An understanding of the concept of knowledge management for knowledge management system implementation in two mobile telecommunication companies in Namibia

Mishake Mitchell Mubuyaeta iD
Department of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
Ministry of Gender Equality and Social Welfare, Namibia.
Email: nsala.meshach@gmail.com

Jaffar Msafiri Ponera iD
Department of Knowledge Management
Moshi Co-operative University (MoCU), Tanzania
Email: jaffar.ponera@mocu.ac.tz

Abstract

This study investigates the understanding of knowledge management (KM) for knowledge management systems (KMS) implementation for efficient KM practice in two mobile telecommunications (MT) companies in Namibia. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study employed convergent parallel design via parallel sampling techniques to gather insights. Three hundred and twenty-nine questionnaires were disseminated via online surveys using simple random sampling from 1,584 employees. The questionnaires returned were then accepted based on the comprehension of KM concepts for KMS implementation to introduce KM practice. Quantitative data was subjected to descriptive analysis using SPSS. Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis using Atlas TI. The findings of this study show that Namibia's two MT companies stand to gain significant advantages by implementing KM practices based on their understanding and implementation of KM. By enhancing their KM capabilities, these companies can leverage this organisational knowledge (OK) to drive innovation and adequately meet the demands of a fiercely competitive, knowledge-based society (KBS). This article is of significant value to KM scholars, professionals, decision-makers, and policymakers as an introductory guide to the comprehension of KM for KMS and how they can facilitate effective KM practices within Namibia.

Keywords: Knowledge management, knowledge management practices, knowledge management system, mobile telecommunications, organisational knowledge, Namibia
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Introduction

For organisations to thrive in a society fuelled by knowledge, they must prioritise OK-intensive operations. According to Mubuyaeta and Ngulube (2023), adopting KM practices is essential to accomplishing this objective. To remain competitive in today's KBS and Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), MT companies in Namibia must prioritise understanding KM and that its related concepts. This will in turn enable MT companies to enhance their capabilities and achieve sustainable growth in a rapidly changing business landscape. By leveraging KM practices, MT companies would be able to capture, store, and share critical OK assets that would assist in facilitating effective decision-making, improving performance, and fostering innovation. Failure to prioritise the importance of KM could lead to lost opportunities, reduced productivity, and decreased competitiveness in KBS and 4IR.

Therefore, Namibian MT companies must recognise the importance of KM and invest in it, particularly in developing and honing robust KM strategies to succeed in the KBS and 4IR. Most organisations find KM concepts challenging. KM is a multifaceted field incorporating many frameworks, models, techniques, and technologies (Jennex, 2008; Garcia-Perez, Gheriss, & Bedford, 2019; Mubuyaeta & Ngulube, 2023). Hence, a comprehensive understanding is thus required so that KM facilitation is effectively implemented and managed in an organisation. This is so that KM facilitates the effective organisation and retrieval of information, OK, and technological services within organisations, thereby fostering organisational advancement (Jennex, 2008; Islam *et al.,* 2020; Bultrini and Newman, 2020; Mubuyaeta & Ngulube, 2023). In light of the above, in order to achieve a successful KM process, it is imperative for an organisation to deeply grasp the intricacies of KM within its structure, as Demarest (1997) suggests. The explicit comprehension, endorsement, administration, and evaluation of KM are imperative for cultivating innovation, improving decision-making procedures, fostering organisational learning, and contributing to the organisation's long-term prosperity and socio-economic advancement (Garcia-Perez, Gheriss, & Bedford, 2019; Mubuyaeta & Ngulube, 2023).

