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Abstract

Knowledge creation have become essential for organizations seeking to build resilience in today's dynamic business environment. The tourism industry, particularly travel firms, faces unprecedented challenges that require effective knowledge utilization to maintain operational continuity. Thus, this study examined the influence of knowledge creation on organizational resilience among travel firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya. A mixed-methods research design was employed, targeting 286 participants drawn from travel firms and tourism-related institutions including KATO, KATA, TOSK, Ecotourism Kenya, the Tourism Regulatory Authority, Tourism Promotion Fund, Kenya Tourism Board, Tourism Research Institute, Kenya Tourism Federation, GTRCMC-EA, the Tourism Professional Association, and the State Department of Tourism. The sample size comprised of 233 respondents, representing an 81.47% response rate. Quantitative findings showed that knowledge creation had a significant positive effect on organizational resilience, demonstrating that travel firms with structured practices for generating new ideas, insights, and solutions were better able to withstand disruptions. Qualitative results revealed that although some firms had initiated knowledge creation activities, many relied heavily on informal practices that limited the institutionalization of creativity and innovation. The study concludes that knowledge creation is a critical driver of organizational resilience among travel firms but remains underdeveloped due to inconsistent structures, limited formalization, and insufficient institutional support. Strengthening knowledge creation systems, fostering collaborative innovation environments, and enhancing organizational mechanisms for generating new knowledge are essential for improving resilience capacity. The study recommends that travel firm managers should strengthen structured systems for knowledge creation and innovation, ensuring that such processes are institutionalized and supported through dedicated teams, professional development, and continuous learning mechanisms. The study further recommends that tourism sector policymakers should enact supportive regulatory frameworks that reduce barriers, promote collaboration, and provide incentives that enable travel firms to develop innovation hubs and advance sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: knowledge creation, organizational resilience, travel firms, Nairobi City County, Kenya

1.0 Background to the Study

Tourism serves as a crucial catalyst for worldwide economic advancement and plays an essential role in fostering sustainable development. In 2024, the sector produced around USD 11.1 trillion, representing 10% of global GDP, and demonstrating a 12.1% annual growth (WTTC, 2024). The industry supports approximately 357 million jobs globally, representing nearly one in every ten positions, thereby underscoring its essential role in sustaining livelihoods. The organization's initiatives are in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 11, and SDG 12, by enhancing economic productivity, creating job opportunities, encouraging sustainable urban development, and advocating for responsible consumption practices (Lenzen *et al.*, 2022; Rasoolimanesh *et al.*, 2023). Tourism plays a pivotal role in environmental stewardship, especially in promoting SDG 14 and SDG 15, which pertain to marine and terrestrial ecosystems (Vaidya & Chatterji, 2020).

Maintaining organizational resilience is essential for guaranteeing the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of tourism, particularly in a period characterized by uncertainty (Prayag *et al.*, 2024). This capacity demonstrates an institution's proficiency in anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to both gradual changes and disruptive events (Rahman *et al.*, 2021). In the realm of tourism, resilience is evident through intentional strategies encompassing planning, risk assessment, operational adaptability, and customer engagement driven by innovation. These practices allow organizations to endure uncertainty while persistently providing social and economic value (Ondiek & Ombui, 2023). Organizational resilience conceptually encompasses adaptive, absorptive, and transformative capacities, enabling firms to effectively navigate volatility in changing environments.

Knowledge creation has become a central pillar of resilience in modern tourism, as global uncertainties increasingly require organizations to generate new ideas and insights that enhance their adaptive capacity. The worldwide tourism industry contributed USD 11.1 trillion to GDP in 2024, representing 10% of global economic activity, and supported 357 million jobs, underscoring how resilience and knowledge-driven innovation underpin sector stability (WTTC, 2024; Lenzen *et al.*, 2022; Rasoolimanesh *et al.*, 2023). This sector-wide reliance on adaptability demonstrates why structured knowledge creation is essential for responding to disruptions, market shifts, and emerging consumer needs in tourism environments.

Global tourism leaders illustrate how knowledge creation strengthens resilience. In the United States, sophisticated knowledge systems and crisis-response intelligence contributed to USD 2.36 trillion in tourism value and supported 18 million jobs, showing how generating new knowledge enhances strategic recovery (WTTC, 2024). The United Kingdom's Tourism Recovery Plan and Canada's federal strategy both invest heavily in innovation and knowledge development to support sector resilience, while Germany's Tourism Knowledge Graph integrates over 200,000 datasets to stimulate continuous learning and adaptive planning (UK Department for Culture, Media & Sport, 2021; Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2023; German National Tourist Board, 2023).

