

The knowledge elements impact on the performance of the travel and tourism companies: From the view point of employees

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Abstract

This study is based on one basic idea; namely identifying the elements of knowledge that can lead to the success of travel and tourism companies in their performance and maintaining market competitiveness through the continued process of selling the product or by raising its sales rates. It has been shown that this depends on three essential elements of knowledge represented in the knowledge obtained by the company through the experience of labor and then through the software, the hardware and the equipment of the modern technological used in the company that contribute to the investment and the utilization of this knowledge in facilitating the work, and finally the communication channels through which a base of information essential for building knowledge in a private company is provided.

The research includes two aspects, the theoretical side, which relied on a set of references and scientific books to get the preliminary information about knowledge in general, and the practical side that was done through the distribution of 60 questionnaires, of which were recovered 54, after the verification 3 questionnaires has been neglected for non-completion of the answers and therefore the number of reliable questionnaires became 51.

The researchers made the procedures of correcting the tool and entering the data into the computer, they have as well analyzed the results of the questionnaire to a set of conclusions that contributed to the access to achieve the objectives of the research and finding solutions and alternatives to the problem of the study through the formulation of a set of recommendations and practical proposals that fit The nature of this study, which also serves the research community.

Key words: Travel and tourism companies, knowledge management, employees' expertise, communication channel.



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INTRODUCTION

Travel and tourism can be defined as the place where a person can get information or technical advice and make the necessary arrangements to travel by land, air and sea to anywhere in the world. (Saidi 2009 p 55), so the success of these companies depends on the amount of accurate and clear available information and the success of these companies needs organized information management the management can use and benefit from which is a key requirement for decision-making, and also to develop a sound future plan to help achieving the goals readily and easily. The work of these companies requires the use of information permanently and continuously, so as to maintain the continuity and maintain the performance of the job duties clearly which requires the availability of large amounts of information on an ongoing basis (Lozi, 2001).

Business organizations have become a major beneficiary of information technology and its mechanisms and improved their performance and offer their services. In the knowledge economy, the productivity associated with the knowledge and the employees where their mental and educational capabilities is embodied and not in the physical susceptibility, these workers make up the company's capital knowledge, which represents the actual knowledge and power of the company or a common knowledge shared by workers which creates the wealth of the organization. That knowledge capital is an important source irreplaceable in companies; the importance of knowledge came through the tremendous growth in the field of information and the increasing role in the space of a web-mail which gives the ability of the company to be linked in any place any time in the outside world and all its components (Ghalibi, 2007). In relation to the areas regarding the benefit from the knowledge management is that it is becoming the

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heart of e-business in terms of recruitment of knowledge assets in the various business opportunities for the development of the company's revenue and expanding their markets.

Problem of the study

Most Jordanian travel and tourism companies suffer from the problem of exploitation of the sources of knowledge available to them to raise their level of performance, whether these sources are available information in the documents, programs and computer equipment owned by the company or knowledge available to workers who have experience enough for the success and development of the performance of these companies or modern and sophisticated communication channels, and all this leads to the failure of the performance of these companies in achieving their goals.

The importance of the study

The world in the recent times is giving a great importance to the issue of knowledge and the advanced countries are proactive regarding the subject of knowledge and are pursuing of all forces to provide enough scientific knowledge and economic development whatever the form of this development is, whether it is in the productive sector or services sector where this knowledge and its evolution is essential in the work. We speak here about the sector where knowledge is a fundamental pillar in its work, survival and operations in an economical and influential way, we find that determining the impact of the importance of knowledge and its effect on the performance of these companies through the creation of the relationship between knowledge and its importance and the success of the performance of these companies gives us a clear process on the impact and importance of knowledge in the success of the tourism sector as an influential economic sector in particular, and we are talking about the developing countries and not the advanced industrial economies and technologies.

Objectives of the study

This study aims to reach a set of goals affecting the travel and tourism sector, particularly in the development of performance of the travel and tourism companies as a main foundation in the touristic activity, from the essential and important work it provides in which its needed for the sector to grow economically and influentially in the country's income and these goals are:

- 1 - Statement of the size and of the effect of knowledge in the performance of travel and tourism companies from the point of view of workers and its impact on the achievement of its objectives.
- 2 - To identify the most important elements needed by these companies to get the knowledge to help them in their performance to stay in the market competition.
- 3 - Statement of the impact of the working experiences in addressing the weaknesses of work and contribute to the success of the performance of these companies.

