizations such as destinations and networks, which ultimately then to be incorporated through new ways of functioning into these organizations.

Pan, Scott and Laws (2006) addressed the issues involving the creation, definition, and the use of knowledge in regards to the Chinese outbound market. Their main goal was to find some suggestions on how knowledge can be produced, where it can be made available and how

this knowledge can be shared among members of the tourism industry, and between academics and the tourism industry. In order to gather this necessary information on knowledge management, the three authors provided an initial view through the help and eyes of tourism managers in Australia. Findings showed that was a collection of data available with the focus on the Chinese outbound market. They concluded that the availability of knowledge through the Internet does not necessarily lead to knowledge use. However, they found that in the case of the Chinese tourist to the Australian tourism market, “findings from academic research and industry research by the National Tourist Office, (Tourism Australia) have helped to develop relevant policy to regulate the China market to Australia”. They concluded that even though attempts were made to specify tourism knowledge, there were no universal ways/schemes in identifying knowledge requirements, even though it would be of great theoretical and practical help.

Pearce and Benckendorff (2006) published a study with the title “Benchmarking, Usable Knowledge and Tourist Attractions”. They identified exceptional and particular needs of the attractions sector for comprehensive and comparative information on parallel operations. The study defined and expressed four different kinds of benchmarking and examined the opportunity of an empirical approach to knowledge acquisition. “Some comparisons and a synthesis of benchmarking studies from the hotel sector, from tour operators and from the national park management world are included in the conceptual appraisal of the benchmarking approach”. The main goal of Pearce and Benckendorff was to illustrate and apply a specific benchmarking approach in regards to tourist attractions. In order to do so, the authors decided to run a large-scale survey study in the Australian tourism attraction sector, which found 15 indicators and demonstrated how these indicators contrasted among all different kinds of attractions. They concluded that the study also provided a very reliable example on how to access graphical

information and can be seen as an example for the knowledge communication process.

Additionally, Pearce and Benckendorff argued that distinctions should be drawn between the findings on knowledge made by analysts and actual meeting the knowledge expectations/needs of managers.

Scott and Laws (2006) wrote a study for the *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism* where studies of other knowledge management researchers are listed, examined and compared. The two authors stated that “knowledge sharing is a means by which new ideas and competitive advantage is created or brought into an organization (destination or network) and incorporated into new ways of functioning”. Furthermore, it was emphasized that findings proved that knowledge sharing takes place through social aspects and managerial knowledge systems. Scott and Laws also states that knowledge sharing would raise the problematic of control and power in regards who is supposed to use and how this person is supposed to use it. This study clearly identified new directions for future research such as understanding the power of knowledge sharing in the tourism industry and how tacit knowledge can be localized. Additionally, future research will have to be focus on knowledge sharing through organizational functioning, and how the tourism industry networks and clusters at the scale of destination management and the scale of operational levels.

Woods and Deegan (2006) based their study on the statement that quality has become the main source for competitive advantage in the tourism industry. Therefore, they published a case study called “The Fuchsia Destination Quality Brand: Low on Quality Assurance, High on Knowledge Sharing”. They mentioned the fact that there has been a shift from “interfirm competition to interdestination competition”. Therefore, a case study in Fuchsia, West Cork, Ireland was executed where findings showed that the Fuchsia brand enjoyed less recognition by

their customers as anticipated but it showed that a knowledge sharing system could be of great need and success when associated with quality. This system proved that customers would not necessarily pay a membership for the assurance of quality of the brand but they would pay a membership fee so that they can be part of a knowledge sharing network that would be beneficial to their needs. Further advantages also showed that these customers' behavior and trends were not related to quality assurance but knowledge sharing within a powerful destination network system.

Zehrer and Pechlaner (2006) addressed the issue of knowledge management by accessing information through e-mail inquiries. It was determined that the advancements in information technology allowed hotel companies to access relevant information via internet. Gathering important information through the internet will play a major factor in the long-term success of tourism organizations. In order to do so, the authors decided to collect data through a two-year e-mail inquiry. "A mystery guest check by means of e-mail inquiries sent to selected tourism organizations was undertaken to determine the response behavior and breadth of information provided by tourism organizations and to reveal potential gaps in the knowledge management and transfer of these organizations". The results of this study has shown that the following problems occurred: inefficient knowledge management among employees, only large hotel organizations have the funds available to afford more capabilities for e-mail inquiry responses, and that small organizations should cooperate with other each other to implement higher quality standards and to work on a more professional day-to-day basis.