Evidence from African tourism systems reinforces the value of knowledge creation. In Tanzania, practices enabling employees to generate and refine new knowledge improved supply chain flexibility during crises (Magova & Kessy, 2020). Studies in Rwanda demonstrated that digital platforms enhanced the creation of market intelligence that supported adaptive destination marketing (Masaki *et al.*, 2021). In Kenya, knowledge creation is recognized as a structured approach for generating information to improve efficiency, innovation, and sustainability in the tourism sector, contributing significantly to adaptive capabilities among organizations (Ondiek & Ombui, 2023; Odunga *et al.*, 2020).

Kenyan empirical evidence confirms the strategic importance of knowledge creation for resilience. Research involving cultural heritage organizations in Nairobi City County found a strong positive relationship between knowledge creation, knowledge acquisition, and institutional performance, proving that the ability to generate new insights directly strengthens organizational outcomes (Ondiek & Ombui, 2023). Studies of five-star hotels in Naivasha revealed that knowledge creation processes—including idea generation, learning, and research—significantly improved service delivery efficiency during the COVID-19 crisis (Asami & Wamae, 2020). These findings show that organizations with stronger knowledge creation systems recover more effectively during disruptions.

Despite this importance, Kenya's tourism sector has not fully transitioned into a knowledge-based ecosystem. Weak institutional mechanisms, limited collaboration structures, and fragmented knowledge generation systems limit the ability of travel firms to develop new ideas and adapt to shocks (Government of Kenya, 2023; Odunga et al., 2020; Ondiek & Ombui, 2023). The sector's economic weight—KES 1 trillion in GDP contribution and 1.55 million jobs in 2023—magnifies the consequences of low knowledge creation capacity, as firms lacking structured idea-generation frameworks struggle to innovate, forecast trends, or respond effectively to crises. Nairobi City County hosts most of Kenya's travel firms and tourism institutions, positioning it as the national hub for tourism innovation and decision-making. However, existing studies in Kenya largely explore general knowledge management or sector performance, leaving a clear gap on how knowledge creation specifically influences organizational resilience among travel firms. Addressing this gap is critical because structured knowledge creation—through research, idea generation, and converting tacit experiences into actionable strategies—determines how effectively travel firms can anticipate change, maintain continuity, and recover from disruptions.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Research across various global tourism contexts demonstrates the critical role that knowledge management practices play in building organizational resilience. Studies among Malaysian tourist resorts, Ecuadorian tourism companies, and hospitality sectors show that knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, knowledge application, and knowledge management infrastructure significantly enhance organizational performance and resilience (Adomako *et al.*, 2020; Liow *et al.*, 2021; Ogunmokun *et al.*, 2020; Ponce-Espinosa *et al.*, 2022). However, despite the recognized importance of knowledge management and organizational resilience, there remains limited research on how these practices influence resilience among travel firms, particularly with legal and policy frameworks serving as a moderating factor in the Kenyan context. Research conducted in four- and five-star hotels in Nairobi County indicated that effective knowledge management practices can strongly enhance customer satisfaction, thus increasing sustainability (Wekesa, 2022). A study of cultural heritage institutions in Nairobi City County showed a significant positive relationship between knowledge creation, knowledge acquisition, and performance (Ondiek & Ombui, 2023). Research among 3-star hotels in Nairobi City County found that strategic management practices significantly and positively influence performance (Ndung'u & Kavinda, 2021). These empirical findings demonstrate the positive impact of knowledge management practices on various performance indicators within Kenya's tourism sector.

However, the Kenyan tourism industry has not yet fully embraced the knowledge economy, despite its significant economic contributions (Government of Kenya, 2023). The sector struggles to effectively use knowledge management practices to enhance its resilience and competitiveness (Odunga *et al.*, 2020). Challenges including external shocks, security concerns, and lack of inter-governmental collaboration have hindered the industry's

adaptability (Ondiek & Ombui, 2023). In an ideal scenario, industry associations would facilitate systematic knowledge sharing and capacity building among member organizations. However, the existing frameworks do not provide sufficient guidance on systematic knowledge management implementation, resulting in fragmented approaches among travel firms that rely on ad hoc and informal practices rather than structured knowledge management systems aligned with industry best practices. The current study addressed this critical gap by examining the influence that knowledge creation on organizational resilience among travel firms in Nairobi City County. Therefore, this study was essential for understanding how to translate knowledge creation into systems that enhance organizational resilience among travel firms in Nairobi City County.

1.2 Objective of the Paper

To examine the influence of knowledge creation on organizational resilience among travel firms in Nairobi City County.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H_0 : There is no significant influence of knowledge creation on organizational resilience among stakeholders in the travel industry in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework, depicted in Figure 1, illustrates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables in this study.

