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Knowledge Acquisition, Dissemination, and Utilization Drivers of Innovation and Distribution Performance in Hospitality Organizations

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Abstract

Purpose: This research examined how knowledge management affects innovation capacity and distribution channel performance in Vietnam's hospitality industry. While knowledge management has been extensively studied, its dual effect on innovation and distribution channels remains underexplored in emerging markets' hospitality sector, particularly considering the unique cultural context of relationship-based business practices in Vietnam. **Research design, data, and methodology:** Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 178 senior executives of hospitality through a structured questionnaire. The study employed established scales adapted from prior research, measuring all items using a five-point Likert scale. Smart-PLS analysis revealed that all three dimensions of knowledge management—acquisition, dissemination, and utilization—positively influenced innovation capacity and distribution channel performance. **Results:** Knowledge utilization demonstrated the most potent effect on innovation capacity, while innovation capacity showed the most substantial impact on distribution channel performance. Mediation analysis revealed that innovation capacity partially mediates the relationship between knowledge management dimensions and distribution performance, with the most substantial indirect effect through knowledge utilization. **Conclusions:** The findings contributed to both theory and practice by establishing the crucial role of knowledge management in enhancing operational performance through innovation capacity in the hospitality sector while highlighting the importance of cultural factors in knowledge management effectiveness within Vietnam's unique business environment.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Innovation Capacity, Distribution Channels, Hospitality Industry

JEL Classification Code: L83, O32, M10

1. Introduction

Organizations must leverage their strategic capabilities to establish and maintain competitive advantages in today's rapidly evolving business environment. Knowledge management has emerged as a critical strategic resource that

enables firms to enhance their innovation capacity and business performance (Abualoush et al., 2018). As firms face increasing competition and market turbulence, their ability to manage knowledge assets and convert them into innovative outputs effectively becomes paramount for sustainable growth (Khoa & Anh, 2024; Hislop, 2023).

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Knowledge management encompasses the organizational practices and dynamic capabilities related to creating, preserving, and transferring knowledge (Khoa & Huynh, 2023). This strategic approach allows firms to leverage the expertise and know-how residing within individual minds more actively while facilitating knowledge sharing across organizational boundaries (Joseph, 2023). The literature suggests that knowledge management capacity is vital in supporting and fostering innovation by enabling firms to acquire, share, and apply knowledge more effectively (Khoa & Huynh, 2024; Chen et al., 2010). Through proper knowledge management, organizations can reduce redundancy, respond rapidly to changes, and develop creative ideas that lead to innovation (De et al., 2023; Polas et al., 2021). Research indicates that knowledge management practices significantly improve operational efficiency and market performance by enabling better coordination across distribution channels (Zheng et al., 2022). As distribution channels become more complex and interconnected, effectively managing knowledge flows between channel partners becomes increasingly critical for maintaining competitive advantage.

While existing literature has examined various aspects of knowledge management and innovation, several important gaps remain in our understanding of these relationships. First, although previous studies have investigated the direct effects of knowledge management on innovation performance (Yen et al., 2022; Chen & Huang, 2009) and marketing results (Quan et al., 2023; Fidel et al., 2018), limited research has explored how knowledge management simultaneously impacts both innovation capacity and distribution channel performance. Most studies have focused on the innovation outcomes or channel performance in isolation, failing to capture potential synergies and trade-offs between these critical business outcomes. Second, while research has established that knowledge management contributes to innovation capacity (Knezevic et al., 2020; Chen & Huang, 2009), the specific mechanisms through which different knowledge management practices affect various dimensions of innovation capacity remain unclear. Prior studies have typically treated knowledge management as a unified construct rather than examining how distinct knowledge management practices may differentially impact exploratory versus exploitative innovation capabilities.

Given these gaps, this study investigates knowledge management's impact on innovation capacity and distribution channel performance. Specifically, we seek to (1) examine how different knowledge management practices affect innovation capacity and (2) analyze the relationship between knowledge management and distribution channel performance.

