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Financial literacy and work performance of local managers of the Adventist corporate in Cuba

Nivel de conocimiento financiero y desempeño laboral de directivos del corporativo adventista en Cuba

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Abstract

The objective of the study was to know if there is a significant evaluation between the financial literacy necessary for daily administrative tasks and the performance levels of administrators within the Adventist corporate network in Cuba. This research was non-experimental, quantitative, transversal and correlational. A stratified sampling was used, incorporating 123 directors of the Adventist corporate network in Cuba, out of a total population of 242. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.721 for the 15-item financial literacy instrument, and 0.870 for the work performance instrument. of 19 articles, both considered acceptable for this study. Spearman's correlational rank test was applied due to the non-normal distribution of the data. A Spearman estimation coefficient (*r*) of .311 and a significance level (*p*) of .001 was found. Given this level of significance ($p < .05$), the null hypothesis suggesting that there was no relationship between the variables is rejected, supporting the alternative hypothesis of a positive compensation of medium strength. The findings suggest that improving financial literacy necessary for daily tasks correlates with better performance among Adventist corporate managers in Cuba participating in this study.

JEL Code:

Keywords: financial knowledge, financial performance, financial competencies, organizational efficiency

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Resumen

El objetivo del estudio fue conocer si existe una correlación significativa entre la alfabetización financiera necesaria para las tareas administrativas diarias y los niveles de rendimiento de los administradores dentro de la red corporativa adventista en Cuba. Esta investigación fue no experimental, cuantitativo, transversal y correlacional. Se utilizó un muestreo estratificado, incorporando a 123 directores de la red corporativa adventista en Cuba, de una población total de 242. El coeficiente alfa de Cronbach de 0.721 para el instrumento de alfabetización financiera de 15 ítems, y 0.870 para el instrumento de rendimiento laboral de 19 ítems, ambos considerados aceptables para este estudio. Se aplicó la prueba de rango correlacional de Spearman debido a la distribución no normal de los datos. Se encontró un coeficiente de correlación de Spearman (r) de .311 y un nivel de significancia (p) de .001. Dado este nivel de significancia ($p < .05$), se rechazó la hipótesis nula que sugería que no había relación entre las variables, apoyando la hipótesis alternativa de una correlación positiva de fuerza media. Los hallazgos sugieren que mejorar la alfabetización financiera necesaria para las tareas diarias, se correlaciona con un mejor rendimiento entre los administradores corporativos adventistas en Cuba que participaron en este estudio.

Código JEL:

Palabras clave: conocimiento financiero, rendimiento financiero, competencias financieras, eficiencia organizacional

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Introduction

This research aims to investigate whether there is a significant relationship between the level of financial knowledge required for daily tasks and the performance level of administrators at the Adventist Corporate in Cuba.

The sudden and widespread impact of the coronavirus pandemic has plunged the international economy into the worst recession since World War II, leading to an unprecedented economic slowdown for businesses (Khademian et al., 2020). However, the inherent need for competitiveness, profitability, and efficient goal attainment remains crucial (Trisnawati et al., 2023). Therefore, it has become essential to adopt good business practices. One of the most important practices is ensuring that employees are familiar with their tasks' objectives, responsibilities, and policies, as this guarantees effective and secure performance.

Financial management plays a crucial role in the decision-making process of any organization. It involves the planning, organizing, directing and controlling of financial resources to achieve organizational objectives (Kisdayanti & Pertiwi, 2021). Therefore, it is essential for local managers to possess a strong

level of financial knowledge to manage their organization's finances effectively (Bazrkar et al., 2021). Several studies have been conducted to determine the relationship between financial knowledge and job performance among local managers (Bilti et al., 2022).

Literature Review

Proper knowledge of each responsibility positively impacts performance by promoting uniformity in work, avoiding duplication of functions, facilitating the induction of new employees, and minimizing risks that affect organizational continuity. Choo an Proper knowledge of each responsibility positively impacts performance by promoting uniformity in work, avoiding duplication of functions, facilitating the induction of new employees, and minimizing risks that affect organizational continuity. Choo and Díaz (1999) define knowledge as the set of capabilities, knowledge, and mental processes that an individual has acquired to help them solve problems, interpret reality, and guide behavior.

