

Knowledge management performance review at Syarikat Air Johor Berhad (SAJH) in Malaysia



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ABSTRACT

Syarikat Air Johor Holdings (SAJH) has been given the concession by Johor state government to provide and supply clean, treated water to consumer in the southern region. Without any competition, has led to not encouraging SAJH to operate with high level of efficiency which is being achieved by other company in the private sector. The lack of competitiveness has caused SAJH employees to be at a static state and not able to capture as well transfer its employee knowledge, which are close to a retiring period which can cause years of valuable knowledge and experience will be loss across SAJH organizational structure. To overcome this, SAJH has took the initiatives to implement knowledge management concept in order to cost effectively capture and manage its tacit knowledge and then recorded it which are then can be transform into explicit knowledge. This explicit knowledge can then be used and the benefit can be shared through the entire SAJH technical staff. SAJH has first officially launched KM initiatives on 1st April 2008. Since the launch, several new initiatives has been added to the program but until now there has not been any review on the current progress of the knowledge management program. This research is carried out to address these problems and review the current performance of the knowledge management program at SAJH. The method used for this study was an online questionnaire and has been distributed to 40 respondents that have been directly involved in the KM initiatives at SAJH as the focused group of this study. From the findings of the respondents it can be concluded that the KM initiatives have been implemented and are performed to its intended objective with only few minor improvements to be done. And the online KM system which is 'i-water' should be further improved on its interface as currently it is not user friendly.

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1. Introduction

As mentioned by Dyer and Nobeoka (2000), Knowledge Management (KM) field has first started since in the mid-1990s. This follows with high-profile companies has started doing case studies on KM programs such as British Petroleum, Chevron, Xerox Corporation, Toyota and Dow Chemical Company where it has attracted the attentions of managers and consultants. With vast success stories of KM implementation, SAJH being in the water

utility industry are also do not want to be left behind and has taken the initiatives to develop its own Knowledge Management System (KMS) and implement KM initiatives within their organization.

SAJH has first officially launched KM initiatives on 1st April 2008. This launching ceremony was led by SAJH Operation Division General Manager, Ir Zainuddin Md Ghazali who was the SAJH Practice of Knowledge Management (POKM) Champion at that time. Since the launch, several new initiatives has been added to the program but until now there has not been any review been done on the current progress of the knowledge management program. This research is carried out to address these problems and review the current performance of the knowledge management program at SAJH. The data for this research will be gained by SAJH online

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communities for their Knowledge Management practice which has been defined by Preece et al. (2003) as a group of people who interact in a virtual environment with a specific purpose that is supported by technology and are guided by norms and policies which is of great importance.

2. Research objective

This research are conducted with the aims of finding and analyzing the overall current performance of knowledge management initiatives that has been carried out since SAJH first launched and implement its knowledge management program in their organization. Rifat (2009) have highlighted that it could be difficult for an organization to track all of the available indicators thus have suggested specific indicators to work on hence the creation of the research objective as follows. The objectives of the study are:

1. Review and analyze the current state of KM initiatives at SAJH organization
2. Gain SAJH employees view and opinion regarding their readiness towards becoming an online communities
3. Review and analyze employee acceptance level towards KM initiatives implemented

3. Methodology

Conducting online research survey has advantages of reducing measurement error, missing data and non-respondent reduction as mention by Farrell and Petersen (2010). The research data collection tool is through an online questionnaire using Google consumer survey as it can be used without to pay for subscriptions. Duffy et al. (2005) has also quoted that online research have the key advantages of delivering data collection in a greater speed at lower cost. A group of 40 respondents has been selected among SAJH employee who has direct involvement in the KM initiatives at SAJH. It is important to gain their view on knowledge management current status. The framework for the development of the online questionnaire can be referred to Fig. 1. The completed online questionnaire interface can be referred to Fig. 2.

4. Results and discussion

The total number of response that has been gained is 30 responses out of the total number of 40 online questionnaires that has been invited, where 37% of the response comes from female employees and the remaining 63% of response comes from male employees which are shown in Fig. 3. Majority of respondents that participate in this research are from 25-34 years of age category with the percentage of 50%. The youngest respondent that has been captured in the research comes from 18-24 years category with a percentage of 7% from the total number of respondents shown in Fig. 4. With

50% of the respondents has been working with SAJH for up to 19 years, which record the highest figure in the service period category in this research shown in Fig. 5.