Hallin and Marnburg (2006) published a study on knowledge management that dealt with the "first-of-the-art survey of empirical KM research in the hospitality field". Their survey was conducted by a database search tool that landed 2365 hits, identifying only 19 empirical studies

with the topic knowledge management. The contents of these nineteen empirical studies were analyzed in juxtaposition using static versus dynamic perspectives on knowledge. Additionally, the overall value and quality of the empirical articles were then compared and measured with “relevant theory-of-science criteria”. The authors revealed in their findings that only five out of the 19 studies were of high research quality and offer good material for future research studies. However, the other 14 studies showed that empirical KM research is limited, inconclusive, low generalization and testability”. Hallin and Marnburg recommended that future research in the field of knowledge management in the hospitality industry is necessary providing them material that would be beneficial for researchers and practitioners.

Xiao and Smith (2006) published a study with the title “The Use of Tourism Knowledge: Research propositions”. The reason for their study was the interest in knowledge management for practitioners and academics because there has been a lack in KM research in the tourism industry. The main purpose was to take a closer look on how practitioners have applied knowledge management for decision-making and problem solving. In order to do so, the authors drew from the utilization literature, and focused on identifying this knowledge use in a conceptual framework. It was concluded that the practical approach in this study was deliberate and faced limitations, their research has the potential to contribute to the utilization and tourism industry.

Shaw and Williams (2008) evaluated a review on current knowledge management and knowledge transfer in the tourism industry. One goal was to further explore some of the most common mechanism/practice in knowledge management and means of knowledge transfer in the tourism industry. “In doing so it explores such concepts as interlocking directorships, communities of practice, learning regions and labor mobility”. The authors identified an

emerging research agenda on knowledge management in the tourism sector but also mentioned variances within the hotel sector where a list of recent articles have evaluated different aspects of knowledge transfer. Shaw and Williams emphasized the importance on innovations in the tourism sector, which should be considered in the overall knowledge management framework.

Conclusion of Literature Review

Knowledge management is one of the most rising and promising concepts in the business world and has to become one of the most important concepts in the hospitality and tourism sector as well. It seems obvious to observe that future research in the field of knowledge management in the hospitality industry is necessary providing material that would be beneficial for researchers and practitioners and should add value to the overall advancement in KM research areas (Hallin & Marnburg, 2006; Frechtling, 2004; Bouncken & Pyo, 2002). Additionally, it can be detected that knowledge management is seen to be deciding factor in order to achieve competitive advantage. In order to do so, knowledge has to be identified, captured, transferred and shared.

PART THREE

Introduction

Part Three builds upon the discussion presented and the research direction given in Part One and Part Two. In Part One, knowledge management was defined and its' relevance for hospitality and tourism industry research was offered. In Part Two, an extensive review of related literature was presented to further analyze the status quo of KM research in hospitality and tourism field. Part Three provides a theoretical and methodological review of KM

publications in hospitality and tourism research by putting forward a concise content analysis in the form of a taxonomy that lays out the 'big picture' on the current direction of KM research in hospitality and tourism.

Results

Using content analysis, a taxonomy of KM research in hospitality and tourism was created by:

1. focusing on referred research publications in hospitality and tourism research journals that were published within the last ten years
2. selecting ten reputable research publication
3. identifying content analysis criteria based on review of relevant research literature (the objective was to be able to discover meaningful ways of evaluating research publication content)
4. using the identified criteria to search for patterns in KM research publications

The taxonomy created (see Table 1) included the following classification criteria:

1. year of publication
2. author and title of publication
3. methodology used
4. research theme presented
5. results, predicators and criteria (if any)

The year of publication was recorded to determine continuity of KM as research topic over the ten years and also to review the frequency of 'KM coverage' over the years studied. The author and publication year information was included to make the taxonomy more usable and helpful for future researchers and readers of this study. Methodology used in each research article was recorded to determine if there were any patterns in terms of the direction of KM research – whether there is more emphasis on qualitative or quantitative research studies. Research themes presented was also recorded to provide a more meaningful representation of content reviewed. The objective for including results (as well as predictors and criteria) was to briefly summarize the content of each study identified.

Nineteen studies were identified and included in the taxonomy created. It was discovered that there was a pattern of increased publication of KM research in hospitality and tourism during the year 2006. Majority of the studies used qualitative methodology and were of exploratory nature. There were no patterns identified in terms of results, predictors and criteria used. Given the nature of KM, the overall research themes incorporated human resources and organizational management issues.