This study made several unique contributions that distinguish it from previous research. The first study will examine knowledge management's dual impact on innovation capacity and distribution channel performance, specifically in Vietnam's emerging hospitality sector. Decomposition of knowledge management into three distinct dimensions (acquisition, dissemination, utilization) to analyze their differential effects. Focus on the hospitality sector provides industry-specific insights into how knowledge management practices translate into operational outcomes.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: Section 2 reviews relevant literature and develops hypotheses. Section 3 describes the research methodology. Section 4 presents the empirical results and discussion. Finally, Section 5 discusses theoretical and managerial implications, limitations, and future research directions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Model

The Resource-Based View (RBV) provides an essential theoretical foundation to analyze how firms achieve sustainable competitive advantage by leveraging their strategic resources (Barney, 1991). According to RBV, resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) are integral to a firm's long-term performance. As an intangible asset, knowledge has been positioned as one of organizations' most critical strategic resources (Ullah Khan et al., 2023). Within this framework, Knowledge Management (KM) emerges as a critical enabler that allows firms to exploit their intellectual capital to achieve superior innovation capacity and operational efficiency, such as performance across distribution channels.

Knowledge Management is conceptualized as the systematic process of acquiring, sharing, and utilizing organizational knowledge to enhance decision-making, increase innovation, and improve performance outcomes (Alegre et al., 2011). Scholars emphasize the three core dimensions of KM: Knowledge Acquisition, Knowledge Dissemination, and Knowledge Utilization. These processes collectively enable firms to develop dynamic capabilities, adapt to environmental turbulence, and create value (De et al., 2023; Hartono & Sheng, 2015; Chen & Huang, 2009).

From the RBV perspective, KM is a dynamic capability, helping firms integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to address rapidly changing environments (Fletcher-Brown et al., 2020). Effective knowledge management facilitates innovation by leveraging existing resources to generate new ideas, products, or processes (Fidel et al., 2018). Moreover, KM ensures the

efficient exchange of information across distribution channels, optimizing performance by reducing inefficiencies, enhancing collaboration, and increasing responsiveness to market demands (Hartono & Sheng, 2015).

The RBV model posits that KM processes directly influence two critical performance outcomes: Innovation Capacity and Distribution Channel Performance. Innovation Capacity refers to an organization's ability to develop and implement new ideas, products, or services (Gui et al., 2022). On the other hand, Distribution Channel Performance measures the efficiency and effectiveness of managing relationships, processes, and knowledge flows across the supply chain to deliver value to end customers (Hartono & Sheng, 2015). This study integrates KM into the RBV framework to explore its impact on these two performance dimensions, emphasizing the interconnected roles of Knowledge Acquisition, Dissemination, and Utilization (Duong et al., 2022). In the context of innovation, Knowledge Acquisition allows firms to source new insights from customers, partners, and employees, fostering creativity and reducing uncertainty in developing novel solutions. Knowledge Dissemination ensures the adequate flow of information across organizational units, enabling cross-functional collaboration and collective problem-solving. Finally, Knowledge Utilization focuses on applying and embedding this knowledge into organizational routines to drive measurable outcomes, such as product development and process improvements.

For distribution channels, KM processes enhance operational efficiency by improving coordination, reducing redundancy, and facilitating real-time decision-making. Knowledge Acquisition enables firms to gather insights into customer preferences and market trends, ensuring alignment between supply and demand. Knowledge Dissemination promotes open communication and collaboration among channel partners, enhancing trust and relationship quality. Knowledge Utilization ensures that acquired knowledge is translated into actionable strategies, such as inventory optimization, customer service improvements, and cost reductions. The research model is proposed in Figure 1.