Thomas (2005) views knowledge as the collection of information acquired through experience, learning, or reflection. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) classify knowledge primarily as explicit and tacit, emphasizing that knowledge is managed more in the social, psychological, and pedagogical realms, including the experience gained by each employee within an organization.

Castro-Gómez (2007) classifies knowledge into empirical, practical, and theoretical categories. He defines each of them in a simple manner as follows: (a) empirical knowledge: It is obtained from the universe and forms the basis of our understanding of the functioning of the universe; (b) practical knowledge: It is directed towards an end or the accomplishment of an action. It shapes behavior (e.g., technical knowledge, ethical knowledge, etc.); and (c) theoretical knowledge: It refers to experiences that we haven't had personally but have been transmitted to us (e.g., scientific knowledge, philosophical knowledge).

Furthermore, he recognizes the avenues through which knowledge is accessed: intuition, experience, tradition, authority, and finally, scientific experimentation. He concludes by stating that only by acquiring knowledge, cherishing it, transmitting it, and organizing it, can we shape what we have and learn from it.

Putri Hartono et al. (2023), and Sharkey (2015) notes that financial literacy involves having the confidence, understanding, and appropriate skills to make financial decisions that promote independence, stability, and financial well-being. These skills encompass the ability to identify, analyze, and effectively use information, resources, and services, as well as make informed decisions about financial commitments, budgets, credit, debt, and long-term planning.

However, tacit knowledge is entirely lost when an employee leaves, as this knowledge is not found in a manual or guide. It is acquired day by day and results from experience. Therefore, when a collaborator departs, the company not only incurs additional costs for training and recruitment but also

loses the knowledge acquired by that employee over time. This may force the new employee to make the same mistakes to acquire the knowledge, resulting in multiple levels of loss for the company.

It is in this sense that companies consider their employees' knowledge as the most precious tangible asset. They understand that this type of asset encompasses creativity, problem-solving abilities, education, professional qualifications, job-related knowledge, occupational assessment, and job-related competencies.

Without doubt, knowledge management is critical to the success of organizations in today's competitive and constantly evolving business environment (Namdarian et al., 2020). Organizations that prioritize the transfer and utilization of knowledge to enhance their innovation capacity are more likely to achieve long-term organizational performance (Zein & Hadijah, 2018). This is particularly true in terms of financial performance, where knowledge management has been found to have a direct impact on the organization's bottom line (Zajkowski & Żukowska, 2021).

Research has confirmed that informed and systematic knowledge management within organizations positively impacts corporate financial performance, while another author suggests that the application of knowledge management practices results in improved financial performance (Mubaraq et al., 2021). In addition, companies that prioritize knowledge sharing and utilize their collective expertise to drive innovation are better equipped to compete in the global market (Li et al., 2021).

However, possessing financial knowledge alone is not sufficient to guarantee effective financial management. Bawono et al. (2022) have shown that financial literacy does not necessarily translate to improved financial management in SMEs.

Regarding performance, Acosta Castillo et al. (2018) define it as the ability assumed by the employee while carrying out their work. They add that when specific objectives are created for the job and the procedures for carrying it out are clearly established, satisfaction is experienced by both the employer and the employee.

Días Chimba (2011) views performance as a set of actions and behaviors expected by the company from its employees, based on a scale that encompasses dimensions such as productivity, responsibility, competence, commitment, and interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

Ortiz García (2016) conceives it as the ability of a company or individual to: fulfill its objectives and goals, adapt to the environment, make rational use of the resources provided, and comply with its strategic guidelines.

Machin Hernández et al. (2015) state that professional performance in contemporary society has become a very important social need due to scientific, technical, technological advancements, knowledge production, and generalization. For them, performance is the capacity of an individual to carry out actions, duties, and obligations specific to their position or professional functions that a job requires. This is expressed in the actual behavior or conduct of the worker in relation to other tasks to be

fulfilled during the exercise of their profession, that is, what the professional does and not just what they know how to do.