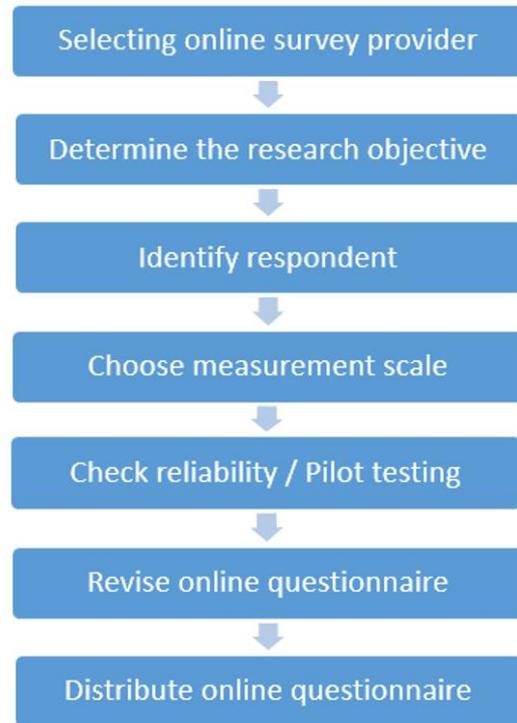


Fig. 1: Constructing online questionnaire framework

This shows that SAJH workforce comes from an early phase of working experience, which can be seen as a good opportunity for introducing new knowledge and relevant skills to them.

Table 1 shows the results for final section in this research, which require respondents to select activities listed in the table above and rank them based on the most important role that knowledge management plays a role in the activities mention above. The rank are started from number 1 which stands for none role played up to rank number 5 which stands for the most important role played in the activities. Five activities have been provided in the table for respondents to analyze and rank them accordingly. The data gained from this research for final section are then analyzed and sorted into a graphical graph shown in Fig. 6, which are further explained based on the findings from this research.

Table 1: Results for final section

Activities		1	2	3	4	5
1	Brainstorming ideas for new product development	0	1	3	16	10
2	Solving problems	0	3	1	9	17
3	Sharing knowledge with colleagues	0	1	5	11	13
4	Conducting a discussion with colleagues or customers	0	0	5	10	15
5	Managing your daily task	1	12	12	2	1

In Fig. 6, it shows the results for final section of this research. The results are started with activity 1 (A1) where 53% of the respondents have selected activity A1 into ranking number 5. Respondents have

collectively agreed that knowledge management plays an important role in brainstorming ideas for new product development discussion session.