To effectively implement KM, it is crucial to possess a comprehensive grasp of the particular KM procedures, methodologies, and principles that can be tailored to align with the organisation's distinct requirements (Mubuyaeta & Ngulube, 2023). According to Bouthillier and Shearer (2002), as well as Garcia-Perez, Gheriss, and Bedford (2019), it is crucial to evaluate the existing components and levels of application within the organisation before the implementation of KM strategies. Understanding the essence of OK and its management within an organisational context is paramount. To achieve the desired outcomes, it becomes mandatory to examine the understanding and approaches of KM thoroughly. The significance of this stage is critical in guaranteeing comprehension of KM for the efficient provision of desired insights. According to Bultrini and Newman (2020) and Xiao (2020), establishing a business culture that champions KM and innovation can be achieved through a practical understanding of the importance of KM practices and how they facilitate the exchange of ideas and information. This underscores the importance of creating an organisational framework that prioritises KM and leverages it as a critical driver of innovation. By fostering an environment that encourages the sharing of OK, ideas, and information, businesses can establish a culture that is both dynamic and responsive to evolving market needs. To this end, MT companies in Namibia should focus on harnessing the potential of KM to drive innovation and promote continuous learning and improvement. The study investigates the understanding of KM for KMS implementation for efficient KM practice in MT companies in Namibia. This is because KM is indispensable in achieving success in a knowledge-driven society, especially in the 4IRs. As a foundational element, understanding KM is pivotal in enabling MT companies in Namibia to access, disseminate, and utilise OK and expertise effectively. The vitality of KM is underlined by the fact that it empowers organisations to remain competitive by staying abreast of the latest developments in their respective fields to be better equipped to mitigate risks, identify new opportunities, and improve their overall performance. Therefore, MT companies must understand KM, allowing them to leverage OK as a strategic asset in the 4IRs.

The importance of KM for organisations has been emphasised in several reviews, including those by Jennex (2008), Bultrini and Newman (2020), Xiao (2020), Polas *et al.,* (2021), and Mubuyaeta and Ngulube (2023). These reviews provide a clear rationale for implementing a KMS that incorporates the fundamental concepts of KM, as argued in the literature by Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2015), Garcia-Perez *et al.,* (2019), and Wang

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and Wang (2020). A comprehensive understanding of KM and its concepts is crucial in designing and implementing an effective KMS for KM practice. Failure to do so could result in the absence of understanding crucial issues and the lack of explicit integration of KMS implementation within an organisational strategy for efficient KM practice. MT companies in Namibia must consider the critical tenets of KM to develop a successful KM practice and leverage the benefits of a well-implemented KMS system. By adopting a comprehensive approach to KM, MT companies can enhance their decision-making processes, promote OK sharing, and foster innovation, ultimately gaining a competitive advantage in their respective industries in KBS and 4IRs. However, a deep understanding of this discipline is imperative to ensure the successful and efficient implementation and practice of KM. In their seminal work, Salehi *et al.,* (2022) have unearthed a profound nexus between KM, OK assets, and social capital. The study further uncovered a significant correlation between intellectual and social capital and its impact on innovation. Furthermore, implementing KM practices, encompassing OK acquisition, dissemination, and adaptation, has been observed to correlate with the manifestation of ecological inventiveness, as highlighted by Polas *et al.,* (2021). However, the comprehension of KM presents a formidable obstacle, as evidenced by the multitude of scholars engaged in this endeavour.

The complexity of this endeavour is further amplified by the wide range of perspectives and subtleties unearthed by every author and the diverse attributes they opt to emphasise (Bultrini & Newman, 2020); thus, MT companies in Namibia are not immune to this phenomenon. However, a deeper understanding of how MT companies in Namibia understand and define KM and its function in supporting, adapting, and implementing KM practices is required. The objective of this study was to delve into the comprehension of KM to implement KMS that would bolster the effectiveness and efficiency of KM practices. Acknowledging that the underlying concept under investigation is still in its early stages of development and refinement within Namibia's public and private sectors is crucial.

The primary focus of the investigation revolved around the central research objective, which sought to delve into understanding of KM for KMS implementation for efficient KM practice in MT companies in Namibia. This is because MT companies in Namibia must be able to adopt KM with their understanding, given that it aligns with their strategic objectives, Namibia's historical context, and the skill set that characterises such businesses in the nation. This enables a smoother and more natural incorporation of KM processes (Bultrini & Newman, 2020). Specifically, the study sought to investigate the understanding of KM for KMS implementation for efficient KM practice in MT companies in Namibia. The following research question guided this study: What are employees' current comprehensions of organisational KM in Namibia's two MT companies?