HYPOTHESES

Major premise

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the size of knowledge and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$

Sub-hypotheses:

The first sub-hypothesis:

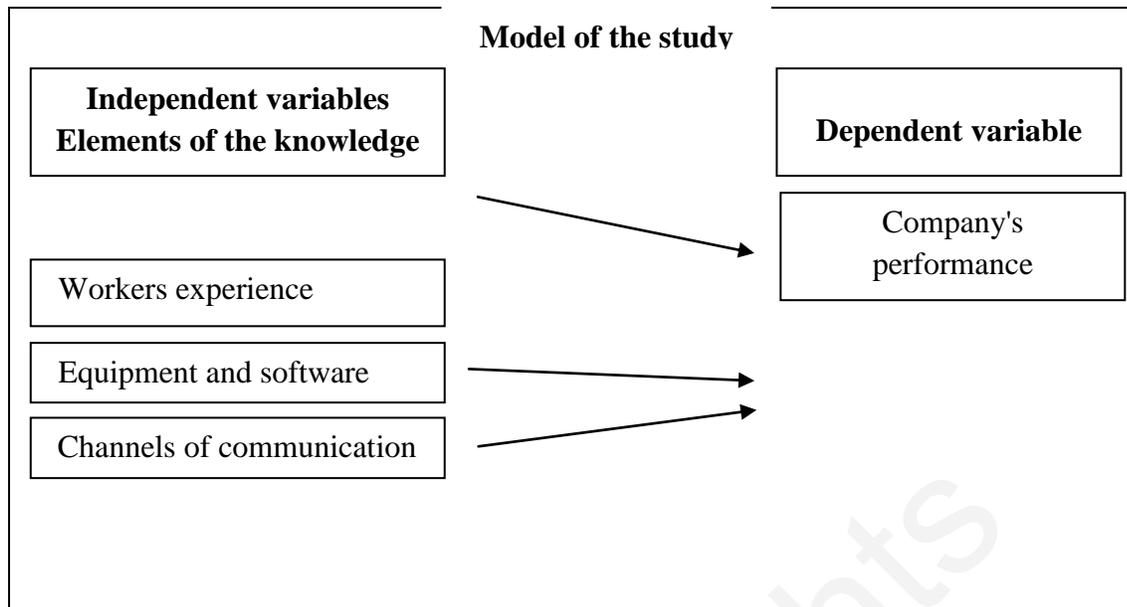
HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the workers experience and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$

Second sub-hypothesis:

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the quality of the available equipment and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$

The third sub-hypothesis:

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the diversity of communication channels and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$.



DEFINITION OF KNOWLEDGE

The definition of the term knowledge came in several forms, including

First: Set of definitions based on the explicit knowledge and information technology, where the advocates of information technology tend to the explicit knowledge and try to reduce it to the level of information, for this they tend to the following definitions in knowledge: - (Star, 2008).

- Knowledge is the experience that can be connected and shared, or the information in the activity.
- Knowledge consists of data or information that has been organized and processed to transfer the understanding and the accumulated experience and education, which applies in the current problem or activity.
- Human knowledge offers a way that can be cured by computer.
- Knowledge is the information usable in solving a specific problem.
- Knowledge is understandable, analyzed and usable information.

The advocates of this vision believe that the knowledge of the company can be transformed into a knowledge base which is a group of facts and the relationship between them, or is a model for identifying humanity which is used by an expert system, instead of working mentally, it is a systems of knowledge and an information system that helps workers in the completion of their routine work as well as in the generation of new knowledge to this base.

Second: definitions based on the implied knowledge in the heads of individuals. These definitions focus on the characteristics of implied knowledge that can be shared and learned but it's difficult to express them or to transfer to others where they now define it as:

- Knowledge is what remains at the head of the individual.
- Knowledge is the prevailing mix of experience, learning, proactive information, expert insights that provide a framework for the assessment and reporting new experiences and information.

Both sides represent knowledge systems in the company and are the ones which knowledge work is poured into, the cognitive work is the essence of the work of members of knowledge who need it in the process of transferring knowledge (collection, access, sharing, publishing, and knowledge generation) to information technology and mechanisms, rules, routines and regulatory components of entrance coding governing access and use.