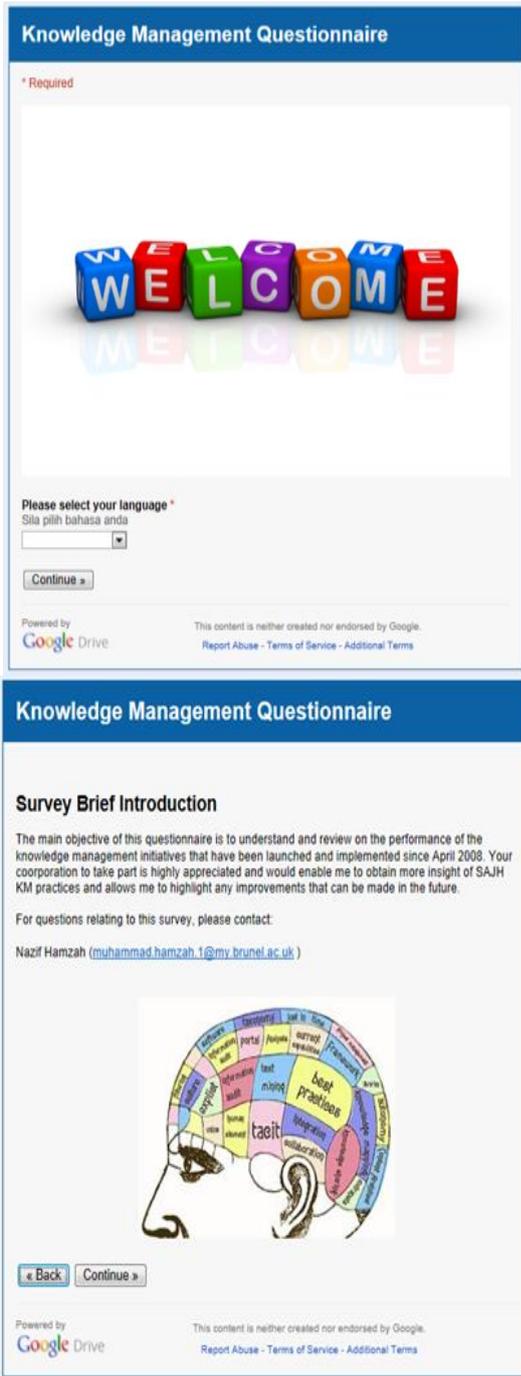


Fig. 2: Completed online questionnaire interface

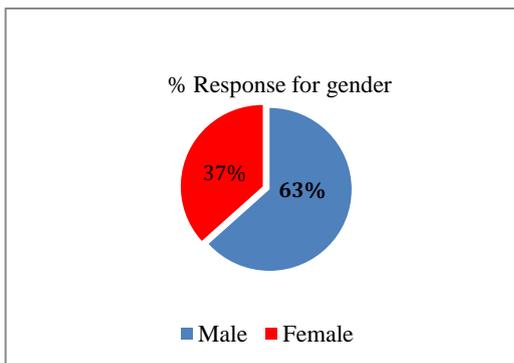


Fig. 3: Pie chart response % for gender

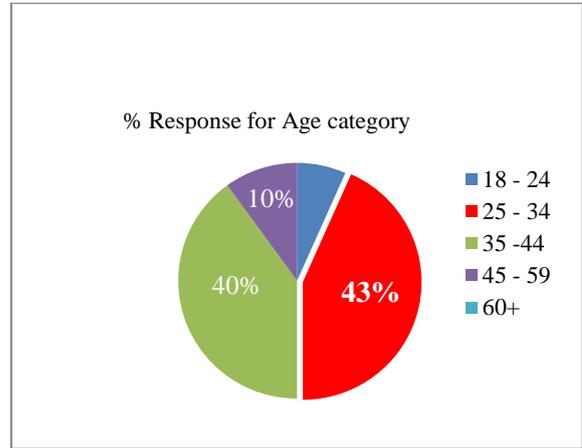


Fig. 4: Pie chart response % for age

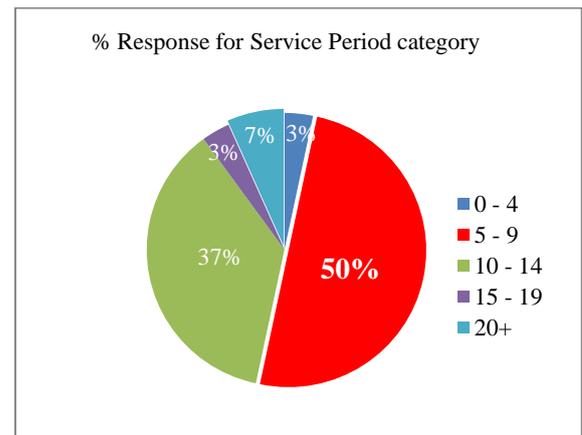


Fig. 5: Pie chart response according to service period

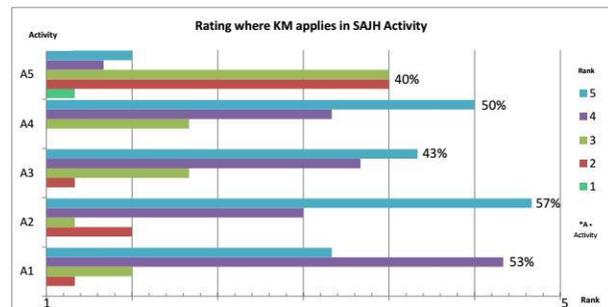


Fig. 6: Results for final section

Activity 2 (A2) which is solving problem has been ranked number 5 by 57% of the respondents to be the most important where knowledge managements play its role. While for activity 3 (A3) 43% of respondents have rank activity A3 into rank number 4. Activity A3 is defined as sharing knowledge with colleagues. Next activity is (A4), where 50% of the respondents have rank activity A4 into rank number 5 which is activity of conducting a discussion with colleagues or customers. Finally, activity number 5 (A5) has received 40% of the respondents in this research which ranked activity A5 both into rank number 2 and number 3. Activities A5 are those activities of managing daily task.

5. Conclusion

From the results of this online questionnaire, it gives a clear view that the current performance of

knowledge management that has been implemented at SAJH are currently performed according to its intended objective with only few area that has been identified, which require SAJH to take action and fine tune the knowledge management implementation that has been initiated. Findings in this research show that the knowledge management initiative that has been implemented at SAJH has been successfully distributed and transferred across SAJH organization and has been well accepted by its employees. With most of the respondents participate in this research shows a complete agreement with the knowledge management initiatives that have been introduced by SAJH. However, SAJH knowledge management committee and its top management levels are critically require reviewing its Knowledge Management System which is known as 'i-water'. It has received a high number of disagreements on its difficulties of use; as well its limitation of functions such as certain part of the system cannot be accessed by certain levels of employees.

In this research paper, the current performance of SAJH knowledge management initiatives has been identified and analyze. The discussion in this paper has highlighted on the main issues in this research as

well possible improvement that can be done by SAJH to take further action. Future research topics that can be done should particular investigates the performance of SAJH knowledge management committee itself and ensures all of the committee is required to be involved in the study.

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