STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY PLATINUM CREDIT LIMITED IN KENYA TO MANAGE DIGITAL DATA

BY

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented to any other university or institution of higher learning for examination or for any other purpose.

Signed ……………………………….. Date …………………………

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REG NO: D61/72585/2012

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Signature: _____ _____

SUPERVISOR: PROF PETER K'OBONYO DATE

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my family members, The Gichohi's.

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It has been an exciting and instructive study period in the University of Nairobi and I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to carry out this study as a demonstration of knowledge gained during the period studying for my master's degree. With these acknowledgments, it would be impossible not to remember those who in one way or another, directly or indirectly, have played a role in the realization of this research project. Let me, therefore, thank them all equally.

First, I am indebted to the all-powerful GOD for all the blessings he showered on me and for being with me throughout the study. I am deeply obliged to my supervisor Prof K'obonyo for his exemplary guidance and support without whose help; this project would not have been a success. Finally, yet importantly, I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the lasting memory of my loving family, and friends who are a constant source of motivation and for their never ending support and encouragement during this project.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

EDI -Electronic Data interchange EDI

IT – Information Technology

BCM -Business continuity management

KM -Knowledge management

KWFT -Kenya Women Finance Trust

DTMs -Deposit Taking Microfinance

SACCO–Saving &Credit Cooperatives

MFIs – Microfinance Institutions

MIS - Management Information System

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish strategies adopted by platinum credit limited to manage digital data. The research design used in this study was a case study and primary data was collected by the use of interview guide as the principal instrument. Content analysis was employed to analyze the findings. From the findings of the study indeed it noted that systems hosted remotely hindered the system manager in executing work effectively. It was also revealed that inaccessibility jeopardized organizational benefits and further services rendered within 24 hours were sometimes inaccessible due to technical changes taking place and poor internet connectivity in remote areas. It was further noted that system managers are not fully empowered as supposed to, to manage the system effectively. The study concluded that the organization has demonstrated governance and management proficiency through investing in audit and financial systems to manage IT assets. Therefore, the study findings recommended that there should be sufficient flexibility in system usage within the system's infrastructure. This will enable the system manager in executing work effectively because everything is run remotely and the organization has no control over it. Further, technical changes taking place should be handled by the relevant experts and internet connections should be 24 hours for the organization to realize its benefits. System managers should be empowered as supposed to manage the system. The study also recommends that governance and management proficiency in information technology assets put in place those formal policies and documents them. The study further recommended that employees should be trained and be conversant with data disclosure policy.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1Background of the Study

Organizations are facing exciting and dynamic challenges in the 21st century. In the globalized business, companies require strategic thinking and only by evolving good corporate strategies can they become strategically competitive. A sustained or sustainable competitive advantage occurs when firm implements a value – creating strategy of which other companies are unable to duplicate the benefits or find it too costly to initiate. Corporate strategy includes the commitments, decisions and actions required for a firm to achieve strategic competitiveness and earn above average returns. (Afua and Tucci2001), argue that most firms are in business to win or to outperform their competitors. They also adopt new technologies to fend off new competitors, reinforce an existing competitive advantage or leapfrog competitor.

Change is the key element that is transforming organizations in this century. According to Afua et.al, (2001), to take advantage of change or to avoid competitors, firms may want to undergo a strategic management process to answer the question of where the firm is now concerning adoption of Information technology and how effectively it has managed information/digital data at its disposal to improve business efficiency. Information systems are becoming of ever greater interest in progressive and dynamic organizations. The need to obtain access conveniently, quickly and economically makes it imperative to devise procedures for the creation, management and utilization of databases in organizations.

Management information and information systems, in particular those related to effective decision-making processes in an organization, i.e. MIS, are regarded as valuable organizational resources. Information technology can be helpful in supporting the search for competitive advantage (Dennis, Nunamaker, Paranka1991). The electronic exchange of transaction documents has had a significant impact on business practices. Electronic Data interchange (EDI) brings in many benefits to the organization such as reduced costs, faster turnaround, better customer service, and in some firms strategic advantage over their competitors.(Karimi, Gupta and Somers1996) suggests that the new competitive strategies will be increasingly technology-based global initiatives that are affected by the firms' IT maturity.

IT is a major force driving the need for business agility and at the same time an important capability, which can hinder or enable a firm's level of business agility. Over time, IT has developed and matured significantly. Efficiency was the primary objective shaping the architecture of IT, while delivering relatively limited performance. Roles and relationships were tightly defined to optimize use of scarce and expensive technology resources (Hagel and Brown 2001). During the years IT has become standardized and commoditized, leading to lower prices due to economies of scale.

1.1.1Concept of strategy

Strategy is a set of key decisions made to meet objectives. A strategy of a business organization is a comprehensive master plan stating how the organization will achieve its mission and objectives. Chandler (1962) suggests that strategy is the determinant of the basic long-term goals of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the

allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals. Mintzberg (1979) defines strategy is a mediating force between the organization and its environment: consistent patterns in streams of organizational decisions to deal with the environment. Strategic responses is a set of decisions and actions that result in the formalization and implementation of plans designed to achieve a firm's objectives (Pearce and Robinson).Strategy refers to a complex web of thoughts, ideas, insights, experiences, goals, expertise, memories, perceptions, and expectations that provides general guidance for specific actions in pursuit of particular ends.