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework
In this study, the conceptual understanding of KM is grounded on the importance of Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) SECI model to understand OK to induce the adoption of well-structured KM practices via KMS in MT companies in Namibia. This is because tacit and explicit OK comes from acquiring, capturing, sharing, disseminating, and transferring as essential aspects that drive the understanding of KM in MT companies in Namibia. The SECI model is a well-established framework that comprises four stages: socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization. This model has proven to be highly effective in facilitating KM for KMS implementation for effective KM practice in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. By leveraging these key components, organizations can gain a comprehensive understanding of the KM processes and implement KMS strategically and effectively. The SECI model has been widely adopted in academic and business settings and is considered a best practice in KM. These components comprised the conceptual structure of

the study, which directed the investigation and determined the focal point of the literature review (Nengomasha *et al.,* 2017; Miles *et al.,* 2014; Yin, 2016; Shropshire *et al.,* 2020; Ngulube, 2020). This is because KM, seen as an iterative method or process, strives to improve methodologies by fostering an ongoing comprehension of these (KM) core concepts. The concepts embraced in this study are both constructive and valuable, as they provide a comprehensive understanding of KM that would facilitate the implementation of a KMS from the perspective of comprehending KM in MT companies in Namibia.

The current undertaking entails the identification of the most crucial processes that have been highlighted in the prevailing literature. The perspective rooted in OK has profoundly influenced the realm of inquiry, asserting that KM holds a central position in propelling innovation and cultivating a competitive advantage. From this vantage point, the emphasis lies in comprehending KM to implement an efficient and successful KMS to foster efficient KM practices. The knowledge-based approach and SECI model further submits that organisations should succeed by using OK to learn in reference to sharing, capturing, transferring, identifying, storing, and protecting OK (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2019; Ode *et al.,* 2020). In that light, Inkinen *et al.,* (2015) and Rhem (2017) stated that individual workers' perceptions of what constitutes KM, mainly what is acceptable in organisational KM knowledge, are context- and role-dependent. As mentioned above, this study emphasizes the importance of understanding different employee perspectives in KM to improve the effectiveness of KMS. It emphasizes the need to explore KM as a concept that facilitates its implementation in Namibian MT companies.

The study highlights the importance of employees' comprehension for successful and efficient KM practice. However, it also acknowledges the need for more comprehensive mixed-methods research on KM in the Namibian MT sector and the private sector's early development of this concept. The preceding comprehension offers a pivotal insight into delving into the notion of KM, which forms the foundation of frameworks that scrutinise the recognition, acquisition, preservation, retrieval, dissemination, and application of OK (Kaira & Phiri, 2022; Ponera & Mubuyaeta, 2023). This comprehension highlights recognising various dimensions of KM within the organisation.

Several studies by Kaira and Phiri (2022), Garcia-Perez *et al.,* 2019; Nengomasha *et al.,* (2017), Lin (2019), Asrar-ul-Haq and Anwar (2016), Mubuyaeta and Ngulube (2023) highlight problems related to KM, amongst others, show a lack of a KM strategy and department (section), and not understanding what KM as problems organisations encounter. This is in light of the breeding of core KM barriers related to organisational, cultural, technological, and structural factors (Nengomasha *et al.,* 2017). Hence, exploring employees' understanding of KM in selected MT companies in Namibia was essential. This will assist with identifying and developing ideas from related works that would familiarise the selected MT companies with current knowledge in a given field of organisational KM. However, what is known must demonstrate the wide range of problems associated with these situations or the ramifications of inadequate KM awareness. A number of the problems mentioned could be associated with a need for more awareness of the basics of KM, particularly in MT companies. Lack of OK about the importance of basic KM is one of many things that can make it challenging to understand KMS implementation, in particular its practice (Kaira & Phiri 2022; Nengomasha *et al.,* 2017; Lin 2019; Asrar-ul-Haq and Anwar 2016; Mubuyaeta & Ngulube 2023). Conducting a comprehensive investigation was deemed essential to acquire an in-depth understanding of Namibian MT companies' perspectives concerning KM and provide them with practical assistance for their endeavours.

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Methodology

The study used a mixed-methods approach and employed a convergent parallel design and parallel sampling techniques to explore employee understanding of KM for a successful KMS implementation in MT companies in Namibia. The selection of methodology utilised in the study was based on pragmatic considerations to acquire dual perspectives on KM employee comprehension for KMS implementation in two Namibian MT companies in Namibia from multiple angles. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), Ngulube (2019), Creswell and Creswell (2018) and Miller *et al.,* (2020), in a convergent parallel design, the researcher gathers and analyses two separate (quantitative and qualitative) data in parallel before merging or amalgamating the findings. Companies such as Mobile Telecommunications Limited, Namibia, and Telecom Namibia were under investigation, as they were deemed to possess pertinent information crucial for comprehending the concept of KM for KMS implementation and were purposely selected for investigation. Other institutions such as Paratus Namibia declined participation in the investigation.