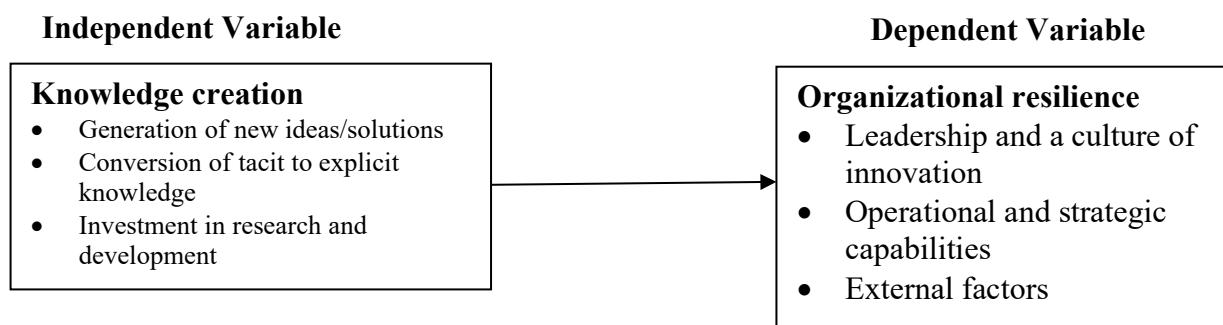


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.0 Literature Review

The literature review in this study is organized into distinct thematic sections to provide a clear and systematic exploration of the key concepts and their interrelationships.

2.1 Organizational resilience

Organizational resilience is defined as a firm's capacity to survive, adapt, and grow in the face of disasters and crises, representing a key capability for tourism companies in coping with environmental uncertainties and disruptions (Chen *et al*, 2021). It refers to a multidimensional construct that has evolved beyond simple recovery to encompass transformation and learning capabilities that enable organizations to emerge stronger from disruptions (Moura & Tomei, 2021). Organizational resilience represents the integration of adaptive capacity, absorptive capacity, and transformative capacity to manage uncertainty and volatility in dynamic business environments, particularly within the hospitality and tourism industry context (Ho *et al*, 2023). Organizational resilience involves different types of dynamic capabilities that build and sustain resilience across pre-crisis, response, and recovery stages, with external factors and internal organizational factors influencing the development of these capabilities (Prayag *et al.*, 2024). The concept encompasses strategic, operational, and functional dimensions that work together

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to create comprehensive organizational resilience capacity (Hepfer & Lawrence, 2022). From a leadership perspective, transformational leadership plays a crucial role in achieving organizational resilience through adaptive cultures and effective crisis management capabilities (Madi *et al.*, 2023). The multidimensional nature of organizational resilience encompasses the ability to maintain function under stress, respond quickly to change, and maintain workforce stability and commitment as core components that interact to create overall resilience capacity (Colberg, 2024).

Organizational resilience indicators include strong leadership and a culture of innovation, operational and strategic capabilities, and external factors. Leadership and culture represent a fundamental dimension that encompasses strong leadership with effective decision-making and clear communication during crises, which is crucial for organizational stability (Shek & Wilkinson, 2022). An innovation culture that encourages creativity and embraces new ideas is vital for adapting to change and finding solutions to challenges, as demonstrated through transformational leadership approaches that foster organizational excellence (Lasrado & Kassem, 2021). Open communication, both internally and externally, helps build trust and facilitates the sharing of information during a crisis, contributing to overall organizational resilience capacity. Employee engagement ensures that motivated employees are more likely to be adaptable and resilient, contributing to the organization's overall ability to bounce back from disruptions (Howard & Irving, 2021). Change readiness reflects employees' willingness to embrace change and adapt to new situations as a key indicator of organizational resilience, particularly in dynamic tourism environments (Fietz *et al.*, 2021).

Operational and strategic capabilities constitute a critical dimension that includes risk mitigation and management through proactive risk assessment and mitigation strategies that help prevent disruptions and minimize their impact (Baghersad & Zobel, 2022). Business continuity planning involves having robust plans in place to maintain operations during and after a crisis, which is essential for business survival and organizational resilience development. Flexibility and adaptability represent the ability to quickly adjust strategies, processes, and structures in response to changing circumstances as a hallmark of a resilient organization (Liu *et al.*, 2021). Problem-solving capacity enables organizations to identify and solve problems effectively, which is crucial for navigating challenging situations and maintaining operational continuity. Learning and adaptation ensure that organizations learn from past experiences and adapt their approaches to be better equipped for future disruptions, enhancing overall resilience capacity (Chen *et al.*, 2021). Data analysis and interpretation involve using data to understand trends, identify potential risks, and inform decision-making as increasingly important for resilience in modern organizational contexts (Colberg, 2024).