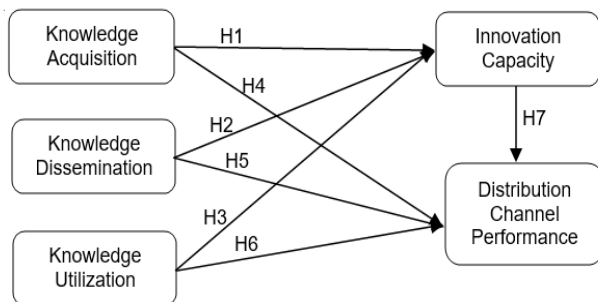


Figure 1: Research Model

This study adopts the RBV framework to examine KM processes' direct and indirect effects on innovation capacity and distribution channel performance. By integrating insights from prior literature, this research seeks to address critical gaps in understanding the synergistic relationships between KM, innovation, and operational performance in distribution systems.

Table 1: The Previous Research

Author(s)	Key Focus	Relevance to Topic
Damanpour et al. (2007)	Examines the role of innovation capacity in achieving competitive advantage.	Reinforces the link between KM, innovation, and performance outcomes such as distribution channel efficiency.
Scarbrough (2003)	Examines the relationship between KM, HRM, and the innovation process.	Demonstrates how KM enables firms to build organizational expertise and competitive advantage.
Chen and Huang (2009)	Examines the role of KM in mediating the relationship between HR practices and innovation.	Highlights how KM processes (acquisition, dissemination, utilization) enhance innovation capacity.
Alegre et al. (2011)	Explores KM's role in fostering innovation in high-tech SMEs.	Highlights the importance of KM processes for enhancing exploratory and exploitative innovation capabilities.
Hartono and Sheng (2015)	Investigates the role of SNSs in facilitating knowledge sharing and improving firm performance.	Emphasizes the impact of KM on operational efficiency and channel performance through digital platforms.
Fidel et al. (2018)	Explores the impact of Customer Knowledge Management (CKM) on innovation and marketing results.	Demonstrates how knowledge sharing enhances innovation and distribution channel performance in SMEs.
Le and Do (2023)	Knowledge-oriented leadership and knowledge sharing boost innovation.	Examines how knowledge-oriented leadership (KOL) affects innovation performance (IP) through knowledge sharing. This research clarifies the KS-IP link.
Truong et al. (2023)	Improvement of performance through innovation and knowledge management	Examines whether government support for innovation (GSFI), information sharing, knowledge management success (KMS), and intellectual capital (IC) improve business innovation and performance.

2.2. Hypotheses Development

Knowledge Acquisition refers to the ability of firms to gather, absorb, and integrate new information from external and internal sources. As Chen and Huang (2009) argue, acquired knowledge is the foundation for generating creative ideas, reducing uncertainty, and fostering innovation. Firms that excel in acquiring knowledge from customers, suppliers, and employees are better equipped to develop novel products and services (Fidel et al., 2018). Joseph (2023) further emphasizes that knowledge acquisition enables organizations to identify emerging trends and adapt their innovation strategies accordingly.

H1: Knowledge Acquisition positively impacts Innovation Capacity.

Knowledge Dissemination involves the effective sharing of information across organizational units and departments. According to Khraishi et al. (2022), knowledge dissemination fosters cross-functional collaboration, enabling teams to integrate diverse perspectives and co-create innovative solutions. Scarbrough (2003) highlights that open communication channels facilitate the exchange of tacit and explicit knowledge, which is critical for overcoming organizational silos and enhancing innovation capacity.

H2: Knowledge Dissemination positively impacts Innovation Capacity.

Knowledge Utilization applies acquired and disseminated knowledge to achieve specific organizational goals. Hartono and Sheng (2015) noted that effective knowledge utilization ensures that innovative ideas are translated into actionable outcomes, such as product development and process improvements. Alegre et al. (2011) emphasized that knowledge utilization drives exploitative innovation by embedding new insights into organizational routines and practices.

H3: Knowledge Utilization positively impacts Innovation Capacity.

Knowledge Acquisition enhances distribution channel performance by providing valuable insights into customer preferences, market trends, and competitor strategies (Truong et al., 2023). Stawicki et al. (2022) argued that firms with superior knowledge acquisition capabilities can align their distribution strategies with changing market demands, reducing inefficiencies and improving responsiveness.

H4: Knowledge Acquisition positively impacts Distribution Channel Performance.