In light of the above, researchers collected and carefully examined key themes that define KM in quantitative and qualitative results from two MT companies in Namibia, looking at the implications of the employees' logical inferences about how well they understood KM for KMS implementation in two MT companies in Namibia. Subsequently, the amalgamation of data occurred as the researchers acquired the two distinct databases and organised them for analysis, evaluation, or contrast within the framework of KM comprehension into different KM concepts. Out of a comprehensive pool of 1,584 employees constituting the employee population, 329 questionnaires were disseminated online. Subsequently, 200 questionnaire responses were successfully received via Google forms. Among these responses, a discerning selection process was employed, and 176 responses were accepted that demonstrated a satisfactory comprehension of KM concepts for KMS implementation.

Twenty online structured interviews were scheduled, of which eleven were successfully conducted. Quantitative respondents were selected using simple random selection under probability sampling using employee email register. Qualitative participants were selected using purposive sampling. Participants were required to hold managerial positions within their respective departments in MT companies in Namibia that demonstrated exceptional decision-making and leadership skills, possessed at least three years of supervisory experience, and had a degree in their specialised field. Such participants were sought to have considerable advanced knowledge and expertise within their relevant study area. Their adept application of said expertise to practical scenarios and ability to contextualise KM questions effectively bear significant implications for understanding KM The researchers examined the data, focusing on identifying patterns and themes (allocating codes) to arrive at a scientifically sound conclusion on the understanding of KM for KMS implementation.

The questionnaires were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS version 22.0. The analysis was primarily descriptive. Graphs and tables are used as visual aids to communicate the descriptive and logically derived findings of this study. The content analysis method examined qualitative data collected via interviews and documents. The verbatim textual format of online interviews was generated using the inherent processes of two software programs: Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Researchers further made use of ATLAS.ti 22 as a tool for extracting, categorising, and interconnecting data segments to identify patterns and themes within interviews and documents on KM for KMS implementation in two MT companies in Namibia. The prevalent themes were determined by analysing transcribed recordings and direct quotations. The participants' names and positions are neither cited nor hinted at in the data presentation due to the competitive nature of the institutions under study.

Findings
According to the study, most respondents were female, accounting for 77%, while the male population comprised a smaller percentage of 23.3%. Respondents were classified based on gender, educational background, professional experience, and operational and managerial responsibilities. A significant proportion of the participants (61.1%) held a bachelor's degree, while the remaining 38.9% held a diploma, master's degree, or technical diploma with at least ten years of professional experience. Of particular importance is the fact that the participants who engaged in the study possessed adequate knowledge and experience to provide accurate and meaningful responses to the study questions. This puts forth the narrative that the data collected from the study is therefore reliable and trustworthy. The researchers conducted qualitative interviews with a subset of eleven individuals, a portion of the intended sample size of twenty. However, the study did not consider gender as a variable of interest in qualitative methods.

Understanding of Knowledge Management
The study primarily sought to understand how two MT companies understood KM for KMS implementation and operation that would spell out efficient KM practices for MT companies in Namibia. Findings revealed that understanding organisational KM is a perceived process linked to competitive advantage through tacit and explicit organisational KM. Findings indicate that a comprehensive KM grasp is closely linked to successfully executing KMS. This necessitates a concentrated effort on various critical elements, such as the sharing, acquisition, dissemination, exchange, and preservation of information through the utilisation of technology.

Findings highlight the importance of a firm grasp of KM to facilitate the effective utilisation of document management systems (DMS) and active participation in online information discussions. These components were essential in achieving comprehensive KM linking to technology (KMS) across multiple departments and regional offices in MT companies in Namibia. The findings indicate further that by prioritising these elements, MT companies ensure the robustness and effectiveness of their KM practice using KMS in enhancing OK sharing and management. In light of this, such an occurrence may result in heightened levels of productivity, enhanced discernment, and fortified organisational efficacy from a KM practice. The study highlights the importance of project reports as a source of good information and as a resource for marketing, finance, logistics, and engineering departments within the companies carrying out their projects about KM from the perspective of DMS and online databases. The word cloud visually represents the principles used to characterise corporate knowledge management, as shown in Figure 1.