External factors represent a vital dimension that encompasses situational awareness as the ability to understand the external environment, anticipate potential threats, and adapt to changes in the market, which is critical for organizational survival (Hussain *et al.*, 2023). Customer focus involves maintaining strong customer relationships and managing reputation, which are important for building trust and loyalty, especially during challenging times when organizational resilience is tested. Supply chain resilience ensures that the organization can continue to operate even if disruptions occur in their external partnerships and resource networks, demonstrating the importance of external relationship management (Doroshenko & Romanchak, 2023). The interaction between organizations and their external environment plays a crucial role in determining resilience outcomes and long-term sustainability, with external factors significantly affecting organizational performance and adaptive capacity (Cooper *et al.*, 2022).

By focusing on these indicators, organizations can build their resilience and better withstand the challenges of a dynamic and unpredictable environment. Measurement approaches have evolved to include validated scales and multidimensional assessment tools that capture the breadth of resilience constructs, incorporating both internal organizational factors and external environmental influences (Moura & Tomei, 2021). The practical implications suggest that organizational resilience serves as a critical mediating mechanism between leadership effectiveness, strategic orientation, and performance outcomes in dynamic tourism environments (Ho *et al.*, 2023).

2.2 Knowledge Creation and Organizational Resilience

Knowledge creation forms an essential pillar of knowledge management and is instrumental in strengthening organizational resilience (Liow *et al.*, 2021). It encompasses structured processes through which new ideas and capabilities are developed, drawing on crisis-related information and continuous organizational learning (Prayag *et al.*, 2024). For travel firms, this may be reflected in the design of new tourism packages, refinement of service delivery systems, or identification of shifting consumer trends in the marketplace. In Japan, Jayasekera *et al.* (2022) assessed the application of Nonaka's SECI model in the tourism sector by reviewing fifty empirical studies conducted over the past decade. Their findings highlighted the value of formalized knowledge creation mechanisms, particularly during disruptive events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, in enhancing adaptability and resilience across the industry.

In Tanzania, Magova and Kessy (2020) showed that practices like selective hiring, job security measures, and teamwork are key to enhancing supply chain flexibility. In Kenya, Ondiek and Ombui (2023) studied cultural heritage organizations in Nairobi City County and found a strong link between knowledge creation, knowledge acquisition, and improved performance. Similarly, Ponce *et al.* (2022) investigated 86 tourism companies in Ecuador using partial least squares (PLS) analysis and found that practices such as consolidating knowledge, centralizing decision-making, formalizing processes, strengthening internal connections, and establishing robust knowledge management systems significantly boosted their ability to absorb and utilize new information, giving them a competitive edge. Additionally, Odunga *et al.* (2020) used structural equation modeling (SEM) to demonstrate that knowledge creation among tourism stakeholders in Kenya enhances destination competitiveness, urging the Kenya Tourism Board to focus on the identification and generation of knowledge resources. Similarly, Asami and Wamae (2020) studied five-star hotels in Naivasha, Nakuru County, during the COVID-19 pandemic and found that knowledge creation, sharing, application, and storage positively impacted service delivery efficiency.

2.3 Theoretical framework

The study was anchored on Resource-Based View (RBV) theory. The theory, first proposed by Edith Penrose in 1959 and later refined by scholars like Jay Barney (1991), Birger Wernerfelt (1984), and Margaret Peteraf in the 1990s, posits that an organization's performance and competitive advantage are primarily shaped by its unique and valuable internal resources and capabilities (Madhani, 2010). According to this theory, sustainable competitive advantage is achieved through resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and irreplaceable—concepts encapsulated in the VRIN framework. Knowledge, in this context, is viewed as a vital intangible resource that helps organizations maintain and enhance their competitive standing. This theory guided the study in exploring how knowledge creation and sharing contribute to enhancing the resilience of travel firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya, focusing on how these knowledge management practices serve as essential organizational resources that bolster resilience and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving tourism sector.

3.0 Research Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-methods research design anchored in an epistemological philosophy that recognizes both the measurable and interpretive dimensions of knowledge creation and organizational resilience. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires, while qualitative insights were gathered using semi-structured interviews to capture the influence of policy environments on knowledge processes. The research was conducted in Nairobi City County, selected for its centrality in Kenya's tourism sector, accessibility, and concentration of travel firms and regulatory bodies. The target population comprised 1,541 stakeholders, including travel firms, tourism regulatory agencies, and sectoral organizations, from which a stratified random sample of 318 respondents was drawn using Yamane's formula to ensure proportional representation. Data were collected through a three-phase process that involved administering questionnaires, conducting key-informant interviews, and undertaking observational visits to capture contextual indicators of knowledge creation and resilience. Structured tools facilitated quantitative measurement, while interviews enabled exploration of managerial perspectives and institutional dynamics. Observations complemented both data sources with real-time contextual evidence. Logistical planning ensured smooth coordination with organizations and respondents, and ethical considerations were upheld through informed consent, confidentiality assurances, and compliance with approvals from Kenyatta University and NACOSTI.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

The findings and discussion are done in sections.