(Thwaites and Glaister1992) argue that for an organization to succeed in an industry, it must select a mode of strategic behaviour that matches the level of environmental turbulence and develop a resource capability which complements the chosen mode. They identify three distinct modes of strategic behaviour. The first mode is reactive and driven by the environment and the second mode is pre-emptive and seeks to anticipate future events and prepare for them. The third mode is the most aggressive stance where organizations not only seek to identify future scenarios but also work to bring these about.

1.1.2 Management of digital data

The value of any information is derived from the actions that management takes as a result of using that information and therefore information specialists need to know what type of tasks and functions management have to perform so that they are able to produce relevant and usable information. The functions of management can be grouped into five areas, namely: planning; decision making; organization and coordinating; leadership and

motivation and control. Obviously, the emphasis given to each area varies from manager to manager and is especially dependent on the level of the manager in the organization. Data being livelihood of an organization, it may be considered as the sole differentiating factor between organizations competing in the market place, especially in today's information age. Without data it would be impossible for business operations to run optimally. Hence, the validity and security of data is fundamental to the success of any business Cane (2002). Organizations have the responsibility to ensure that data is made available to business operations and in cases where the data is not immediately retrievable, recovery processes must be implemented.

Data through an information cycle moves from one state to another until when it becomes obsolete. An information life cycle therefore, involves the creation, storage and protection of data through the application of data protection strategies using relevant technologies, processes and procedures Haeusser et al., (2007). The concept of an information life cycle implies that the value of information changes with time. Information assets are intangible and for the purpose of this project the following are included in the definition of information Assets: all explicit, codified data, documents and published content, irrespective of medium (e.g., hard copy, soft copy, microfiche, and head-space) and format (e.g. Word document, spreadsheet, email, drawing), as well as tacit knowledge. These intangible assets are inputs to the business.

A modern organization needs to treat its data as money and also understand patterns of 'wear and tear' and expected media lifetimes (Liang et al., 2009). This statement implies that an organization's data can be seen as an asset with an attached monetary value.

Moore (2003) says "storing data is one thing; retrieving data is everything" and that data once stored and protected must be retrievable in case of a disaster. To reiterate the notion of data management, (Burnie2002) observed that conventional data protection methods are no longer sufficient and may succumb to the challenges that businesses face regarding the growth of data needs and the availability requirements of working twenty-four hours a day and seven-days-a-week for business operations.

1.1.3 Strategies Employed in Management of digital data

Information management has been viewed as the organization-wide capability of creating, maintaining, retrieving and making immediately available the right information, in the right place, at the right time, in hands of the right people, at the lowest cost, in the best media, for use in decision making Langemo (1980). In the same vein, (Best1988) defines information management as the economic, efficient and effective co-ordination of the production, control, storage and retrieval and dissemination of information from external and internal sources, in order to improve the performance of the organization. To harness data as a corporate asset requires a mix of "soft" skills, required to build sustainable strategies and manage change, and "hard" stuff, which applies a portfolio of data management tools and techniques to ensure the delivery of consistent, high-quality data that's aligned with business strategies and initiatives.

Critical business data is generally protected using management systems and themes such as business continuity management, backup restoration, and knowledge management. Business continuity management (BCM) involves managing risks to ensure that an organization can continues operating at a minimum predetermined level at all times.

Business continuity is a proactive process which is the responsibility for the entire business organization Synergistic Online Solutions (2009). In this way business continuity should be a business goal with the appropriate planning and tools to support it and in turn protect the organization's data. Managing data results in minimizing data loss and maximizing business continuity (Cane, 2002). The most important factor to maintain continuity is to have a data backup system, ensure the system is designed to fit the business data model and to ensure that equipment is up and running.

A key element in any data strategy is to design and implement a data governance program, knowledge management and data management agility. The fundamental premise of a data governance program is that the business designs and runs the program and the IT department (or data management team) executes the policies and procedures defined by the data governance team. In addition, a good data governance program incorporates change management practices that accelerate user adoption and ensure long-term sustainability. Another aspect of BCM is managing knowledge in the organization. Knowledge management (KM) involves spreading knowledge of individuals and groups across the organization in ways that directly impact performance Seiner (2001). Furthermore, there is no guarantee that the data is accurate and up-to-date. A knowledge steward is therefore required to manage knowledge.

1.1.4 Platinum Credit Limited in Kenya

In the 2000's, the microfinance sector witnessed emergence of large number of MFIs with some transforming to commercial banks and deposit taking institutions. The focus of these institutions gradually shifted from emphases on the very poor to the enterprise poor

as demands on these institutions to be become financially sustainable increased. The Microfinance Act 2006became operational in May 2008. The Act empowered the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) to license and supervises deposit taking microfinance institutions. By December 2010, the CBK had licensed Faulu Kenya, Kenya Women Finance Trust (KWFT), SMEP, UWEZO and REMU as Deposit Taking Microfinance (DTMs) to conduct nationwide deposit taking microfinance business. As of May 2010, non-deposit-taking microfinance institutions did not fall under the jurisdiction of the Central Bank's microfinance regulations, and as such they fall under either the SACCO category supervised by the SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA), or the informal microfinance category, which is unregulated except for the licensing required of all NGOs in Kenya.(International Journal of Management Sciences and THE MICROFINANCE ACTNo. 19 of 2006).