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Figure 1: Participants' understanding of the concepts of organisational KM
(Source: Researchers, 2023)

On a follow-up question, according to the findings presented in Figure 2, it was observed that a significant proportion of respondents in MT companies in Namibia possessed a level of familiarity with the idea of KM at an operational level. Expressly, 58% of the surveyed companies indicated familiarity with KM, while the remaining 42% reported a lack of familiarity with the concept. The participants' perspective emphasised the process of understanding operational personnel and precisely using an invention to effectively improve employee and organisational performance to compete in the market from the prospect of KM.

Figure 2: Respondents' understanding of knowledge management

Of a high and particular significance is the observation that qualitative findings have revealed a heightened recognition of the profound importance of the interplay between OK management and technological comprehension, surpassing the insights derived from quantitative findings within two Namibian MT companies. The results indicated that KM has been perceived as a type of "administration" centred around training (sharing OK) and archiving digital or physical records for future use, such as defect notifications. According to the findings, KM is understood that MT companies in Namibia require integrating a robust IT infrastructure. This integration is significant in securely storing and accessing financial data. These companies can effectively manage their OK by utilising technological solutions, resulting in improved decision-making, heightened productivity, and a competitive edge. The study also cites the implementation of online networks, e-commerce platforms, and marketplaces as examples of KM supported by a KMS perspective. Srirahayu, Eliyana, and

Anugrah (2022) proffer that KM attempts to create and use space for human interaction, which allows for the formation of intangible assets to help the organization achieve its aims. Findings point out that organisational KM relates to the administration of OK. The ensuing participant responses, which are carefully chosen for their significance, warrant special acknowledgement:

Participant 3 eloquently emphasised that:

> *My understanding of KM in our company is aptly described as the proficient management of information and resources, which is pivotal in ensuring our success, such as policies and guidelines on ICT. I presume this is part of KM.*

Participant 7 highlighted that:

> *KM is about preserving valuable information within this company, and managing various forms of information with ICT tools to ensure that this information is conserved and readily accessible to staff members alike. This facilitates transfer and fosters a culture of continuous learning and growth within this company.*

Participant 9 stated:

> *I view information or KM as an efficient process in which personnel must be networked and able to receive and share information and documents or forecasts utilising technology.*

Participant 11, claimed that:

> *KM entails the acquisition and distribution of information. I believe that these two key processes play important roles at the core of KM.*

The study's findings show critical interdependence between KM comprehension and diverse organisational endeavours, specifically in implementing optimal project methodologies across numerous departments within MT companies in Namibia. Findings further point out that KM was also referenced as a long-term organisational investment for competitive advantage; 56 (32%) 'strongly agree' and 'agree' that management views KM as a long-term organisational investment, compared to 76 (43.2%) senior managers who 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' and 44 (25%) who are neutral. Based on the circumstances above, as seen in Figure 3, it encompasses the predominant concepts about understanding KM within the framework of MT companies in Namibia. Acknowledging that these concepts held greater prominence within departments such as finance, marketing, and logistics is of utmost significance.
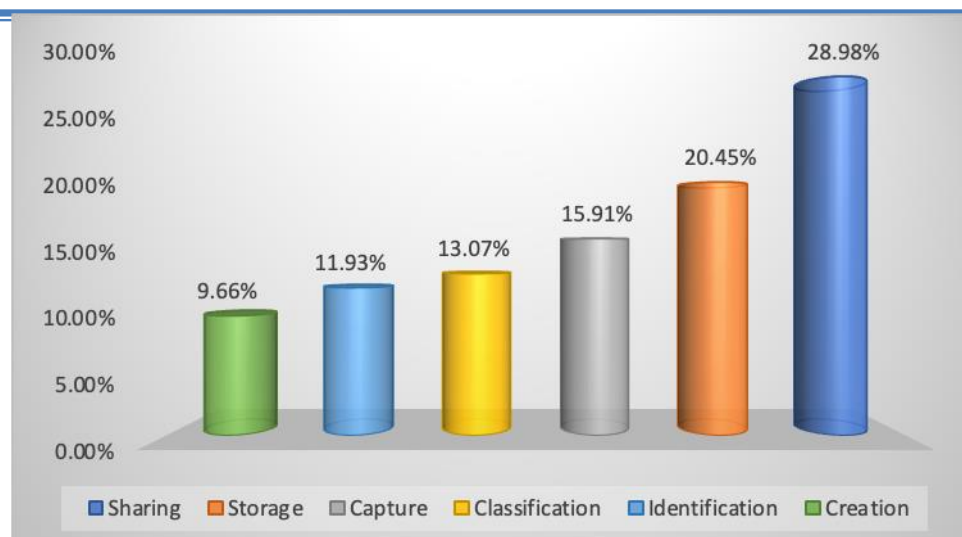
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Figure 3: Summarises the popular concepts related to KM