Table 1.

Theoretical and Methodological Review of Knowledge Management Publications in Tourism and Hospitality Research

Year	Author	Title	Methodology	KM Research Theme	Results, Predictors and Criteria
2002	Bouncken	Knowledge Management for Quality Improvements in Hotels	Qualitative methodology on knowledge management in hotels, case studies and listings of different strategic advices and structural recommendations for implementation techniques	Improving service quality by developing employees' knowledge about customers' preferences and the corresponding procedures; service quality is depending on the acquisition, accumulation, development, and distribution of knowledge assets	Contribution to knowledge management and hotel management literature; incorporation of knowledge management in hotels based on individual and organizational knowledge; further research needed concentrating on KM practices will help expanding and supporting findings of her study

2002	Bouncken & Pyo	Achieving Competiveness Through Knowledge Management	Qualitative method comparing articles published in the Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism Vol. 3 on the topic of KM	Reusing proven KM and availability of KM are the main benefits of knowledge management	Most studies in the Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism are theoretical/conceptual & practical, but not empirical due to the short existence of knowledge management research in hospitality/tourism; the discussed volume should add to the overall understanding of KM and should contribute to the advancement in research methods/areas
2002	Gronau	The Knowledge Cafe - A Knowledge Management System and Its Application to Hospitality and Tourism	Conceptual approach towards Knowledge Management System; applications of this KMS are described/discussed in this study	Knowledge Management seen as the main key for any organization processes to guarantee success; integration of customers and their representatives' needs/experiences through open discussions; storing and sharing this gained knowledge/information in a Knowledge Management System also called "The Knowledge Cafe" with employees, management and	Realization of the KM framework architecture is the Knowledge Cafe; existing examples from the area of hospitality and tourism prove that there are many possibilities available for Knowledge

franchise operations

Management Systems

2002	Hattendorf	Knowledge Supply Chain Matrix Approach for Balanced Knowledge Management: An Airline Industry Firm Case	Presentation of a Knowledge Supply Chain Matrix; application of this tools are introduced and how it is applied in the Airline Industry	KM projects suffer from single-factor projects, emphasizing only one area within KM; the proposed Knowledge Supply Chain Matrix will balance different factors in KM projects such as structures, strategies or processes	Appropriate tool to balance and structure KM initiatives; the only gap to fill is the fact that the Matrix follows a theoretical background
2004	Yang & Wan	Advancing Organizational Effectiveness and Knowledge Management Implementation	Four International 5-star hotels in the Taiwan area; semi-structured interviews presenting 35 full-time employed participants from the range of top management level to the rank-and-file	Sharing and Retaining employees' knowledge/information; the goal was to minimize employee turnover rates by collecting data through semi-structured interviews and evaluate KM practices;	Findings/data proved that KM practices, such as cultures and programs, which support acquiring, sharing and storing will ultimately benefit hotel organizations

2004	Frechtling	Assessment Tourism/Hospitality Journals' Role In Knowledge Transfer: An Exploratory Study	Sample survey of members of two organizations that cover the Travel and Tourism Research Association and the Travel Industry Association of America	Examination 13 popular hospitality, tourism, and related academic journals to researchers, managers and additional practitioners in the United States hospitality and tourism industries by addressing the assessment of knowledge transfer	The two populations differ in their proportions that read any journals and specific journals, that there are preferences for journals that vary by occupation and tourism sector, and that relatively little transmission of knowledge is taking place from leading journals to industry practitioners
2005	Pyo	Knowledge Map for Tourist Destinations - Needs and Implications	Comparison of knowledge maps of four destination types (city, mountain, historic and island resort tourism) and suggests different mapping schemes; supported by data collection process done by both open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires	Identifying ways how to make knowledge easily accessible for employees through an organized computer database, called knowledge mapping. Knowledge mapping can be described as “blueprints to help find knowledge.	Conclusion indicated that each destination has distinctive knowledge requirements and, therefore, the structure of each individual knowledge map should be built to meet the expectations/needs and preference of supporters of knowledge maps