Platinum Credit Limited is Micro Finance Company licensed under the company's act and was first set up in Uganda in 2002 before moving to Kenya in 2003 .The Tanzanian operation was set up in 2006. Platinum Credit Limited was founded for the sole purpose to provide emergency loans to every needy working man and woman in Eastern Africa. The company has since grown to become a major regional player with over 340 employees serving more than 80,000 customers within its branch network across Eastern Africa. It has more than twenty eight branches spread across the country with its head office located at the capital city, Nairobi. Due to the nature of its business or collecting via check-off system, it has narrowed down its target client to civil servants, teachers and has a special unique product sold to bank staffs only (www.platinumcredit.co.ke)

1.2 Research Problem

To succeed in the long term, organizations must compete effectively and out-perform their rivals in a dynamic environment. Strategic management is a highly important element of organizational success. The need to know what the business is about, what it is trying to achieve and which way it is headed, is a very basic requirement determining the effectiveness of every member's contribution. Every successful organization has this business self-awareness and every successful business seems to have this clarity of vision, even though it does not arise from a formal planning process (Pearce and Robinson, 1997). In line with a company's strategy, Information systems are implemented within an organization for the purpose of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of that organization. Capabilities of the information system and characteristics of the organization, its work systems, its people, and its development and implementation methodologies together determine the extent to which that purpose is achieved (Silver et al. 1995). The need to improve performance, efficiency and operational costs in business processes and operations has led financial organization to incorporation and adaptation of technology and related innovations such as mobile banking and payments, analytics, digital money, data concentration, mass automation and global integration networks. Data being a company's greatest asset and is continually under threat from human error, technological failure, natural disasters and other external factors. The key to developing an effective data management system is to identify critical business data in order to develop strategies relevant to the level of data criticality. According to Fogleman (1995) data is a tool that must be protected. In an Information Technology (IT) revolution there is a fundamental change in the conduct of warfare that indicates the requirement to build

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a defensive capability to protect the data and data exchange on which business powers have become dependent.

Platinum Credit's management has established and maintained management information system (MIS) framework. Senior management, with appropriate oversight by the board, plays a key role in the development of the framework to ensure the proper allocation of resources, effective planning and coordination across the organization and alignment to the organizational strategic objectives, and a corporate culture that reinforces the importance of data integrity. Of importance, considerations around resources, technology and infrastructure issues need to be addressed in the context of the organization's overall corporate objectives and the evolution of its business model over time. The organization also carry out monitoring trends (e.g. increasing frequency of data inconsistencies or data security breaches) which may be symptomatic of fundamental weaknesses within the data systems and controls or indicative of heightened risks of larger system failures; conducting regular reviews and assessments of the overall operation of the data management and MIS framework; and recommending enhancements or corrective measures to senior management to address gaps and deficiencies in the framework.

While various studies have been done in reference to management of information system, none has been done in regards to strategies adopted by platinum credit limited to manage digital data and therefore depicting the existence of a knowledge gap. The various studies that have previously been done surrounding the aspects of E-commerce include an investigation of the business value of e-commerce Muganda (2001), A survey of the impact and challenges of Business ecommerce in Kenya Kiyeng (2003). There is lack of

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a study of strategies employed by microfinance institutions in the management of digital data and this study seeks to answer to the research question: what strategies has platinum credit limited adopted to manage digital data?

1.3 Research Objective

To establish strategies adopted by platinum credit limited to manage digital data.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings of the study will be of great importance to the management of platinum credit limited as it will enable them make appropriate decisions towards putting in place strategies that will guide the company in enhancing organization's capability in dealing with the current and future need of the organization's data. The study may also bring out the challenges experienced by organization in adopting various strategies in data management and thus appreciate the need for comprehensive strategy to gaining competitive edge as this will affect the profitability of the firm.

Other MFIs and organization's management will obtain knowledge of the microfinance sector dynamics in terms of data management and the responses that are appropriate to data. They will therefore obtain guidance from this study in designing appropriate policies that will govern data management. Future researchers and scholars may use the study as a source of reference for further research on the same area. It is important to document the research findings for future reference.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the literature review to provide relevant theoretical orientation to the study. It identifies the research issues to be addressed. It also provides the detailed outline of the underlying concepts and variables. In summary, this section is discussed in terms of theoretical review, and empirical review.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

This section outlines various relevant theories namely: dynamic capability theory, Perceived environmental uncertainty and resourced based theory.

2.2.1 Dynamic Capability Theory

The Resource Based View of the firm Barney, 1991) argues that organizations possess resources such as land, labour, capital, and information assets that enable them to achieve competitive advantage and superior long-term performance. Barney's (1991) defines firm resources as "all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge controlled by a firm that enables the firm to conceive and implement strategies that improve its efficiency and effectiveness". The conceptualization of dynamic capabilities encompasses market dynamism as an influential factor for firm capability development and evolution (Eisenhardt and Martin 2000). Tripsas (1997) illustrates that radical technological innovation in the typesetter

industry was a major factor of market dynamism. Firms with higher dynamic capabilities developed technological capability and adapt themselves accordingly.

Furthermore, Eisenhardt and Martin (2000) define dynamic capabilities as "the firm's processes that use resources – specifically the processes to integrate, reconfigure, gain and release resources – to match and even create market change," and " the organizational and strategic routines by which firms achieve new resources and configurations as markets emerge, collide, split, evolve, and die."

Adaptive capability is defined as a firm's ability to identify and capitalize on emerging market opportunities (Miles and Snow 1978). Chakravarthy (1982) distinguishes adaptive capability from adaptation. The latter describes an optimal end state of survival for a firm, while adaptive capability focuses more on effective search and balancing exploration and exploitation strategies. This type of 'balancing' act is brought to a strategic level and linked to the resource perspective: adaptive capability is manifested through strategic flexibility - the inherent flexibility of the resources available to the firm and the flexibility in applying these resources (Sanchez 1995). Firms that have high levels of adaptive capability exhibit dynamic capabilities (Teece et al. 1997).