4.1 Response Rate

After excluding the 32 respondents who participated in the pilot study from the original sample size of 318, the remaining sample size was 286. Out of this adjusted sample size, the study received 224 responses from travel firms through questionnaires and 9 responses from management teams through interviews, representing an overall response rate of 81.47%. Those used in the pilot were excluded from final analysis and these 32 were excluded from 318.

Table 1: Response Rate

Category	Sample Size	Response	Percent
Travel Firms			
KATO	65	52	0.8000
KATA	56	45	0.8036
TOSK	27	22	0.8148
EK	16	14	0.8750
Tourism Regulatory Authority	113	91	0.8053
Management Team			
Tourism Promotion Fund	1	1	1.0000
Kenya Tourism Board	1	1	1.0000
Tourism Research Institute	1	1	1.0000
Kenya Tourism Federation	1	1	1.0000
GTRCMC – EA	2	2	1.0000
Principal Secretary, State Department of Tourism	1	1	1.0000
Tourism Regulatory Authority	1	1	1.0000

Category	Sample Size	Response	Percent
Total	286	233	0.8147

Table 1 reveals high response rates across all respondent categories. Ecotourism Kenya (EK) demonstrated the highest participation rate among travel firms at 87.50%, followed by Tour Operators Society of Kenya (TOSK) at 81.48% and Tourism Regulatory Authority at 80.53%. Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA) showed a response rate of 80.36%, while Tour Operators (KATO) achieved an 80.00% response rate. The management team organizations were interviewed and respondents were picked randomly based on their availability, achieving 100% response rates across all categories, indicating strong engagement from key informants in leadership positions, including the Principal Secretary from the State Department of Tourism who provided valuable policy-level insights. The overall response rate of 81.47% significantly exceeds the 60% threshold recommended by Zhao *et al.* (2020) and Hemani *et al.* (2017) for ensuring adequate representation in analyses.

4.2 Knowledge Creation and Organizational Resilience among Travel Firms

The analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of how knowledge creation practices influence organizational resilience through descriptive statistics, inferential statistics comprising correlation and regression analysis, hypothesis testing to validate research propositions and qualitative analysis offering perspectives from management teams across tourism institutions.

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

The summary of the descriptive statistics is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of Knowledge Creation

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Deviation
New ideas and solutions.	25.00%	56.30%	5.80%	9.80%	3.10%	2.10	0.99
Tacit knowledge converted into explicit knowledge.	38.40%	42.00%	4.00%	8.90%	6.70%	2.04	1.18
Investment in research and development.	27.70%	50.40%	10.70%	7.10%	4.00%	2.09	1.01
Sharing knowledge and expertise.	18.80%	54.50%	4.90%	20.10%	1.80%	2.32	1.05
Capturing and documenting new knowledge.	32.60%	50.40%	2.20%	5.40%	9.40%	2.08	1.19
Utilization of	16.10%	64.30%	4.50%	9.80%	5.40%	2.24	1.01
Structured knowledge-sharing sessions/ forums.	29.90%	49.60%	5.80%	9.80%	4.90%	2.10	1.09
Cross-functional collaboration.	33.90%	46.90%	1.80%	12.90%	4.50%	2.07	1.13
Opportunities for continuous learning.	23.20%	57.10%	6.70%	10.30%	2.70%	2.12	0.97
Values and rewards innovative thinking and problem-solving.	25.40%	52.20%	4.90%	8.00%	9.40%	2.24	1.19
Dedicated resources.	37.50%	42.00%	5.40%	12.90%	2.20%	2.00	1.07
Identify and address knowledge gaps.	20.10%	58.50%	6.30%	8.00%	7.10%	2.24	1.08
Average						2.14	1.08

The study found that 81.3% (25.0%+56.3%) of the respondents disagreed that their organizations frequently generate new ideas and solutions to address emerging challenges, while only 12.9% (9.8%+3.1%) agreed with the statement, with 5.8% remaining neutral. Besides, 80.4% (38.4%+42.0%) of respondents disagreed that tacit knowledge is effectively converted into explicit knowledge in their organizations, while only 15.6% (8.9%+6.7%) agreed with this statement, with 4.0% remaining neutral. The mean score was 2.04 with a standard deviation of 1.18. This indicates a failure to capture and formalize the valuable implicit knowledge held by employees across travel firms in the region. Without effective mechanisms to transform tacit knowledge into documented forms, critical expertise and experience may remain inaccessible or be lost entirely when knowledgeable staff exit the organization. Moreover, 78.1% (27.7%+50.4%) of respondents disagreed that there is significant investment in research and development activities in their organizations, while only 11.1% (7.1%+4.0%) agreed with this statement, with 10.7% remaining neutral. The mean score was 2.09 with a standard deviation of 1.01. This reveals a lack of financial commitment to formal knowledge creation efforts. Without adequate investment in R&D, these firms may find it difficult to develop new tourism products and processes that are essential for staying competitive.