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

1 - External sources

Are those sources that appear in the corporate environment surrounding, and that depends on the type of relationship with other leading companies in the field, or belonging to groups that facilitate the knowledge cloning process, and examples of these sources are libraries and the Internet, and the sector that the company, competitors, suppliers, customers, universities, scientific research centers and patents of Foreign Affairs operate in, the environment is the external source of information and knowledge, where individuals work at various regulatory levels and through one or both perceptions (audio, visual, tactile, taste, smell) to acquire data and incidents from the environment and through their cognitive and comprehensive perceptions like (meditation, understanding and causation and governance) where they can handle this data and turn it into information, and through experience, intelligence and learning, thinking individuals can interpret these information and put in the sense of turning into knowledge, and the difference in the level of this knowledge depends on the difference in the means and perceptions mentioned above.

2- Internal sources

The internal sources are the experiences of members of the companies accumulated on various topics and their ability to take advantage of the learning of individuals and groups and the company as a whole, and the operations and technology adopted. Examples internal sources are: interior strategy and conferences, electronic libraries, learning classroom, dialogue, internal operations of the mines through intelligence, reasons, experience and skills, or through learning by doing research or internal and patents. The growing perception of knowledge is linked to the progress in information technology, especially the Internet, but some confirm that the knowledge does not lie in the collection of information nor in the area of information security as a source of knowledge, and there two assumptions (Star, 2008)

First: Assuming that the search for and development of information leads to knowledge, and this knowledge assigned to research will be used to improve goods and services.

Second: It is assumed that the quality of knowledge and its use are independent from their sources, and that the information provided to the decision-maker to be from other sources.

It must be pointed out that the integration of the components of business majors (strategic, individuals, process, technology) with the principal information technology (systems, applications, data) is through cognitive maps which constitute an important source for capturing the knowledge phenomenon, and an indication to indicate the tacit knowledge, the work is associated to knowledge-makers who occupy advanced positions in the operations department, and the knowledge is generated during a business processes important sources of internal knowledge through interaction with the knowledge stored in people's minds .

RECENT TRENDS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The concept of "knowledge" is an old term; human knowledge is accompanied since open consciousness and evolved with him from his primitive level and widening its views to become what it is now.

The new in this concept is the size of the impact on the economic and the social life and on the human growth, and certainly that a tremendous progress and development in information technology was witnessed this century, which is the biggest change in life which enabled the human of imposing control over the nature, and so became an evolution in the field of knowledge that is more influential in the life of the other physical factors.

Despite the growing interest in the concept of knowledge management, there is no specific definition for it, but it has been described as those processes that help companies to generate knowledge its selection, organization, use, and dissemination, and finally transferring the important information and expertise possessed by the company and which are necessary for the activities of different administrative like taking decisions, solve problems, learning, and strategic planning. It is that process that institutions from which to find the value of intellectual elements based on the knowledge in order to achieve best practices. (Star, 2008)

"The concept of knowledge management is based on providing information and making it available to all employees of the company, and the beneficiaries outside, based on the maximum utilization of the information available in the company, and individual experiences inherent in the minds of its employees.

So, one of the most important advantages of the application of this concept is the best investment of the intellectual capital, and turning it into a productive force contributing to the development of the performance of the individual, and raising the efficiency of the company.

The American administration "Peter Drucker" sees that the world is now dealing with knowledge industries where ideas are their products and data is the raw materials and the human mind is its tool, to some extent knowledge became the main component of the contemporary economic and social system.

It is no doubt that information technology plays a pivotal role in knowledge management programs through its ability to speed up the production process, the transfer of knowledge and knowledge management tools helping in the collection and organization of knowledge groups making this knowledge available through participation.

One of the most important elements of successful companies is their ability to catch up with the latest changes and maintaining their ability to compete and survive in the market in light of the revolution taking place in the era of information technology. The massive buildup of information and the ease of getting it have led to an urgent need to organize and manage this information, and the institutions that employ a full balance of collective intelligence has to make the most of them in achieving the strategic objectives of the institutions, and use it to support decision-making. (Salman, 2009).

KNOWLEDGE OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

The tourism industry has become the most important element of the economies of the countries, and has become truly one of the main sources of income for many countries of the world, and is already the main generator the hard currency for in those countries.

Tourism is mainly dependent on the services provided by the travel and tourism companies and the rest of the other tourist sectors, the more the tour operators are active and effective and covering various different desires of tourists or residents in any country, this will be returned as benefit for the tourism industry.