Cohen and Levinthal (1990) refer to absorptive capacity as the ability of a firm to recognize the value of new, external information, assimilate it, and apply it to commercial ends i.e. the ability to evaluate and utilize outside knowledge is largely a function of the level of prior knowledge." Firms with higher absorptive capability demonstrate stronger ability of learning from partners, integrating external information and transforming it into firm-embedded knowledge. Woiceshyn and Daellenbach (2005), in their study of

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Canadian oil and gas firms, find that firms' absorptive capability is critical for success in the face of external technological change.

Innovative capability refers to a firm's ability to develop new products and/or markets, through aligning strategic innovative orientation with innovative behaviour and processes (Wang and Ahmed 2004). Thus, innovative capability encompasses several dimensions. Prior research has emphasized different combinations of these dimensions. For example, Schumpeter (1934) suggests a range of possible innovative alternatives, namely developing new products or services, developing new methods of production, identifying new markets, discovering new sources of supply and developing new organizational forms. Miller and Friesen (1983) focus on four dimensions: new product or service innovation, methods of production or rendering of services, risk taking by key executives and seeking unusual and novel solutions.

2.2.2 Perceived Environmental Uncertainty

Dealing with environmental uncertainty is a common problem faced by all executives (Elbanna &Gherib, forthcoming). For example, executives virtually never have access to all the relevant information, nor can they generate all the possible alternatives and accurately anticipate all the consequences (Alkaraan &Northcott, 2006). In many areas of management studies, researchers consider environmental uncertainty as the environmental dimension on which most theoretical interest and empirical effort have focused. Thus, this study chose environmental uncertainty from among many other environmental variables. Galbraith (1977) defines uncertainty as a gap between the information which one has and the information which one needs to perform a task. Some

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authors have treated uncertainty as a mystery which rational processes cannot resolve. Milliken (1987) identifies three facets of uncertainty.

There is lack of clarity about cause-effect relations, inability to predict the probability of some future state or event, which would favour one alternative or another, and the unpredictability of outcomes. Some authors use uncertainty to refer to uncertainty related to specific events, such as decision uncertainty (Elbanna & Child, 2007) others address environmental uncertainty in general (Baum & Wally, 2003).

2.2.3 Resource Based Theory

The resource-based view (RBV) emphasizes the firm's resources as the fundamental determinants of competitive advantage and performance. The resource-based view (RBV) asserts that firms gain and sustain competitive advantages by deploying valuable resources and capabilities that are inelastic in supply (Wernerfelt, 1984). It adopts two assumptions in analyzing sources of competitive advantage (see for instance Barney, 1991). First, this model assumes that firms within an industry (or within a strategic group) may be heterogeneous with respect to the bundle of resources that they control. Second, it assumes that resource heterogeneity may persist over time because the resources used to implement firms' strategies are not perfectly mobile across firms (i.e. some of the resources cannot be traded in factor markets and are difficult to accumulate and imitate).

Resource heterogeneity (or uniqueness) is considered a necessary condition for a resource bundle to contribute to a competitive advantage. The argument goes "If all firms in a market have the same stock of resources, no strategy is available to one firm that would

not also be available to all other firms in the market" (Cool, Almeida Costa and Dierickx, 2002). There a firm's capability to execute its strategy is greatly affected by its resources and their uniqueness compared to other players.

2.3 Agility and Flexibility

Business Agility is a management concept to cope with the competition, business practices and corporate structures of the twenty-first century. Business (or Enterprise) agility builds upon other concepts in business which include dynamic capabilities Teece et al. (1997), market orientation (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990), absorptive capacity (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990), and strategic flexibility (Ansoff, 1980).The law of requisite variety (ashby, 1956) states that "the variety within a system must be at least as great as the environmental variety against which it is attempting to regulate itself". Goldman et al. (1991) defined agility as the ability to thrive in a competitive environment of continuous and unanticipated change and to respond quickly to rapidly changing, fragmenting global markets that are served by networked competitors with routine access to a worldwide production system and are driven by demand for high-quality, high performance, low-cost, customer-configured products and services.

Key areas of focus in research of information systems include flexibility, which has been described as the capacity of an information system to adapt and to support and enable organizational change, and has been linked to operational efficiency and to organizational nimbleness (Allen & Boynton, 1991). It has also been demonstrated that knowledge management applications can provide an organization with greater flexibility that is manifested, for example, in the capability for innovation (Newell, Huang, Galliers& Pan, 2004).The implementation process is logically preceded by system development where

decisions are made regarding the scope and inherent flexibility of a system that will support a given business process over time. To be effective and efficient, an enterprise system needs to be flexible, that is, cover a certain range of functions and features and allow for variation over time (Allen & Boynton, 1991). Decisions related to flexibility are typically not straightforward. On one hand, insufficient flexibility limits system usage and may require manual operations, thereby jeopardizing the anticipated benefits (Koste & Malhotra, 1999). On the other hand, excessive flexibility unnecessarily increases system complexity, and can lead to extra costs and usability problems, followed by adoption resistance from users (Silver, 1991).Despite the potentially significant impact of flexibility on the long-term success of an enterprise system, the economic value of flexibility is only rarely acknowledged (Kumar, 2004).