Knowledge Dissemination strengthens distribution channels by promoting transparency, trust, and collaboration among channel partners (Hartono & Sheng, 2015). Effective dissemination ensures that all stakeholders have access to relevant information, enabling better coordination and decision-making across the supply chain (Ha et al., 2021).

H5: Knowledge Dissemination positively impacts Distribution Channel Performance.

Knowledge Utilization improves distribution channel performance by translating insights into actionable strategies, such as inventory optimization and customer service enhancements (Bresciani et al., 2022). Al-Sharafi et al. (2022) highlighted that firms that effectively utilize knowledge can achieve cost savings, reduce lead times, and enhance customer satisfaction.

H6: Knowledge Utilization positively impacts Distribution Channel Performance.

Innovation Capacity enables firms to develop new solutions that address channel-specific challenges, such as demand variability and logistical inefficiencies (Hoang & Khoa, 2024; Truong et al., 2023). Ha et al. (2021) argued that firms with strong innovation capacity can enhance distribution channel performance by introducing advanced technologies, streamlining processes, and fostering closer collaborations with partners.

H7: Innovation Capacity positively impacts Distribution Channel Performance.

3. Method

This study employs established scales adapted from prior research to measure the key constructs: Knowledge Acquisition (KA), Knowledge Dissemination (KD), Knowledge Utilization (KU), Innovation Capacity (IC), and Distribution Channel Performance (DCP). All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). KA is assessed using a three-item scale adapted from Gold et al. (2015). This scale captures the extent to which the organization acquires knowledge from various sources. A four-item scale adapted from Khoa and Huynh (2023) measures KD. This scale assesses the effectiveness of knowledge sharing within the organization. KU is measured using a five-item scale adapted from Huber (1991). This scale reflects the organization's ability to apply knowledge to improve processes and create value. IC is assessed using a three-item scale adapted from Hurley and Hult (1998). This scale captures the organization's ability to generate and implement new ideas. DCP is measured using a three-item

scale adapted from Mentzer et al. (2011). This scale assesses the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization's distribution channels.

Data collection was conducted between January and October 2024. To minimize common method bias, we followed Podsakoff et al. (2003) recommendations by ensuring respondent anonymity and using different scale formats for different constructs. The questionnaire was pre-tested with 20 executives from the industry to ensure clarity and relevance. The study employed a quantitative research approach using a structured questionnaire. The target population comprised senior executives (CEOs, managing directors, and general managers) from hospitality companies in Vietnam, including hotels, restaurants, and travel companies. This population was chosen because these executives have comprehensive knowledge of their organizations' knowledge management practices and performance outcomes. The sampling frame was developed from the Vietnam Tourism Association's database. A systematic random sampling technique was used to select potential respondents. Initial contact was made through email and telephone calls to confirm participation. The questionnaire was administered in English and Vietnamese, with the Vietnamese version being back-translated to ensure consistency. From 300 distributed questionnaires, 178 valid responses were received, representing a response rate of 59.3%. Table 2 presents the demographic profile of the respondents and their organizations.

Table 2: Respondent Demographics

Demographic Variable	Category	n	Frequency (%)
Age	25-34	27	15.17%
	35-44	71	39.89%
	45-54	53	29.78%
	55 and above	27	15.17%
Gender	Male	124	69.66%
	Female	53	29.78%
Industry Sector	Hotel	71	15.17%
	Restaurant	62	34.83%
	Travel Company	45	15.17%
Company Size (Employees)	1-10	60	39.89%
	11-50	100	34.83%
	51-100	18	25.28%
Years in Operation	1-5	45	33.71%
	6-10	62	56.18%
	11-20	53	10.11%
	Over 20 years	18	25.28%

Table 3: Convergent and Discriminant Validity Assessment

Construct	Outer loadings	CR	AVE	Fornell-Larcker Criterion				
				KA	KD	KU	IC	DCP
KA	0.812 - 0.873	0.882	0.715	0.846				
KD	0.785 - 0.889	0.915	0.731	0.692	0.855			
KU	0.817 - 0.877	0.928	0.719	0.674	0.701	0.848		
IC	0.892 - 0.910	0.926	0.806	0.671	0.715	0.723	0.898	
DCP	0.861 - 0.913	0.926	0.805	0.629	0.676	0.687	0.741	0.897