2006	Clark & Scott	Managing Knowledge in Tourism Planning: And How to Access Your Capability	Conceptual study; because of limited knowledge management research in the tourism field, a literature review was used to describe a three-point framework of assessment	The main theme of this study was the strategic planning in a “State Tourism Organization” (STO); value of knowledge management in the strategy making process and highlighting the importance of an organizations knowledge management program in assisting the overall strategic planning process.	Transfer of knowledge into practice through the function of discovery, integration, application, and education; therefore, the study concluded that higher educational institutions when incorporating e-learning and networking practices in their knowledge identification, capturing and sharing process play a major role
2006	Hawkins	Transferring Tourism Knowledge: The Role of Higher Education Institutions	Qualitative study	Study approached this topic by mainly concentrating on the part higher education takes when transferring knowledge into practice; combining knowledge with networking processes by identifying the knowledge needed, capturing the knowledge, and sharing the gained knowledge information through networking so that the potential can be optimized for the tourism industry	Higher educational institutions when incorporating e-learning and networking practices in their knowledge identification, capturing and sharing process, do play a major role

2006	Lebe	European Spa World: Chances for the Project's Sustainability Through Application of Knowledge Management	Qualitative study; description of an international project across four regions on Europe	Developing a strategic plan based on knowledge management in order to design training and educational training for a diverse workforce in four European regions	Knowledge sharing of experienced single partners can then made possible and integration of local traditions and culture can be initiated; however, further knowledge sharing is necessary so that systematic plans to penetrate new markets would be possible; implementing already existing knowledge of partners would be of great value
2006	Lemelin	The Tourism Intelligence Network: The Quebec Source for Information on the Evolving Tourism Industry	Case study of a concept, which is called TIN (Tourism Information Network)	Tourism Information Network through knowledge sharing and creation will create competitiveness advantage, while the development of new innovations and knowledge must be guaranteed so that maximizing the wealth of companies' stakeholders is guaranteed in the long-run; KM supports better decision-making	The Tourism Information Network is based on a concept that is quite specific for the Quebec Tourism Industry; by sharing and decimating knowledge (public good), the industry will cooperate better and increase competitiveness

2006	Pan, Scott & Law	Understanding and Sharing Knowledge of New Tourism Markets: The Example of Australia's Inbound Chinese Tourism	Qualitative study	Suggestions on how knowledge can be produced, where it can be made available and how this knowledge can be shared among members of the tourism industry, and between academics and the tourism industry	Industry and academic research helped to introduce relevant policies to regulate the Chinese market to Australia; however, the availability of knowledge does not always mean knowledge use; further research will be necessary to capitalize on the overall Chinese market
2006	Pearce & Benckendorff	Benchmarking, Usable Knowledge and Tourist Attractions	Qualitative study through empirical approach towards knowledge acquisition; supporting data through large survey scale	Identification of exceptional and particular needs of the attractions sector for comprehensive and comparative information on parallel operations. the study defined and expressed four different kinds of benchmarking and examined the opportunity of an empirical approach to knowledge acquisition	Study provided a very reliable example on how to access graphical information and can be seen as an example for the knowledge communication process; additionally, it was argued that distinctions should be drawn between the findings on knowledge made by analysts and actual meeting the

knowledge
expectations/needs of
managers

2006	Scott & Laws	Knowledge Sharing in Tourism and Hospitality	Qualitative study comparing studies of fellow research studies published	Knowledge sharing takes place through social aspects and managerial knowledge systems; knowledge sharing would raise the problematic of control and power in regards who is supposed to use and how this person is supposed to use it	Study identified new directions for future research such as understanding the power of knowledge sharing in the tourism industry and how tacit knowledge can be localized.; future research will have to be focused on knowledge sharing through organizational functioning, and how the tourism industry networks and clusters at the scale of destination management and the scale of operational levels.
------	--------------	--	--	--	--

2006	Woods & Deegan	The Fuchsia Destination Quality Brand: Low on Quality Assurance, High on Knowledge Sahring	Case study based on Fuchsia, West Cork, Ireland	Knowledge sharing system could be of great need and success when associated with quality so that better brand recognition by customers will take place	KM system proved that customers would not necessary pay a membership for the assurance of quality of the brand but they would pay a membership fee so that they can to be part of a knowledge sharing network that would be beneficial to their needs; further advantages also showed that these customers' behavior and trends were not related to quality assurance but knowledge sharing within a powerful destination network system
------	----------------	--	---	--	--