2.4 Data Governance

Governance refers to what decisions must be made to ensure effective management (decision domains) and who makes the decisions (locus of accountability for decision-making). Management involves making and implementing the decisions (khatri& brown, 2010). A critical role of governance is to monitor and control the behaviour of management, who preside over the day-to-day activities of running the organization (fama & jensen, 1983). Key assets such as human assets, financial assets, physical assets, information technology assets, relationship assets, and intangible assets such as data, information, and knowledge need to be governed (Khatri & brown, 2010). Companies have demonstrated governance and management proficiency in human assets, financial assets, physical assets, information technology assets, and relationship assets. However, many organizations lack an all-encompassing information management and information

governance policy (kooper, maes, &lindgren, 2011). Organizations often spend too much on IT infrastructure and software and very little on data management and quality. Managers often regard IT infrastructure problems as more critical than information availability. Best (2010) agrees that it is information which must be managed, rather than the technology.

According to (Mlangeni and Biermann2006), the process of minimizing risks associated with information security includes the compilation of a detailed and standardized information security policy. Such a policy can among other things define issues such as threats and corresponding countermeasures in addition to defining roles and responsibilities of employees. Information security policy also specifies the procedures, systems and tools required to protect an organization's information. The benefits of creating such a policy include: Information security policies will help protect the business' investment in information system. This is achieved by defining what must be done to ensure all information assets are adequately protected against damage and the practice of developing information security policies is becoming increasingly popular and may be considered a source of competitive advantage amongst security conscious business partners and customers PricewaterhouseCoopers (2002).Security incidents result in financial losses to organizations, damage their reputation, disrupt the business continuity and sometimes may also have legal implications (Department of Trade and Industry, 2004). In order to avoid such challenges, organizations should ensure that they are adequately protected, and one of the basic ways to achieving this is developing and adopting a security policy.

Abbot (1999) conducted structured interviews with members of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa on the use of documentary records. The major findings of the study were that electronic records were being produced in both the public and private sectors and the National Archives of South Africa had established an electronic records management programme based on three control strategies. A study to investigate the management of electronic records in the public sector in Lesotho was conducted by Sejane (2004). The study established that the public sector in Lesotho was not managing its electronic records satisfactorily. It was established that the public sector did not only have legislation that specifically dealt with managing electronic records, but also lacked written policies, strategies and guidelines. There were no qualified personnel with the expertise and skills to manage electronic records in the public sector.

Kimwele et al.(1950) studied the adoption of information technology security policies in Kenyan Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).The study sought to find out whether SME employees are given adequate and appropriate information security education and training, and if employees are well informed as to what is considered acceptable and unacceptable usage of the organization's information systems. There was evidence from the survey to suggest that IT security policies are not widely adopted and the benefits harnessed by Kenyan SMEs.

2.5 Knowledge as Strategic Resource

According to Martin et al. (1991) one of the most important barriers to the implementation of information management is the adoption of a proprietary attitude to information on the part of certain individuals and departments. Knowledge is considered

as the element of a recombination process to generate innovation (Galunic, 1998). It has an inherent value to be managed, applied, developed and exploited. Knowledge can be seen as an asset, raising traditional asset questions to management such as when, how much and what to invest in. Owing to the particular properties of knowledge, however, knowledge assets require special attention. Swan et al. (1999) argue that knowledge exploration and exploitation are the core objectives of KM. Knowledge is often embedded in employees; has features of a public good (Jaffe, 1986); and it can hardly be bought in the market (Hall et. al., 2006, 296).

Innovating firms have a need for a sophisticated knowledge management (KM), which pays a lot of attention to the special requirements for and the interactive dimensions of knowledge (creation). KM implementation can be divided into IT-based KM and human-resource-related KM, as well as process-based approaches (Tidd et al. 2001). IT-based or supply driven KM emphasizes the need for (easy) access to existing knowledge stored in databases or elsewhere (Swan et al., 1999). Various studies focus on the role of KM in the innovation process. The results found by Liao and Chuang (2006) confirm the vital role which KM has for the knowledge processing capability and in turn, on speed and activity of innovation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the research proposal deals with the description of the methods applied in carrying out the research study. This chapter is organized under the following sections Research Design, Target Population, Sampling design, Data Collection Methods, Data Collection, Validity, Reliability and Data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the plan of collecting and utilizing data for a desired purpose, e.g. prove a hypothesis, or study a behavior or pattern in the said environment. Research design falls into two categories: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative research design seeks to analyzed and understand social interactions while qualitative seeks test hypothesis and look at the cause and effects. Research design types are two: case study where only one firm is studied and survey where a portion of the population is studied.

The research design used in this study was a case study. This is because there is only one firm being studied as a unit of analysis. Therefore, case study survey was deemed best strategy to fulfill the objectives of this study as it looked deeper at the current situation in the platinum credit versus the ideal situation and give recommendations.

3.3 Data Collection

This study sought to collect primary data by adopting interview guide as the principal instrument for data collection which was used for the informant. The interviewees were top management which comprises of the CEO, Managing Director, finance director, head

of IT, head of country sales manager, head of sales strategy and training. Under middle level management, researcher also interviewed head of Risk, head Collections, head of customer care, finance manager and business analyst.

The interview guide had open-ended questions so as to allow the researcher to gather in depth information from the informants. The interview was administered by the researcher through direct interaction with the respondents to explain the motive of the study and for purposes of creating a rapport that facilitated the carrying out of interviews.