4. Results

4.1. Measurement Model Assessment

Convergent validity measures the extent to which items of a specific construct correlate positively. Following the guidelines of Hair et al. (2019), we assessed convergent validity based on factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All individual item loadings should exceed the threshold of 0.7. Constructs should demonstrate CR values greater than 0.7 to ensure internal consistency and reliability. AVE values should exceed 0.5, indicating that the constructs explain at least 50% of the variance in their respective items. All outer loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.7, and composite reliability values ranged between 0.882 and 0.928, indicating high internal consistency. Additionally, AVE values for all constructs ranged from 0.715 to 0.806, exceeding the minimum requirement of 0.5. These results confirm the convergent validity of the measurement model.

Discriminant validity assesses whether constructs are distinct from one another. It was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Diagonal elements represent the square root of AVE, which is greater than the inter-construct correlations, confirming discriminant validity. Table 3 summarizes the results of the convergent and discriminant validity assessment.

4.2. Structural Model Assessment

The structural model evaluates the relationships among the constructs, testing the proposed hypotheses. The analysis includes assessing R² values, f² effect sizes, Q² predictive relevance, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for collinearity, and the overall path coefficients. The hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples in Smart-PLS.

R² measures the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables. Hair et al. (2019) suggest that R² values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 represent substantial, moderate, and weak levels of explanatory power, respectively. The results in Table 4 indicated that the independent variables explain 65.2% of the variance in Innovation Capacity and 69.8% in Distribution Channel Performance, signifying moderate explanatory power. Q² was calculated using the blindfolding procedure

to evaluate the predictive relevance of the model. Q² values greater than 0 indicate predictive relevance. The Q² values for Innovation Capacity (0.495) and Distribution Channel Performance (0.538) indicate high predictive relevance.

Table 4: R² and Q² value

Construct	R ²	Q ²
IC	0.652	0.495
DCP	0.698	0.538

f² evaluates the change in R² when a specific predictor is removed, assessing its contribution to the model. Cohen (1988) categorizes f² values as small (0.02), medium (0.15), and large (0.35). The f² values in Table 5 suggested small to medium effect sizes for all relationships. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were calculated to assess collinearity. A VIF value below 5 indicates no multicollinearity issues (Hair et al., 2019). All VIF values

in Table 5 were below 3, indicating no serious multicollinearity issues.

All hypothesized relationships were significant (p < 0.05), with path coefficients ranging from 0.198 to 0.312, supporting all seven hypotheses. Knowledge Utilization showed the most potent effect on Innovation Capacity (β = 0.312), while Innovation Capacity had the most substantial effect on Distribution Channel Performance among all predictors (β = 0.289).

The mediating role of Innovation Capacity was assessed using the VAF (Variance Accounted For) method. According to Hair et al. (2017), VAF values below 20% indicate no mediation, values between 20% and 80% indicate partial mediation, and values above 80% indicate full mediation. In Table 5, results showed that Innovation Capacity partially mediates all three relationships (VAF_{KA->IC->DCP} = 26.1%; VAF_{KD->IC->DCP} = 28.0%; VAF_{KU->IC->DCP} = 26.0%)

Table 5: f², VIF value, and Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	VIF	f ²	VAF	Result
H1	H1: KA → IC	0.298	4.567	1.742	0.156		Supported
H2	H2: KD → IC	0.267	3.892	1.835	0.123		Supported
H3	H3: KU → IC	0.312	4.789	1.768	0.167		Supported
H4	H4: KA → DCP	0.243	3.678	1.856	0.112		Supported
H5	H5: KD → DCP	0.198	2.987	1.923	0.089		Supported
H6	H6: KU → DCP	0.256	3.856	1.892	0.121		Supported
H7	H7: IC → DCP	0.289	4.234	2.134	0.145		Supported
Mediating effect	KA->IC->DCP					0.261	Supported
	KD->IC->DCP					0.280	Supported
	KU->IC->DCP					0.260	Supported

4.3. Discussion

The empirical findings strongly support all hypothesized relationships between knowledge management dimensions, innovation capacity, and distribution channel performance in Vietnam's hospitality sector. This section discusses these findings with the existing literature.