2006	Zehrer & Pechlaner	Response Quality of E-Mail Inquiries - A Driver for Knowledge Management in Tourism Organizations?	Collection of data through a two-year e-mail inquiry	Knowledge management by accessing information through e-mail inquiries; advancements in information technology allowed hotel companies to access relevant information via internet	Results show that the following problems occurred: inefficient knowledge management among employees, only large hotel organizations have the funds available to afford more capabilities for e-mail inquiry responses, and that small organizations should cooperate with other each other to implement higher quality standards and to work on a more professional day-to-day basis
2006	Hallin & Marnburg	Knowledge Management in the Hospitality Industry: A Review of Empirical Research	Survey of empirical KM research in the hospitality field; survey was conducted by a database search tool	Nineteen empirical studies were analyzed in juxtaposition using static versus dynamic perspectives on knowledge management; additionally, the overall value and quality of the empirical articles were then compared and measured with relevant theory-of-science criteria	Five out of the 19 studies were of high research quality offering good material for future research studies; 14 studies showed that empirical KM research is limited, inconclusive, low generalization and testability; future

research in the field of knowledge management in the hospitality industry needed to provide material that would be beneficial for researchers and practitioners

2006	Xiao & Smith	The Use of Tourism Knowledge: Research Propositions	Utilization literature focusing on identifying this knowledge use in a conceptual framework	Interest in knowledge management for practitioners and academics because there has been a lack in KM research in the tourism industry; this study took a closer look on how practitioners have applied knowledge management for decision-making and problem solving	Practical approach in this study was deliberate and faced limitations; research has the potential to contribute to the utilization and tourism industry.
2008	Shaw & Williams	Knowledge Transfer and Management in Tourism Organizations: An Emerging Research Agenda	Qualitative study on knowledge management and knowledge transfer	Further exploration of some of the most common mechanism/practice in knowledge management and means of knowledge transfer in the tourism industry	List of recent articles have evaluated different aspects of knowledge transfer; the authors emphasized the importance on innovations in the tourism sector, which should be considered in the overall knowledge management

framework

Conclusion

The taxonomy approach to review KM research studies in hospitality and tourism did not reveal any significant findings in terms of the direction of KM research in hospitality. The studies included in the taxonomy provided numerous examples to justify the pursuit of KM research in the hospitality industry. Most of the published research identified in this study were focused on the 'discovery' of KM applications and were of exploratory nature. Unlike some of the KM research in other disciplines, there was no empirical research on KM in hospitality. None of the studies provided quantitative evidence to demonstrate the impact of KM on organizations. Instead, the themes included perceptions of management and potential uses of KM practices in tourism and hospitality.

Overall, the taxonomy approach used offered an outlook on ongoing KM research in hospitality. The analysis could be helpful for understanding how hospitality focused KM research is different or similar in comparison to other disciplines' research studies on KM.

Recommendation

Future research could continue to document KM research in hospitality. Meaningful patterns that clearly define the status quo and direction of KM research in hospitality and tourism could emerge in the future. A more thorough review of literature could help improve future taxonomy analysis of this topic. Also, criteria to be included in the taxonomy could be expanded to help strengthen the content analysis.

References

- Abel, M. (2008). Competencies management and learning organizational memory. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 12(6), 15. Retrieved from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1572050211&Fmt=7&clientId=65345&RQT=309&VName=PQD>
- Alavi, M., & Leidner, D. E. (2001, March). Review: Knowledge Management and Knowledge Management Systems: Conceptual Foundations and Research Issues. , 25(1), 107-136. Retrieved from MIS Quarterly.
- Bennet, A., & Bennet, D. (2008). The fallacy of knowledge reuse: Building sustainable knowledge[1]. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 12(5), 21. Retrieved from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1572050101&Fmt=7&clientId=65345&RQT=309&VName=PQD>
- Bouncken, R. B. (2002). Knowledge management for quality improvements in hotels. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 3(3), 25-59. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=hjh&AN=11424498&site=ehost-live>
- Bouncken, R. B., & Sungsoo Pyo, R. B. (2002). Achieving competitiveness through knowledge management. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 3(3), 1-4. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=hjh&AN=11424496&site=ehost-live>

- Civi, Emin. (2000). Journal of Marketing Intelligence and Planning. *Title: Knowledge Management as a competitive asset: a review*, 18(4), 166 - 174. Retrieved from Emerald
- Clark, Jr, T. D., Jones, M. C., & Armstrong, C. P. (2007, September). The Dynamic Structure of Management Support Systems: Theory Development, Research Focus, and Direction. , 31(3), 579-615. Retrieved from MIS Quarterly.
- Cooper, C. (2006). Knowledge management and tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 33(1), 47-64.
- De Pablos, P. O., & Lytras, M. D. (2008). Competencies and human resource management: Implications for organizational competitive advantage. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 12(6),48.Retrieved from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1572050231&Fmt=7&clientId=65345&RQT=309&VName=PQD>
- Groff, T.R. and Jones, T.P. (2003), Introduction to Knowledge Management: KM in Business, Elsevier, Amsterdam
- Gronau, N. (2002). The knowledge Café—A knowledge management system and its application to hospitality and tourism. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 3(3), 75-88. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=hjh&AN=11424500&site=ehost-live>
- Haag, W. (2000, February). *Knowledge Worker*. Retrieved October 25, 2007, from http://wiki.ittoolbox.com/index.php/Knowledge_workers
- Halal, William E., The Logic of Knowledge: How a Knowledge Economy Differs from