3.4 Data Analysis

Content analysis is a set of procedures for organizing information in a standardized format that allows researcher to make inferences about the characteristics and meaning of written and other recorded material especially where semi structured questionnaire is used. Simple formats can be developed for summarizing information or counting the frequency of statements. The result was presented using tables, graphs and charts for ease of understanding. This also allowed for the interpretation of the findings generated and a recommendation from the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the result of the analysis of data collected through interviews targeting top management of Platinum Credit limited. They included the CEO, Managing Director, Finance Director, Head of IT, Head of country Sale Manager, Head of sales strategy and training. The data was analyzed using content analysis based on meanings and implications emanating from respondents information and documented data. Specifically, it starts with the analysis of the general information of the respondent and then proceeds to results strategies adopted by platinum credit limited to manage digital data.

4.2 Demographic information

On seeking to establish the gender composition of the respondents, the study established that male gender dominated and comprised the majority , accounting for 67% ;and they were followed by their female counterparts who also accounted for 33%.It can be therefore be concluded most respondents were male. The researcher investigated the period the respondents have worked in platinum credit limited and the length of service at the company ranged from 4 to 10 years. The respondents, according to the analysis of the findings, were from IT, Sales and marketing, Finance, Executive, and revenue collections.

The designation of the respondents comprised of the CEO, Managing Director, finance director, head of IT, head of country sales manager, head of sales strategy and training. Under middle level management, researcher also interviewed head of Risk, head Collections, head of customer care, finance manager and business analyst.

4.3 Strategies Adopted to manage Digital Data

4.3.1 Agility and Flexibility

The strategies adopted by the organization comprised agility and flexibility, data governance and knowledge. The respondents were asked to indicate whether the organization had capacity to adapt and to support organizational change. The responses received from the interviewee's shows clearly that there is an improvement by employees in various departments; their flexibility and pro-activeness through process reviews, human capital, and exposure to competition in management of digital data.

Moreover, the study inquired whether the system usage is hampered by insufficient flexibility within the system's infrastructure. The respondents stated that despite the fact that the system is hosted remotely; the system manager in executing work effectively and thus the organization has control over it. From this, it is consistent with the previous studies that flexibility, which has been described as the capacity of an information system to adapt and to support and enable organizational change, and has been linked to operational efficiency and to organizational nimbleness (Allen & Boynton, 1991).
This implies that the organization need to always put in place measures and emergency tools to aid when the system is hosted remotely.

The researcher investigated on how system inaccessibility jeopardized organizational benefits. Based on the results it was clear that services rendered 24 hours were sometimes inaccessible due to technical changes taking place and poor internet connectivity in remote areas, which affects the implementation of strategies, as well as timelines of reporting in the organization. It is consistent with the studies done by (Silver, 1991),that increases system complexity and inaccessibility can lead to extra costs and usability problems, followed by adoption resistance from users.

4.3.2 Data governance

The respondents were requested to explain whether the organization has demonstrated good governance and management proficiency in managing information technology assets. They indicated that indeed the internal environment has put in place restricted rights in data accessibility, and organization has demonstrated governance and management proficiency by investing in audit and financial systems efficiently and effectively manage IT assets. The study further revealed that that there is no governance and management proficiency in information technology assets, cited that the policies in place are informal and not documented and also the lack of IT committee in the board. According to (khatri& brown, 2010),Key assets such as human assets, financial assets, physical assets, information technology assets, relationship assets, and intangible assets such as data, information, and knowledge need to be governed but this goal have not been attained yet. Therefore, the findings are consistent with it.

The study also required the interviewees to indicate whether the amount of resources spent by the organizations on IT infrastructure and software influences data management and quality. According to the responses, it was evident that if the organization spends more resources on IT infrastructure and software, there will be better management of data. The responses also further revealed that data integrity will be greatly improved. On whether managers regard IT infrastructure problems as more critical than information available, most participants said yes by indicating that for information to be available IT infrastructure must be fully function. The results also identified that information availability is one of the key pillars in IT department of any organization and this is in consistency with (kooper, maes, &lindgren, 2011) where it stated that Organizations often spend too much on IT infrastructure and software.

The study further sought to know whether defining roles and responsibilities of employees clearly play a step towards achieving efficient management of data. From the field responses it was revealed that this empowers employees to apply their knowledge, skills and experience in data management. The results further indicated that employers managed their data daily as they perform their duty. The study sought to inquire if employees are trained or conversant with data disclosure policy. According to the responses it was evidently shown that employees are not conversant with data disclosure policy.

The study also further probed the effects of employees' training on code of ethics. Based on the responses, training makes employees to be liable and responsible for any information they've got. Also the findings revealed that employees must be ethical in

regards to what they do and information they process in their work. This finding is in consistent with the previous studies done by (fama & jensen, 1983).

4.3.3 Knowledge as strategic Resource

In seeking to know the extent employees have access to existing knowledge stored in database, that is, Intranet clearly was revealed that the organization has developed Google as a means of storing their work with the purpose of sharing between themselves. The study further probed extent the organization is facilitating interactive knowledge sharing and creation that is brainstorming. The data collected show that, organization information is stored in cloud and the cloud is accessed interactively by employees who granted access for the information. Through this platform information is shared which contributes to growth of the organization.

The researcher discovered that employees can be motivated by creating performance improvement culture and fostering of organizational learning. Also, training them on new skills and developments and sponsor them to attend seminars. The study sought to find out whether Platinum Credit Limited focuses on mastering transaction data and not in turning information and knowledge that can lead to business results. The responses indicated that as long as data entry is done it aids information system to interpret the data into business information that is translated into strategic action.