The human and material resources consist one of the most important components of this industry, and the existence of effective and successful management of these resources and using them well to achieve the goals which it was created this industry. In addition, the tourism is considered as an industry multiple doorways leading to the advancement of many industries and other services, in what became known as the multiplier effect of tourism activity and this is what lies in the great importance of tourism.

The tourism industry involves many peculiarities that distinguishes them from other industries and make them differ greatly from other human activities (Hourri + Tai 2009)

The most important qualities of the industry that it is serving millions of people, and will continue the prosperity of the world economy, to the growth of tourism and increasing the number of and tourist spending during the next twenty years.

As shown, according to the expectations of the World Tourism Organization, the number of passengers will increase to one and a half billion passengers in 2020, while tourism revenues have reached about 1600 billion dollars in 2010 and will reach two thousand billion dollars in 2020, operate millions of workers in the globalization will lead to increasing exchanges and openness, and reducing the role of the state, and the increasing role of multinational corporations, and ease the movement of individuals, companies and capital.

IMPORTANCE OF THE KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM COMPANIES

The most important elements of the success of travel and tourism companies at the present time are the ability to catch up with the latest changes, maintaining their competitiveness in the use of information and turning it into knowledge among individuals, employees and programmers of action for the company to survive in the market in light of the revolution taking place in our present era of information technology. The massive buildup of information has led to an urgent need to organize and manage this information, the travel and tourism companies have to employ all of its cognitive capital (Knowledge Capital) to make the most of it to achieve the strategic objectives of these companies, as the hospitality industry by nature and its components and depreciable outcome, is a knowledge-intensive industry.

From the above we can say that this industry is dealing with huge numbers and different types and forms of mixed information about tourists, tourist destinations in its difference, excellence, prices and types of services provided, as well as information and statistics on the producers and workers, processors and conducting studies and research to the extent of satisfaction achieved with customers about the products and services provided to them, all this indicates that the tourism industry has become a knowledge-intensive industry, and as we have said, the information from the knowledge base, whether internal or external, and that the basis of this information is available data for this industry.

PREVIOUS STUDIES

1 - **Study (Zaydi 2009)**: Zaydi study aimed to define the concept of knowledge management and its impact in the management of human resources, through the collection, studying, analyzing the theoretical literature related to knowledge management and its relationship to human resources management, the study has concluded some results including:

- That existing knowledge is the most important intangible, as most of the institutions have the knowledge but without or using it in an inappropriate manner.
- Knowledge management is necessary for administrative activities such as taking decisions and solving problems, planning and learning.
- Knowledge management requires an unusual pattern of conscious leadership interested in the application of knowledge management and to encourage cooperation, and also requires a flexible organizational structure horizontally rather than vertically.
- The importance of information technology is in the application of knowledge management.

2 - **Study (Hassan, 2008)**: The study aimed to propose educational management strategy to increase the added value of using knowledge management in the private schools in the city of Amman. The study concluded that the degree of understanding of the concept of knowledge management and its practice in private schools in the city of Amman medium in all areas. Management strategy has been proposed to increase the educational value added by using the knowledge management in the private schools in the city of Amman.

3 - **Study (Baydas 2007)**: The study aimed to identify the reality of the use of the methods and programs of modern scientific management knowledge in decision making by the Jordanian telecom companies and getting to know the obstacles and challenges facing the use of these methods and programs of modern scientific management knowledge in Jordanian telecommunications companies. The study found that the most important obstacles and challenges facing the use of modern methods and programs for knowledge management is bad planning and lack of independent budget for the knowledge management project and the lack of support from senior management and improper choice of a knowledge management team.

The study recommended the adoption of proper planning and accurate prediction of the aspects related to knowledge management and the proper selection of the knowledge management team and providing adequate commitment and the required budget.

4 - **Study (Abu Eid, 2007)**: It is a working paper and descriptive case of adoption of the principles of the knowledge management in the Dubai Government, that has aimed to describe and analyze the foundations and concepts of knowledge management, and its tools and applications in the government sector in the city of Dubai as a model in the Gulf region mentioning the most important initiatives and plans adopted by the Emirate of Dubai in transforming its economy into a knowledge-based economy model as exposed to what knowledge management is, and the knowledge to divisions explicit and hidden.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

This research uses quantitative research approach through which will be finding a solution to the problem of the study through the study of quantitative variables (numeric) and by relying on the numeric data and linking them with a view to the conclusion of the equations of a numeric relationship according to specific equation.

The study population

The study population in this research is workers in the travel and tourism companies in the city of Amman.