In addition, 73.3% (18.8%+54.5%) of respondents disagreed that employees are encouraged to share their knowledge and expertise in their organizations, while only 21.9% (20.1%+1.8%) agreed with this statement, with 4.9% remaining neutral. The mean score was 2.32 with a standard deviation of 1.05. This suggests limited organizational support for internal knowledge exchange. When employees are not actively encouraged to share what they know, critical information remains siloed, which can slow down organizational learning and innovation. Also, 83.0% (32.6%+50.4%) of respondents disagreed that there are well-established processes for capturing and documenting new knowledge, while only 14.8% (5.4%+9.4%) agreed with this statement, with 2.2% remaining neutral. The mean score was 2.08 with a standard deviation of 1.19. This reflects the absence of formal documentation systems across many travel firms. Without such systems, insights and lessons learned are at risk of being forgotten or underutilized in future initiatives.

Furthermore, 80.4% (16.1%+64.3%) of respondents disagreed that knowledge gained from past experiences is effectively utilized to inform current practices, while only 15.2% (9.8%+5.4%) agreed with this statement, with 4.5% remaining neutral. The mean score was 2.24 with a standard deviation of 1.01. This indicates a gap between historical knowledge and its practical use. When past lessons are not applied, organizations may repeat avoidable mistakes and overlook practices that previously worked well. Likewise, 79.5% (29.9%+49.6%) of respondents disagreed that there are structured knowledge-sharing sessions and forums, while only 14.7% (9.8%+4.9%) agreed, with 5.8% neutral. The mean score was 2.10 with a standard deviation of 1.09. This suggests that opportunities for collaborative knowledge exchange are limited. Without structured sessions, knowledge may remain confined to certain individuals or teams, restricting organizational learning.

In addition, 80.8% (33.9%+46.9%) of respondents disagreed that cross-functional collaboration is encouraged to foster knowledge creation, while 17.4% (12.9%+4.5%) agreed, with 1.8% neutral. The mean score was 2.07 with a standard deviation of 1.13. This shows there are barriers to collaborative learning across departments. Lack of cross-functional interaction can reduce innovation by limiting the blending of different experiences and viewpoints. Further, 80.3% (23.2%+57.1%) of respondents disagreed that employees are provided with opportunities for continuous learning and skill development, while only 13.0% (10.3%+2.7%) agreed, with 6.7% neutral. The mean score was 2.12 with a standard deviation

of 0.97. This implies that most organizations are not prioritizing professional development. Without such opportunities, employees may not gain the new competencies required to keep up with industry shifts.

Moreover, 77.6% (25.4%+52.2%) of respondents disagreed that there is a culture that values and rewards innovative thinking and problem-solving, while only 17.4% (8.0%+9.4%) agreed, and 4.9% were neutral. The mean score was 2.24 with a standard deviation of 1.19. This reveals a weak cultural foundation for innovation. When creativity and problem-solving are not recognized or rewarded, employees may lack motivation to contribute fresh ideas. Further, 79.5% (37.5%+42.0%) of respondents disagreed that there are dedicated resources allocated for knowledge creation initiatives, while only 15.1% (12.9%+2.2%) agreed, with 5.4% neutral. The mean score was 2.00 with a standard deviation of 1.07. This points to low resource commitment for developing new knowledge. Without sufficient time, staffing, or funding, knowledge creation activities may be deprioritized.

Lastly, 78.6% (20.1%+58.5%) of respondents disagreed that there are effective mechanisms to identify and address knowledge gaps, while 15.1% (8.0%+7.1%) agreed, and 6.3% were neutral. The mean score was 2.24 with a standard deviation of 1.08. This shows that knowledge-related needs are often overlooked. If gaps are not clearly identified and resolved, firms may lack the expertise needed for emerging opportunities or challenges. These findings suggest a widespread limitation in knowledge creation practices among travel firms in Nairobi City County. The overall low mean score of 2.14 across the knowledge creation dimension points to challenges in generating, documenting, sharing, and leveraging new knowledge in daily operations. Without improvements in these areas, organizations may continue to rely on outdated practices, fall behind competitors, and miss opportunities for growth. To address this gap, travel firms need to establish structured knowledge creation frameworks, allocate sufficient resources, promote collaborative and innovative cultures, and conduct regular assessments to identify and bridge knowledge gaps. Doing so would position them to respond better to shifting market conditions and increase their overall resilience in a rapidly evolving tourism industry.

4.2.2 Inferential Statistics

In this study, inferential statistics included correlation and regression analysis.