a Capital Economy, unpublished paper, George Washington University, Washington, DC

Hallin, C. A., & Marnburg, E. (2008). Knowledge management in the hospitality industry: A review of empirical research. *Tourism Management*, 29(2), 366-381.

Hattendorf, M. (2002). Knowledge supply chain matrix approach for balanced knowledge management: An airline industry firm case. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 3(3), 61-73. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=hjh&AN=11424499&site=ehost-live>

Hawkins, D. E. (2006). Transferring tourism knowledge: The role of higher education institutions. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 7(1), 13-27. doi:10.1300/J162v07n01-02

Hudspith, D., & Ingram, H. (2002). Delivering management development through action learning. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 14(7), 368. Retrieved from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=209626721&Fmt=7&clientId=65345&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

Lebe, S. S. (2006). European spa world: Chances for the project's sustainability through application of knowledge management. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 7(1), 137-146. doi:10.1300/J162v07n01-08

- Massey, A. P., Montoya-Weiss, M. M., & O'Driscoli, T. M. (2002, September). Knowledge Management in Pursuit of Performance: Insight from Nortel Networks. , 26(3), 269-289. Retrieved from MIS Quarterly.
- Maier, R (2007): Knowledge Management Systems: Information And Communication Technologies for Knowledge Management. 3rd edition, Berlin: Springer.
- Pan, G. W., Scott, N., & Laws, E. (2006). Understanding and sharing knowledge of new tourism markets: The example of australia' s inbound chinese tourism. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 7(1), 99-116. doi:10.1300/J162v07n01-06
- Pearce, P., & Benckendorff, P. (2006). Benchmarking, usable knowledge and tourist attractions. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 7(1), 29-52. doi:10.1300/J162v07n01-03
- Pyo, S. (2005). Knowledge map for tourist destinations—needs and implications. *Tourism Management*, 26(4), 583-594.
- Schultze, U. Leidner D E 2002 Studying Knowledge Management in Information System Research: Discourses and Theoretical Assumptions.)Schultze, U., & Leidner, D. E. (2002, Septmber). Studying Knowledge Management in Information System Research:Discourses and Theoretical Assumptions. , 26(3), 213- 242. Retrieved from MIS Quarterly.
- Scott, N., & Laws, E. (2006). Knowledge sharing in tourism and hospitality. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 7(1), 1-12. doi:10.1300/J162v07n01-01
- Shaw, G., & Williams, A. Knowledge transfer and management in tourism organisations: An emerging research agenda. *Tourism Management, In Press, Corrected Proof*

Skyrme, D. J. (1999). *KM Basics*. Retrieved November 11, 2007, from

<http://www.skyrme.com/resource/kmbasics.htm>

Skyrme, D. J. (1999): *Knowledge Networking: Creating the Collaborative Enterprise*,
Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann

Tan, S. S., Teo. H. H., Tan, B. C, and Wei, K.K. "Developing a Preliminary Framework for Knowledge Management in Organizations." in *Proceedings of the Fourth Americas Conference on information Systems*, E. Hoadley and I. Benbasat (eds), Baltimore. MD. August 1998, pp. 629-631

Yang, J., & Wan, C. -. C. (2004). Advancing organizational effectiveness and knowledge management implementation. *Tourism Management*, 25(5), 593-601

Woods, M., & Deegan, J. (2006). The fuchsia destination quality brand: Low on quality assurance, high on knowledge sharing. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 7(1), 75-98. doi:10.1300/J162v07n01-05

Yang, J., & Wan, C. -. C. (2004). Advancing organizational effectiveness and knowledge management implementation. *Tourism Management*, 25(5), 593-601.

Zehrer, A., & Pechlaner, H. (2006). Response quality of E-mail Inquiries—A driver for knowledge management in the tourism organization? *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 7(1), 53-73. doi:10.1300/J162v07n01-04 ff