The significant positive impact of knowledge acquisition on innovation capacity (β = 0.298, p < 0.001) aligns with Chen and Huang (2009) findings that knowledge acquisition capabilities enhance firms' ability to generate and implement new ideas. This relationship is particularly pronounced in hospitality, where rapidly changing customer preferences necessitate continuous knowledge acquisition for innovation. Similarly, Fidel et al. (2018) found that firms actively acquiring customer knowledge demonstrate superior innovation outcomes.

Knowledge dissemination's positive effect on innovation capacity (β = 0.267, p < 0.001) supports Hartono and Sheng (2015) assertion that effective knowledge sharing across organizational units catalyzes innovation. This finding

extends their work by demonstrating that formal and informal knowledge-sharing mechanisms in hospitality firms significantly enhance their innovative capabilities. The more substantial effect of knowledge dissemination compared to acquisition suggests that internal knowledge flows may be more crucial for innovation than external knowledge gathering in the hospitality context.

The most substantial relationship was observed between knowledge utilization and innovation capacity (β = 0.312, p < 0.001), confirming Alegre et al. (2011) findings that practical knowledge application is crucial for innovation performance. This result particularly resonates with Scarbrough (2003) emphasis on translating knowledge into actionable innovations. The dominant effect of knowledge utilization on innovation capacity (β = 0.312) reveals particular significance in Vietnam's hospitality context. This strong relationship can be attributed to several industry-specific factors. First, the intensive customer interaction characteristic of hospitality services necessitates rapidly applying customer insights. Our findings show that firms effectively translating customer feedback into service

improvements demonstrate superior innovation outcomes. Second, the nature of service innovations in hospitality often requires immediate process modifications. The strong path coefficient suggests that firms excelling in knowledge utilization can more effectively implement service improvements. This is particularly relevant in Vietnam's rapidly evolving hospitality sector, where adapting to changing customer preferences is crucial for competitiveness. The relationship between knowledge utilization and innovation is further strengthened by operational characteristics specific to hospitality services. The need for quick translation of learning into practice is paramount, as service delivery improvements cannot be delayed without impacting customer experience. Additionally, the effectiveness of knowledge utilization is enhanced when employees are empowered to apply knowledge directly in customer interactions, a finding particularly relevant in Vietnam's service-oriented hospitality sector.

Regarding distribution channel performance, the direct effects of knowledge management dimensions were also significant but showed different patterns. Knowledge acquisition's impact on distribution channel performance ($\beta = 0.243$, $p < 0.001$) aligns with Zhang and Hiltz (2003) findings that market knowledge acquisition enhances operational capabilities. However, the effect was weaker than anticipated, suggesting that knowledge acquisition's influence on distribution channels may be more indirect through innovation capacity.

Knowledge dissemination showed a more substantial effect on distribution channel performance ($\beta = 0.198$, $p < 0.01$), supporting Hartono and Sheng (2015) emphasis on information sharing for enhanced channel coordination. This finding extends their work by demonstrating the importance of knowledge dissemination in Vietnam's hospitality sector, where relationship-based business practices predominate.

Knowledge utilization's substantial impact on distribution channel performance ($\beta = 0.256$, $p < 0.001$) corroborates Stuart (2000) findings on the importance of applying knowledge to improve operational efficiency. The strong relationship suggests that hospitality firms effectively translate knowledge into action to achieve superior distribution channel outcomes.