Correlation Analysis

The correlation results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of Knowledge Creation and Organizational Resilience

		Organizational resilience	Knowledge creation
Organizational resilience	Pearson Correlation	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.612**	
Knowledge creation	Pearson Correlation		1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	

The study found that knowledge creation was positively and significantly associated with organizational resilience ($r = .612$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that when organizations actively generate new knowledge and ideas through innovation, research, and continuous improvement, they are better positioned to adapt to change and recover from disruptions. The strong correlation indicates that travel firms investing in systematic knowledge creation processes demonstrate enhanced capabilities to anticipate challenges and develop adaptive solutions.

This relationship underscores the fundamental role of knowledge creation as a strategic resource that enables organizations to build resilience through continuous learning and innovation activities. The study results agree with Liow, Yeow, Sam and Heng (2021), who emphasized that knowledge creation is a fundamental component of knowledge management practices and plays a crucial role in fostering organizational resilience in Malaysian tourist resorts.

Table 4: Model Fitness of Knowledge Creation and Organizational Resilience

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.612a	0.374	0.371	0.265692

The study found that knowledge creation accounts for 37.4% of the variance in organizational resilience among travel firms in Nairobi City County, with a robust model fit and precise predictions, as indicated by an adjusted R square of 0.371 and a standard error of 0.265692.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Knowledge Creation and Organizational Resilience

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.364	1	9.364	132.642	.000b
	Residual	15.671	222	0.071		
	Total	25.035	223			

Table 5 presents the ANOVA results which demonstrate that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 132.642$, $p = 0.000$). The results show that knowledge creation significantly predicts organizational resilience with less than a 0.1% probability that this result occurred due to random chance. The F-statistic of 132.642 with 1 degree of freedom for regression and 222 degrees of freedom for residual indicates a very strong relationship between knowledge creation and organizational resilience. The sum of squares for regression (9.364) compared to the total sum of squares (25.035) further confirms the substantial explanatory power of knowledge creation in predicting organizational resilience outcomes among travel firms. Table 6 presents the regression coefficients showing the individual contribution of knowledge creation to organizational resilience

Table 6: Regression Coefficients of Knowledge Creation and Organizational Resilience

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	0.841	0.131		6.402	0.000
	Knowledge creation	0.646	0.056	0.612	11.517	0.000

The study results indicate that knowledge creation has a significant positive effect on organizational resilience ($\beta = 0.646$, $t = 11.517$, $p = 0.000$). The t-value of 11.517 with a significance level of 0.000 provides robust statistical evidence that this relationship is not due to chance, indicating that knowledge creation serves as a critical determinant of organizational resilience among travel firms. The study results corroborate with research by Prayag *et al.* (2024), who emphasized that knowledge management practices operate through dynamic capabilities frameworks that emphasize sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring capabilities as

fundamental processes for building organizational resilience. The findings align with Liow, Yeow, Sam and Heng (2021), who demonstrated that knowledge creation serves as a foundational element in enhancing organizational resilience through continuous learning and idea generation in tourist resorts. Additionally, the results support Jayasekera *et al.* (2022), who found that structured knowledge creation processes, particularly under the SECI model, helped organizations in Japan's tourism industry respond better to disruptions such as COVID-19.

4.2.3 Test hypothesis

The hypothesis testing revealed a statistically significant effect of knowledge creation on organizational resilience among travel firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya, as the p-value of 0.000 was less than the significance level of 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

4.2.4 Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis involved interviews with representatives from management teams across various tourism organizations including the Tourism Promotion Fund, Kenya Tourism Board, Tourism Research Institute, Principal Secretary, State Department of Tourism, Kenya Tourism Federation, Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre (GTRCMC-EA), Tourism Professional Association (TPA), and Tourism Regulatory Authority to understand how travel organizations are encouraged to create new knowledge and ideas that enhance their resilience. From the perspective of these regulatory and policy-level institutions, most travel firms were reported to have only limited structures in place for knowledge creation. While the concept of innovation was generally acknowledged among travel firms, implementation was described as scattered and largely informal across the sector. According to the management teams from these institutions, very few travel firms had invested in formal research and development departments or dedicated innovation teams, with most organizations lacking the strategic infrastructure required for systematic knowledge creation.

The interviews revealed that knowledge creation efforts among travel firms were largely dependent on individual employee initiative rather than organizational systems. Representatives from the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre and Kenya Tourism Board noted that most firms did not allocate specific funding or resources for idea generation, while the Tourism Regulatory Authority and Tourism Professional Association added that although some firms occasionally hosted brainstorming sessions or participated in tourism expos, such efforts were infrequent and not embedded into strategic planning. Management teams from across these institutions highlighted that while some travel firms attempted to encourage innovation through workshops, familiarization trips, or internal idea-sharing forums, these activities were not coordinated or consistently followed up with implementation. In some cases, firms introduced suggestion boxes or hosted innovation challenges, but these tools were not backed by strong reward systems or feedback mechanisms, limiting their effectiveness in fostering sustained knowledge creation.