4.4 Discussion

The main objective was to establish strategies adopted by platinum credit limited to manage digital data. The study determined strategies adopted to manage digital data by

exploring on the agility and flexibility strategies of data management. The findings of the study revealed that agility and flexibility, data governance and knowledge were some of the strategies adopted. Improvement of employees in various departments was revealed whereby we had flexibility and pro-activeness through process reviews, human capital, and exposure to competition in management of digital data. In addition, it was stated that information system to adopt enabled organizational change, and was linked to operational efficiency to organizational nimbleness which implied that organization needed to put in place measures and emergency tools to aid when the system is hosted remotely.

Further, the results indicated that services were rendered 24 hours which were sometimes inaccessible due to technical changes taking place and poor internet connectivity in remote areas. These affected effective implementation of strategies. The respondents were also required to indicate whether the organization has demonstrated good governance and management proficiency in managing information technology assets. It was clear that internal environment has put in place restricted rights in data accessibility, investing in audit and financial systems on how to manage IT assets efficiently and effectively. It was evident that the organization spends more resources on IT infrastructure and software which increased data integrity of the organization hence IT infrastructure was identified as critical in providing information, there will be better management of data.

The study also sought to establish whether defining roles and responsibilities of employees clearly play a step towards achieving efficient management of data. Field responses indicated that it indeed empowers employees to apply their knowledge, skills

and experience in data management. Evidently, it was shown that employees are not conversant with data disclosure policy and in when employees are trained on code of ethics , it makes an individual be liable and responsible for any information and also was revealed that respondents a knowledge on intranet and Google was developed for the purpose of sharing between themselves. Results also show that, organization information is stored in cloud and the cloud is accessed interactively by employees who granted access for the information. Further, employees can be motivated by creating performance improvement culture and fostering of organizational learning. Also, training them on new skills and developments and sponsor them to attend seminars. Data entry aids information system to interpret the data into business information that is translated into strategic action.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the findings and makes conclusions based on the objective of the study which was to establish strategies adopted by platinum credit limited to manage digital data. This chapter also contains a summary and recommendations for improvement arising from the study and proposes direction for further research.

5.2 Summary of the findings

As to whether the organization had capacity to adapt to and support to enable organizational change, the results of the findings shows that there is an improvement in productivity of employees in various departments with the management of digital data. The study inquired on whether the system usage is hampered by insufficient flexibility within the system's infrastructure and the results evidently showed that that despite the fact that the system is hosted remotely; the system manager in executing work effectively and thus the organization has control over it.

The researcher determined on how system inaccessibility does not jeopardized organizational benefits. Based on the analysis of the findings it was clear that despite the services being rendered 24 hours and were sometimes inaccessible due to technical changes taking place, the company had control over it and they are doing everything they could to minimize the technical error. There is poor internet connectivity in remote areas but the company looks for an alternative.

The study also explored whether the organization has demonstrated governance and management proficiency in information technology assets. The respondents indicated that indeed the internal environment has put in place restricted rights in data accessibility, and organization has demonstrated governance and management proficiency by investing in audit and financial systems efficiently and effectively manage IT assets. The study further revealed that some respondent indicated that there is no governance and management proficiency in information technology assets by citing that policies in place are informal and not documented and lack of IT committee in the board. The respondents indicated that indeed organization has demonstrated governance and management proficiency by investing in audit and financial systems efficiently and effectively manage IT assets.

The study further sought to know from interviewees whether the amount of resources spent by the organizations on IT infrastructure and software influences data management and quality. According to the findings, it was evident that if the organization spent more resources on IT infrastructure and software; there will be better management of data. The responses also revealed that data integrity would be greatly improved. On whether managers regard IT infrastructure problems as more critical than information available, most participants indicated that for information to be available IT infrastructure must be fully function. The results also identified information availability as one of the key pillars in IT department of any organization.

The results further reveals that employers managed their data handled daily as they perform their work. The study sought to inquire if employees are trained or conversant

with data disclosure policy. According to the responses it was revealed that employees are not conversant with data disclosure policy. The study also probed the effects of employees' training. Based on the findings of the study, training makes employees to be liable and responsible for any information them with. Also the findings revealed that employees must be ethical in regards to what they do and information they process in their work.

The study found that it was of paramount importance to establish the extent employees' access to existing knowledge stored in database that is Intranet. It was evidently revealed that the organization has developed Google as a means of storing their work with the purpose of sharing between themselves. The study further established extent the organization is facilitating interactive knowledge sharing and creation that is brainstorming. According to the results gathered from the field, organization information is stored in cloud and the cloud is accessed interactively by employees who granted access for the information. Through this platform information is shared which contributes to growth of the organization. The researcher also sought to determine on how and to what extent the organization working towards motivation of employees at all levels that is creation of a performance improvement culture, and fostering of organizational learning. The findings indicated that it is through educational support by the organizational, training in regard employee duties and sponsor them to attend seminars. The study also investigated whether Platinum Credit Limited focuses on mastering transaction data and not in turning information and knowledge that can lead to business results. The responses indicated that as long as data entry is done it aids information

system to interpret the data into business information that is translated into strategic action.

5.3 Conclusion

On whether the organization had capacity to adapt, support to enable organizational change, the results conclude that indeed there is an improvement of employees in various departments with the management of digital data. The study inquired whether the system usage is hampered by insufficient flexibility within the system's infrastructure. According to the results, it was concluded that, despite the fact that the system is hosted remotely the system manager in executing work effectively and thus the organization has control over it.

The researcher also investigated on how system inaccessibility jeopardized organizational benefits. Based on the findings it was concluded that services rendered 24 hours were sometimes inaccessible due to technical changes taking place and also poor internet connectivity in remote areas. The findings shows that system managers are not fully empowered as expected to manage the system and many times they have to rely on external parties to get resolve or access to the systems at administration level.