In the subsequent analysis, a synthesis of quantitative results demonstrates that most respondents, specifically 119 (67.62%), expressed a positive stance by either "strongly agreeing" or "agreeing" that classification plays a crucial role in comprehending KM for KMS implementation. This positive perception is attributed to the benefits of facilitating accurate information retrieval, effectively organising the taxonomy, and uncovering novel and previously acquired OK as required. Conversely, a smaller proportion of participants, comprising 39 (23.02%), expressed an opposing viewpoint by either "strongly disagreeing" or "disagreeing" with the significance of classification in KM for KMS implementation. Additionally, a minority of respondents, approximately 18 (10.23%), adopted a neutral position. These findings are visually represented in Figure 3.

According to the study, sharing OK is crucial for understanding KM, mainly through technology. This highlights that MT companies prioritise OK and are at the forefront of developing advanced and innovative technology from a KM understanding perspective. The study further points out that empowering consumers with accessible information promotes the efficient exchange and distribution of information through technology because utilising information portals is crucial in comprehending KM in knowledge-based enterprises. The following chosen replies need acknowledgement:

Participant 2insights were:

> *The present state of our information management system represents one of the most cutting-edge technologies available in the market for KM. It facilitates the seamless conduct of meetings, enabling efficient discussions and the systematic documentation of proceedings for future use. Hence, it is the established procedure for KM; is it not what it means?*

Participant 3 claimed that:

> *Our information system is meant to organise staff profiles, including professional experiences, papers, reports, and books, based on our organisational departments inside the company. The process encompasses the proper management of information and knowledge, which is already in place inside our organisation's current KMS.*

Participant 5 stated that:

> *… within our company, KM serves as an excellent example of how our advanced technologies facilitate the exchange of ideas, the connection of our collective information, and its efficient storage while also addressing customer satisfaction as well as dealing with organisation's challenges.*

Participant 11 said"

> *Using information management, we have successfully identified staff members with specialised knowledge in their respective departments and formed networks of communications. I can provide you with a specific person or employees from this department who have been recognised as having the necessary information, therefore participating in processes of information and managing knowledge.*
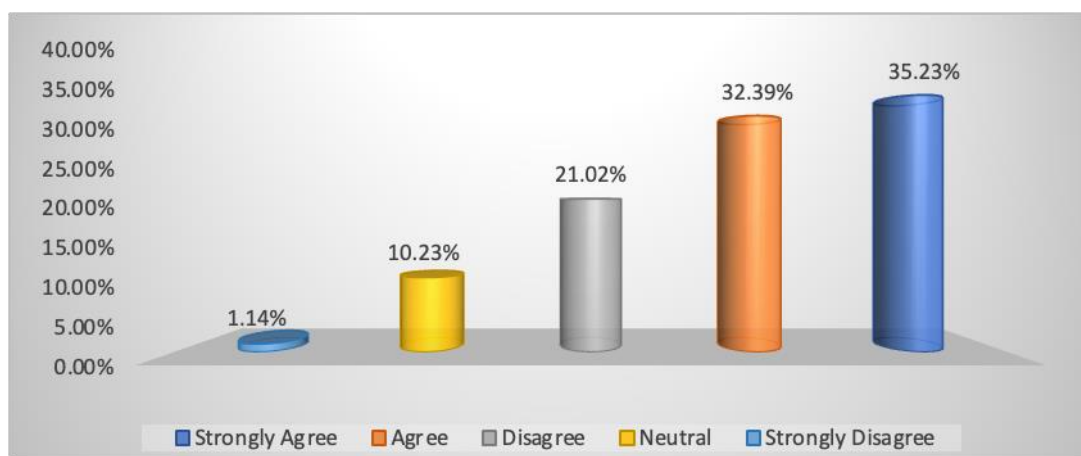
Figure 4: Respondents' understanding that KM is associated with solving challenges.