The management representatives observed that partnerships with academic institutions and participation in industry forums were promising developments among some travel firms, but these initiatives were primarily driven by external events rather than internal strategic planning. The Tourism Research Institute and Kenya Tourism Federation emphasized that while travel firms showed some interest in knowledge creation, most lacked the systematic approaches needed to convert innovative ideas into actionable solutions for building organizational resilience. The Tourism Promotion Fund and Tourism Professional Association noted that the absence of formal knowledge creation processes meant that valuable insights and experiences

were often lost or not effectively captured for future use, limiting firms' ability to learn from past experiences and adapt to new challenges.

Thus, the qualitative findings from management teams across these tourism institutions suggested that while travel firms in Nairobi City County had demonstrated some awareness of the importance of knowledge creation for resilience building, most organizations operated without the strategic infrastructure and sustained commitment required for effective knowledge generation. The management representatives emphasized the need for targeted support, sector-wide coordination, and stronger policy incentives to promote structured and continuous knowledge development across the tourism industry. These qualitative insights support the quantitative findings that showed a significant positive relationship between knowledge creation and organizational resilience, while highlighting the practical challenges that prevent many travel firms from fully realizing the benefits of systematic knowledge creation practices.

5.0 Conclusion

The study concludes that knowledge creation is a vital contributor to organizational resilience among travel firms. When firms intentionally promote the generation of new ideas, creative problem-solving, and continuous improvement, they are better equipped to adapt to disruptions and recover more efficiently. Practices such as research and development initiatives, team brainstorming sessions, and employee-led innovations were found to enhance the organization's ability to foresee challenges and craft relevant solutions. However, the qualitative findings revealed that most travel firms had only limited structures in place for knowledge creation, with implementation described as scattered and largely informal. Firms that lacked systematic mechanisms to generate new knowledge were observed to respond slower to change, placing them at greater risk during periods of instability. Therefore, deliberate knowledge creation must be treated as a strategic asset for strengthening resilience. This conclusion aligns with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), which emphasizes the role of innovation in sustainable development. By embedding innovation into everyday operations, travel firms contribute to building a robust tourism sector that is not only adaptive but also inclusive. Additionally, this objective supports SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by creating environments where employees are continuously challenged to think creatively and solve problems, thereby improving their skills and engagement.

6.0 Recommendations

The recommendations include management recommendations and policy recommendations derived from the study's findings.

6.1 Recommendations for Practice

The study recommends that travel firm managers should prioritize the establishment of structured systems for knowledge creation within their organizations. Given that qualitative findings revealed most travel firms had only limited structures in place for knowledge creation, with implementation described as scattered and largely informal, management should actively support activities such as regular brainstorming sessions, employee-led innovation challenges, and collaborative workshops focused on problem-solving and service improvement. These initiatives should not only be encouraged but institutionalized through internal policies that link creativity to organizational learning and performance outcomes. Since very few travel firms had invested in formal research and development departments or dedicated innovation teams, managers should facilitate the development of innovation units or cross-functional teams responsible for generating, testing, and refining new tourism products and service delivery models.

In addition, managers should invest in professional development programs that equip employees with skills to contribute meaningfully to knowledge generation, addressing the current gap where innovation largely depends on individual employee initiative rather than organizational systems. Such programs should be aligned with emerging market trends and technologies affecting the tourism sector. By embedding innovation in the organizational culture, travel firms can continuously build internal resilience, ensuring that new ideas become part of routine strategic thinking rather than infrequent and uncoordinated efforts.

6.2 Recommendations for Policy

The study recommends that the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife (MoTW) and the Tourism Regulatory Authority should formulate national-level policies that reduce regulatory barriers to knowledge creation within travel and tour firms. Given that qualitative findings revealed most travel firms had only limited structures in place for knowledge creation, with implementation described as scattered and largely informal, these policies should streamline licensing procedures, simplify compliance documentation, and ensure that regulatory requirements support rather than hinder innovation activities. Furthermore, the government should provide clear policy guidelines that align regulatory compliance with knowledge management objectives, making it easier for firms to integrate innovation strategies into their operations while meeting legal requirements.

In addition, Kenya Association of Tour Operators (KATO), Kenya Association of Travel Agents (KATA), Tour Operators Society of Kenya (TOSK), Ecotourism Kenya (EK), Tourism Promotion Fund, Kenya Tourism Board, Tourism Research Institute, Kenya Tourism Federation, the State Department of Tourism, and the County Government of Nairobi City County should collaborate to develop policy frameworks that provide institutional support for innovation hubs or tourism research clusters. These frameworks should include funding mechanisms, tax incentives, and capacity building programs that enable firms to co-develop new products and test solutions, addressing the current gap where very few travel firms had invested in formal research and development departments. Such policy support would contribute directly to sustainable tourism development by creating an enabling environment for knowledge creation while advancing SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure).

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