Due to the relevance of these elements in the competitiveness and profitability of the entire organization, as well as the impact of these local executives on the management and stewardship of local financial resources amidst the general uncertainty that surrounds our environment, and finally, the lack of a tool in this Adventist corporate to ensure the custody and updating of explicit and tacit knowledge that guarantees performance in line with organizational guidelines and in accordance with the exhortation of White (2004) to work tirelessly to establish a solid financial system, it is through this study that we aim to explore the relationship between the level of knowledge and performance. It should address the following questions: Is there a significant relationship between the levels of financial knowledge of local executives in the Adventist corporate in Cuba? Are there any differences in this relationship concerning factors such as gender, age, educational level, years of experience, and the profession of those working there?

Materials and Methods

Study Design

According to the objectives outlined in this research, the present study was quantitative, descriptive, correlational, and cross-sectional. It was non-experimental since the variables were not manipulated or controlled. It was quantitative because there are numerical values and hypothesis testing, correlational because the relationship between two variables was sought, and cross-sectional because the data were collected at a single point in time.

Ethics

In conducting this study, ethical rules and considerations for research involving humans currently applied in Mexico were followed, as well as those outlined by the University of Montemorelos. This study upholds principles that govern conduct, ensuring that it does not harm others by respecting values such as respect when collecting information that supports the researcher, as well as obtaining and gathering information applied to the study sample through instruments such as surveys or interviews. Similarly, honesty is maintained regarding the information presented to be useful in the respective field of study. Truthfulness is maintained in the application of instruments to ensure reliable research that can be used for the target audience. The aspects are fundamental as they seek to gather important information from organizations through employees who participate in providing information for the research.

Population and Sample

To select the participants, a stratified probability method was followed, involving 123 directors of the Adventist Corporate in Cuba from the total population of 242 in this research. Regarding the

distribution of the participants of the Adventist Corporation of Cuba: 18% belong to the Pinar Del Río area, 15% to the Western and Central regions of the country respectively, 31% are made up of the directors of the Eastern zone and the rest 20% by those in the East of the island. Regarding sex, the majority are women 67.5%; regarding age, the highest frequency is 50 years or older 47.2%; regarding the school level, the highest frequency is the middle level 46.0%. The majority have worked for their respective organizations between 1 and 5 years 51.2%. Regarding profession, the highest frequency is profession or trade 46.0%.

Measuring Instrument

The survey technique was used for data collection, and the base instrument was the "Financial Inspection Oversight Service Inter-American Division Questionnaire" for the treasury area. The following sections of the questionnaire were used: (a) financial literacy level consisting of 15 items, and (b) work performance level consisting of 19 items.

To calculate the reliability of the instrument, the Cronbach's alpha method was used. The reliability value for the instrument measuring the financial literacy level was 0.721 for 15 items, and the reliability value for the instrument measuring work performance was 0.870 for 19 items, both of which are acceptable for this research.

Procedures

Participants received an informed consent letter and were informed about the study's characteristics and confidentiality. Only administrators who decided to participate were given instructions on how to respond. Subsequently, participants independently completed the measurement instruments. Data collection took place approximately from January to December 2021 and was conducted by the researcher. Upon receiving the questionnaire, the researcher allotted 15 minutes for participants to respond.

Data Analysis

A descriptive statistical analysis was performed presenting arithmetic means and standard deviations using a statistical program. To test the relationship hypothesis, the Rho Spearman statistical test was used, since the assumption of normality was not met. Nonparametric tests were also used to address hypotheses about differences.

The Mann-Whitney test was applied to assess the difference between gender and levels of financial knowledge and performance. The Kruskal-Wallis test was utilized to examine differences in age, educational level, years of experience, and profession concerning levels of financial knowledge and performance.

Results

Hypothesis Testing

There is a significant relationship between the level of financial knowledge required for daily tasks and the level of performance of the administrators of the Adventist Corporate in Cuba.

In this use, the Rho Sperman statistical test was used because the assumption of normality is not met, and it was decided to use a non-parametric test. The variables considered in the study are the level of financial knowledge and the level of performance.

When running the statistical test, an r value of .311 and a p significance level of .000 were found. For this level of significance ($p < .05$), the null hypothesis of independence between the variables will be rejected and the hypothesis of a relationship between them will be accepted. A positive compensation was found to a medium degree.