The study sample

The study sample was selected from managers and workers who are in the travel and tourism companies in Amman. And this sample will be a 60 director and officer and department head.

Data collection method

The questionnaire will be used as a method of data collection, designed by the researcher and adopted to collect primary data required by the nature of the problem, and included (34) questions covering the research problem, this form has undergone tests including virtual honesty tests and it was introduced to a number of professors that gave their comments and views in and each had a deep impact on the revision and the redrafting of some paragraphs of the resolution, to make it more accurate in the variables to be measured, and therefore the data collection tool has achieved at least, virtual honesty and sincerity of content.

DATA ANALYSIS

This study aimed to identify the views of the members of the study sample with respect to the impact of sources of knowledge to achieve the company's goals, and to achieve this goal a tool was developed to solicit the views of members of the study sample, and 60 questionnaires were distributed of which 54 were recovered, after which the verification has neglected 3 questionnaires for non-completion of answers and therefore the number of treatable questionnaires became 51 questionnaires and then the correct procedures and tools and to enter data into a computer, and then making the appropriate statistical analysis to test the hypotheses were made.

After applying the study tool, and collecting the responses of the study sample, and turning their responses to raw degrees, and then the frequencies, percentages were found, also the test internal consistency Cronbach alpha, arithmetic means, standard deviations and multiple and simple regression were used to test the hypotheses to find the impact of knowledge in achieving the objectives of tourism companies

Stability testing tool study

The test (alpha Krobnach) was used to measure the stability of the measurement tool where the value of alpha = 88.7% for all paragraphs of the resolution, which is an excellent ratio that is higher than the accepted 60%.

Characteristics of the study sample

The frequencies and percentages of the characteristics of the study sample were as follows:

- 1) **Sex:** Table (1) shows the distribution of the study sample according to sex.

Table (1) Distribution of the sample by gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	29	56.9
Female	22	43.1
Total	51	%100.0

Note that 56.9% of the study sample is males, while the percentage of females is 43.1% of the study sample.

- 2) **Age:** Table (2) distribution of study sample by age.

Table (2) Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 30%	24	%47.1
30 40 years	21	%41.2
More than 40 years	6	%11.8
Total	51	%100

The table above indicates that the highest proportion of individuals of age is less than 30 years and reached 47.1% and the proportion of individuals in the age group 30-40 years amounted to 41.2%, while individuals in the age group over 40 years was less ratio amounted to 11.8% of the total study sample.

3) Qualification: Table (3) the distribution of the study sample by Qualification.

Table (3) Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	3	%5.9
Bachelors	39	%76.5
Masters	9	%17.6
Total	51	%100

The above table indicates that the highest percentage of individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree stood at 76.5%, followed by who obtain masters and amounted to 17.6%, while carriers of the diploma amounted to 5.9% of the total study sample did not contain a another category the Qualification variable.

4) Job Title: Table (4) distribution of study sample by Job Title.

Table (4) Job Title

Job	Frequency	Percentage
Employee	32	%62.7
Department head assistant	7	%13.7
Department head	4	%7.8
Assistant manager	5	%9.8
Manager	3	%5.9
Total	51	%100

The table above indicates that the highest proportion of employees stood at 62.7%, followed by the proportion of Department head assistant, reaching 13.7%, then assistant manager of the rate of 9.8%, followed by Department head 7.8%, and finally, the percentage of the manager level made 5.9% of the total study sample.

5) Experience: Table (5) distribution of study sample by Experience.

Table (5) Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 3 years	16	%31.4
3/5 years	18	%35.3
5/8 years	13	%25.5
More than 8 years	4	%7.8
Total	51	%100

The table above indicates that the highest rate was 3-5 years experience and reached 35.3% followed by the proportion of experience less than 3 years and amounted to 31.4%, and then the proportion of experience of 5-8 years and reached 25.5%, and finally the proportion experience more than 8 years and reached 7.8% of the total study sample.

Outputs of the study:

The following percentages were adopted in determining the degrees of importance were the quintet scale was used the study:

- Standard mean (less than 3.00): Low.
- Standard mean (3-3.5): Average.

- Standard mean (higher than 3.5): High.

Testing hypotheses

Major premise:

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the size of knowledge and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$

To study the hypothesis the regression testing was used to analyze the medium of the study sample answers and the extent of the existence of a statistically significant effect between applying the quality management and developing the performance of the hotel organizations at $0.5 \geq \alpha$.