The significant relationship between innovation capacity and distribution channel performance ($\beta = 0.289$, $p < 0.001$) represents the most assertive path coefficient in the model, supporting Damanpour et al. (2007) assertion that innovation drives operational excellence. This finding extends the existing literature by empirically demonstrating innovation's crucial role in enhancing distribution channel performance within the hospitality context.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several significant theoretical contributions to the knowledge management and innovation literature:

First, it extends the Resource-Based View by empirically validating knowledge management as a critical capability driving innovation and operational performance in the hospitality sector. The strong relationships between knowledge management dimensions and performance outcomes reinforce RBV's premise that knowledge-based capabilities create sustainable competitive advantage.

Second, the study develops and validates a comprehensive model integrating knowledge management, innovation capacity, and distribution channel performance. This integration advances the theoretical understanding of how knowledge management processes influence innovative and operational outcomes simultaneously.

Third, the research contributes to knowledge management theory by demonstrating the differential effects of acquisition, dissemination, and utilization on performance outcomes. The more substantial impact of knowledge utilization compared to acquisition suggests a theoretical refinement in understanding the relative importance of different knowledge management processes.

The study extends innovation theory by empirically establishing innovation capacity as a crucial mediating mechanism between knowledge management and operational performance. This advances the theoretical understanding of how knowledge-based capabilities translate into tangible performance improvements.

Finally, the effectiveness of knowledge management practices in Vietnam's hospitality sector demonstrates unique characteristics shaped by distinct cultural elements. Our findings reveal that Vietnam's cultural context significantly influences knowledge management practices, particularly in how knowledge is shared, disseminated, and utilized within organizations. Vietnam's high-context communication culture emphasizes implicit understanding and non-verbal cues, substantially impacting knowledge-sharing mechanisms. This is evidenced in our results, where informal, relationship-based communication channels complement formal knowledge-sharing platforms. The more substantial effect of knowledge dissemination ($\beta=0.267$) compared to knowledge acquisition ($\beta=0.243$) on distribution channel performance can be attributed to the emphasis on maintaining harmony and building consensus in Vietnamese business culture. The hierarchical nature of Vietnamese organizations creates distinct patterns in knowledge flows. While this might traditionally be seen as a barrier, our findings suggest that when properly managed,

these structured relationships can facilitate more effective knowledge dissemination, particularly in the hospitality sector, where clear lines of authority are essential for service delivery. The collectivist values prevalent in Vietnamese culture also play a crucial role in shaping how knowledge is utilized, emphasizing group decision-making and shared responsibility for implementation.

5.2. Managerial implications

The findings offer valuable insights for hospitality industry practitioners and managers:

First, the results prove that investing in knowledge management systems and processes can significantly enhance innovation and operational performance. Managers should prioritize developing comprehensive knowledge management capabilities.

Second, the more substantial effect of knowledge utilization suggests that firms should focus on acquiring knowledge and developing systems and processes to apply knowledge throughout the organization effectively.

Third, the findings highlight the crucial role of knowledge dissemination, indicating that managers should foster both formal and informal knowledge-sharing mechanisms within their organizations.

Fourth, the strong relationship between innovation capacity and distribution channel performance suggests that managers should view innovation investments as crucial for improving operational efficiency, not just for developing new services.

5.3. Limitation and Further Research

Several limitations suggest directions for future research. First, the cross-sectional nature of the data limits causal inference. Longitudinal studies could better establish the temporal relationships between knowledge management, innovation, and performance outcomes. Second, the focus on Vietnam's hospitality sector may limit generalizability. Future research should test the model in different cultural contexts and industry sectors. Third, while the study examined direct relationships, future research could investigate potential moderating factors such as organizational culture or environmental dynamism. Longitudinal studies would be valuable in understanding how knowledge management practices evolve as firms mature, especially in Vietnam's rapidly developing hospitality industry. Investigating the role of external knowledge sources warrants attention, mainly to how customer feedback mechanisms and competitor analysis contribute to knowledge acquisition in Vietnam's unique market context. This could include examining how traditional and digital feedback channels complement each

other in the hospitality sector. Finally, future studies could explore additional outcome variables beyond distribution channel performance, such as financial or customer satisfaction.

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