The Mann-Whitney test was applied to evaluate the difference between gender and levels of financial knowledge. When running the statistical test used in this analysis, a Z value of -.769 and a bilateral asymptotic significance level of p equal to .442 were found. Since the p value was greater than .05, it allows us to conclude that gender does not make a significant difference on the level of financial knowledge perceived by administrators. The mean rank for males was equal to 65.40 and for females 65.409. Regarding the level of financial performance, a Z value of -.898 and a bilateral asymptotic significance level of p equal to .369 were found. Since the p value was greater than .05, it is concluded that gender does not have a significant difference with respect to the administrators' financial performance level. The mean rank for males is 66.15 and females 60.00.

The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to examine differences between age, academic level, years of experience, and profession in relation to levels of financial knowledge and performance. When carrying out the analysis, a significant difference was found in the level of financial knowledge according to the academic level. A significant difference was found between the level of financial knowledge and the academic level ($p = 0.046$). The university students showed a greater mean rank of 74.82, the mean rank for middle school was 54.18, and the mean rank for college was 63.73. A significant difference was also found between the level of financial performance and the educational level (p = .001), a difference was found between the university students and the other groups ($p = .002$), a mean rank of 80.64 was obtained for university students, middle school educational level has a mean rank of 45.14, for college educational level a mean rank of 66.95 a higher education showed a higher level of financial performance.

Regarding the level of knowledge and years of experience, no significant difference was shown ($p = .909$); There was also no difference between financial performance and years of experience ($p = .519$). Regarding the level of knowledge and profession, there was no significant difference ($p = .162$); There was also no difference between financial performance and profession ($p = .652$). Regarding the level of knowledge and age, there was no significant difference ($p = .107$); There was also no difference between financial performance and age ($p = .794$).

Discussions

In this research, a significant positive relationship was found between the level of financial knowledge required for daily tasks and the level of performance of the administrators of the Adventist Corporate in Cuba. This result agrees with specialists who have previously made contributions on this topic. In this sense, it is noted that administrators must have the necessary knowledge about financial management, since this plays a crucial role in the decision-making process of any organization. It involves the planning, organization, direction, and control of financial resources to achieve organizational objectives (Kisdayanti & Pertiwi, 2021). Therefore, it is crucial that local managers possess a solid level of financial knowledge to manage their organization's finances effectively (Bazrkar et al., 2021).

Namdarian et al. (2020) consider knowledge management to be critical to the success of organizations in today's competitive and constantly evolving business environment. This is particularly true in terms of financial performance, where financial management has a direct impact on the organization's results (Zajkowski & Żukowska, 2021).

The application of knowledge management practices was found to result in better financial performance (Mubarak et al., 2021). Furthermore, companies that prioritize knowledge sharing and using their collective experience to drive innovation are better equipped to compete in the global market (Li et al., 2021).

Conclusions

In conclusion, the study carried out on the relationship between the level of financial knowledge necessary for daily functions and the performance of administrators in the Adventist Corporate in Cuba reveals a statistically significant and positive relationship of medium magnitude. These findings indicate that as the level of financial knowledge among manager's increases, a corresponding improvement is observed in their performance within the Adventist corporate entity. This connection suggests the importance of strengthening financial competencies among professionals in charge of management since it could directly impact the effectiveness and efficiency of their daily functions in the financial context.

For Future Research

In the construction of this scientific article, it is crucial to acknowledge the specificity and potential limitations inherent to the research methodology and sample selection. This study is meticulously centered on a niche demographic, specifically the administrators within the Adventist Corporate in Cuba. Such a focused approach, while enriching the depth of insights into this particular group, inherently restricts the applicability of the findings beyond this specific organizational and geographical context. Moreover, the reliance on a relatively small sample of administrators from the Adventist Corporate in

Cuba introduces additional constraints on the study's generalizability. These limitations suggest that the results, while significant within their immediate context, may not seamlessly extend or be applicable to broader populations or differing organizational environments. This consideration is vital for interpreting the study's outcomes and understanding the scope within which these findings hold relevance.

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