Table (6) Regression testing

Nil Hypothesis result	F Indexed	F Calculated	R Determination coefficient	R2 Correlation coefficient	Significant value
Reject	2.198	9.187	0.608	0.370	0.000

Table (6) shows the impact of knowledge on the company's success in achieving its objectives as the results showed statistically significant impact, reaching a correlation coefficient of R (0.608) at statistically significant value ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), the coefficient of determination R2 reached (0.370), and the morality of this effect is enhanced by a high value of calculated f, which amounted (9.187) which is higher than the indexed value (2.198), and at the level of statistical significance (0.000) which is less than the specified value 0.05, and therefore we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the nil hypothesis.

Sub-hypotheses:

The first sub-hypothesis:

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the workers experience and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$.

Second sub-hypothesis:

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the quality of the available equipment and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$.

The third sub-hypothesis:

HO: There is no statistically significant relationship between the diversity of communication channels and the success of the company in achieving its goals at $0.5 \geq \alpha$.

Table (7) Regression testing of the relationship between the volume of knowledge and success of the organization in achieving its goals

Sub hypothesis		Significant value	Indexed T	Correlation coefficient β	Result of nil hypothesis
Independent variables	Dependent variable				
Employees experience	The travel and tourism company success in achieving its goals	0.023	2.357	0.316	Reject
Quality of equipment		0.010	2.702	0.416	Reject
Communication channels diversity and evolving		0.000	3.526	0.521	Reject

The table (7) shows the existence of the statistically significant effect between the experiences of workers and the success of the organization in the performance at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), as the value of (T) (2.357) which is higher than their indexed value (1.89), and at the level of statistical significance that amounted to (0.023) which is less than the specified value 0.05, and therefore we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject one that is, there is a statistically significant effect between the experiences of workers and the success of the company's performance in achieving its objectives.

In addition, as shown in Table (7) shows the existence of the effect statistically significant relation between the quality of equipment and software available in the company and the success of the company's performance in achieving its objectives at the indication level statistical ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), as the value of (T) (2.702) which is higher than the indexed value (1.89) at the level of statistical significance that was (0.010) which is less than the specified value 0.05, and therefore we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the nil one that is, there is no statistically significant impact between the quality of equipment and software available in the company and the success of the company's performance in achieving its objectives at the indication level statistical ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

As indicated in table (7), there's a statistically significant effect between the development and the channels of communication and the success of the company's performance in achieving its objectives at the indication level statistical ($\alpha \leq 0.05$), as the value of (T) (3.526) which is higher than their indexed value (1.89), and the level of statistical significance was (0.000) which is less than the specified value 0.05, and therefore we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the nil one, such as there's no statistically significant impact between the evolution of the channels of communication and the success of the organization's performance in achieving its objectives at the indication level statistical ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

RESULTS

- 1 - The existing knowledge in workers can be used to access good performance and achieve the goals of the company if it was used properly and in a scientific manner and this was confirmed by the results of the first hypothesis.
- 2 - The quality of equipment and software in the company increases the knowledge of the company and thus help to achieve a high performance level to achieve the objectives of the company and this has been proven by the second hypothesis.
- 3 - The development of channels of communication allows the company to reach the level of high performance assisting in the expansion, enforcement and access to its current and future markets, helping them to achieve their goals which was confirmed by the results of the third hypothesis
- 4 - The tourism industry serving millions of people making their companies need to take advantage of existing knowledge sources has to improve its performance to meet the requests of these millions of tourists.
- 5 - Knowledge that a fundamental pillar in the tourism activity cannot be ignored because the industry cannot grow without it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 - The management of knowledge in travel and tourism companies of all types and sizes is a major determinant of the domestic and global competition, where the survival of these companies in the interface needs energy and a large volume of training, organization and development of their employees.
- 2 - The knowledge management in these companies needs experience, capital and information where without knowledge there will be no change for the better, but change for the worst, leading to the failure of companies in achieving their goals, losing in the market.
- 3 - It is necessary to focus on corporate values and the values of employees and knowledge management and taking attention to their participation through adopting methods of stimulating that serve their initiatives and free thinking.
- 4 - Travel and tourism companies must work to acquire the latest equipment and software that facilitates the process of dealing with modern knowledge and use in the development of performance and employees.

5 - Attention must be paid to the development and the and diversification of communication channels that make the company in a position to benefit from the use of modern technologies in the access to desired markets and this is what leads to successful business performance and success in achieving in achieving their goals.

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