On demonstration of governance and management proficiency in information technology assets, the findings concludes that indeed internal environment has put in place restricted rights in data accessibility. The study concludes that organization has demonstrated governance and management proficiency through investing in audit and financial systems efficiently and effectively to manage IT assets. The study further concludes that some

respondent indicated that there is no governance and management proficiency in information technology assets by citing that policies in place are informal and not documented and lack of IT committee in the board.

The study also further sought from respondents to indicate whether the amount of resources spent by the organizations on IT infrastructure and software influences data management and quality. According to the findings, it was concluded that if the organization spent more resources on IT infrastructure and software; there will be better management of data. The responses also further concluded that data integrity will be greatly improved.

On whether managers regard IT infrastructure problems as more critical than information available, the results concludes by indicating that for information to be available IT infrastructure must be fully function. The results also conclude information availability is one of the key pillars in IT department of any organization and as such the same needs to be availed as quickly as needed and in the manner on which it's needed.

The study further established whether defining roles and responsibilities of employees played a step towards in achieving efficient management of data. From the responses, it was concluded that it empowers employees to apply their knowledge, skills and experience in data management. The findings show that employers managed their data handled daily as they perform their work. The study inquired if employees are trained or conversant with data disclosure policy.

Based on the analysis of the findings it was concluded that employees are not conversant with data disclosure policy. The study also further probed the effects of employees'

training. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded training makes employees to be liable and responsible for any information them with. Also the finding concludes that employees must be ethical in regards to what they do and information they process in their work. The study also established the extent employees' access to existing knowledge stored in database that is Intranet. It was concluded that the organization has developed google as a means of storing their work with the purpose of sharing between themselves. On the extent the organization facilitates interactive knowledge sharing and creation on brainstorming, the study findings concluded that organization information is stored in cloud and the cloud is accessed interactively by employees who granted access for the information. Through this platform information is shared which contributes to growth of the organization. The researcher also determined on how and to what extent the organization working towards motivation of employees at all levels that is creation of a performance improvement culture, and fostering of organizational learning. The finding concludes that it is through educational support by the organizational, training in regard employee duties and sponsors them to attend seminars.

The study further determined whether Platinum Credit Limited focuses on mastering transaction data and not in turning information and knowledge that can lead to business results. The responses conclude that as long as data entry is done it aids information system to interpret the data into business information that is translated into strategic action.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that there should be sufficient flexibility in system usage within the system's infrastructure. This will enable the system manager in executing work effectively because everything is run remotely and the organization has no control over it. Further, technical changes taking place should be handled by the relevant experts and internet connections should be 24 hours for the organization to realize its benefits. System managers should be empowered as supposed to manage the system. The study also recommends that governance and management proficiency in information technology assets put in place those formal policies and documents them. The study further recommends that employees should be trained and be conversant with data disclosure policy.

5.5 Limitation of the study

The researcher was met with various challenges when conducting the research that included the fact that Platinum Credit Limited ordinarily does not want to give information due to confidentiality. In addition, some of the interviewees would not find the subject to be of interest. Additionally, some respondents would not want to give the information as they considered it of competitive importance and as an exposure to some weaknesses in the policies in place. The respondents being normally very executives and top manager people may not have found adequate time to be interviewed. Since the research was conducted via open-ended interviews, a large amount of time was needed to collect information from the respondents. Time limitation made it impractical to include more respondents in the study. This study was also limited by other factors in that some respondents may have been biased or dishonest in their answers. More respondents would have been essential to increase the representation of Platinum Credit Limited team in

Kenya. However, the researcher did look for contradictions in the information given and no inconsistency were found.

5.6 Recommendations for further Studies

This study focused on the strategies adopted by platinum credit limited to manage digital data. It is therefore recommended that similar researches should be replicated in other financial organizations and the results be compared so as to establish whether there is consistency on strategies adopted MFIs to manage digital data Kenya.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender

   Male   [ ]   Female   []

2. How long have you worked in platinum credit?

   ....

3. What is your department?

   ....

4. What is your current designation?

   ....

SECTION B: STRATEGIES ADOPTED

Agility and Flexibility

6. Does the organization have the capacity to adapt and to support and enable

   organizational change?

   Explain……………………………………………………………………………………

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7. Is system usage hampered by insufficient flexibility within the system's

   infrastructure? Explain

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8.   How do the effects of (7) above, jeopardize the anticipated benefits?

Explain…………………………………………………………………………………

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Data Governance

9. Has the organization demonstrated governance and management proficiency in

information technology assets?

Explain.…………………………………………………………………………………….

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10. Does the amount of resources/funds spent by the organizations on IT infrastructure

and software influence data management and quality? Explain your

answer……………………………………………………………………………………

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11. Is it true that managers often regard IT infrastructure problems as more critical than

Information availability? Explain

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12. How does defining roles and responsibilities of employees clearly play a step towards

achieving efficient management of data? Explain

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13. Are the employees trained or conversant with data disclosure policy?

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14. What effect does employees' training have on the disclosure of information to unauthorized individuals or systems?

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Knowledge as Strategic Resource

15. To what extent do you think the employees have access to existing knowledge stored in databases: intranet?

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16. How and to what extent is the organization facilitating interactive knowledge sharing and creation: brainstorming?

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17. How and to what extent is the organization working towards motivation of employees at all levels, creation of a performance improvement culture, and fostering of

organizational

learning?..

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18. Organization focus too much on mastering transaction data and not enough on turning

it into information and knowledge that can lead to business results, is this the case

with your

organization?...

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