As illustrated in Figure 4, findings further show that understanding KM is understood as a process that could assist in solving organisational challenges, as 91 (51.7%) 'strongly agreed' and 'agreed' that KM would assist in solving challenges in passing compliance audits with less effort, compared to 38 (22%), who strongly disagreed and disagreed, and 47 (26.7%) were neutral. The study reveals that KM is about online management and storing crucial information, utilises online-stored information, and effectively addresses organisational challenges. This assists them in predicting and shaping outcomes and empowers MT companies to optimise their KM process, enabling them to predict and shape outcomes through careful analysis of their reports.

The study shows that MT companies' understanding of KM is based on strategically allocating financial and human capital resources to address their departments' information needs and technological infrastructure effectively, prioritising KM as a crucial aspect of their business operations to maintain a competitive edge. The following selected responses deserve special mention:

Participant 1 expressed:
> *The underlying importance of management knowledge or information is to learn from the past projects how to overcome these challenges that we might experience in the*

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future or present; it looks like it is there to help us forecast from our financial or marketing reports and determine the future of our company.

Participant 9 stated that:

I understand that KM is a strategic process to allocate financial and human capital resources to address our department's information needs and technological infrastructure such as training, necessary computer systems, and software.

Participant 10 highlighted:

I should say KM means assessing and correcting inadequacies within our organisational capacities, encompassing both areas of skills and experiences and dealing with obstacles with the information we have. Online assistance, including voice-based systems, has become an essential element of information technology within our organisation.

Findings show that 130 (74%) 'strongly agreed' and 'agreed' that KM understanding looks into the efficiency of KM practice could primarily be used for the implementation of documentation for ease of reference in two selected MT companies in Namibia, compared to 31 (17.6%) 'strongly disagreed' and 'disagreed' and 15 (8.5%) were neutral. Based on the study's findings, MT has successfully incorporated KM as a valuable tool, resulting in enhanced accessibility and efficiency of OK sharing among various departments. This has effectively eliminated barriers and facilitated a more collaborative work environment. It is worth noting that effective KM within organizations entails recognizing the significance of records, which, in turn, promotes the development of better systems that are both efficient and effective. The following selected response is highly noteworthy:

Participant 3 explains:

I understand KM as a process that permits document management systems to provide information about specific information that one might be looking for; these are essential details that help an employee search the system to find what they want or need.

Findings indicate that KM is concerned with a process of acquisition of OK, as 115 (72.79%)' strongly agreed' and 'agreed' that KM enables OK acquisition, compared to 37 (23.4%) who 'strongly disagreed' and 'disagreed', and 16 (4%) were neutral with the process of implementation of KM practice in two MT companies in Namibia. Research highlights the importance of preserving and utilizing organizational OK as a key concept in KM. It proposes that capturing OK improves employees' ability to navigate complex processes within multinational companies, optimizes OK for improved decision-making, and is essential to effective KM practices. Furthermore, this is closely linked to market and supplier OK, which aids multinational companies in their day-to-day operations. Additionally, capturing OK for KM provides a means of acquiring OK by recruiting new employees and customers and consulting with specialists from various fields. The following response is highly noteworthy:

Participant 5 affirmed that:

Our knowledge comes from the markets and suppliers. From these processes, we get so much information and knowledge that it has assisted us in remaining the best-preferred service provider of telecommunication services in this country.

Participant 6 stated that:

> *We engage with consumers through suggestion surveys to understand their preferences and needs. This helps us to get information. We use online services to employ various practices to understand market trends, identify specific requirements, and uncover opportunities for improvement. Adopting these practices is essential for our businesses to stay at the forefront of the marketing game in managing knowledge.*

Participant 7 emphasises that:

> *...my understanding is that KM facilitates the market flow of information and serves as a catalyst for marketing efforts. We stay ahead of the competition (we are one of the best in Namibia, if not Southern Africa); this is because of the information and knowledge we have in the company, which gathers market information and uses consultants for insights and recommendations*

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Participant 11's viewpoint was:

> *Part of our company's use of KM is to hire new employees and seek the services of consultants from different field specialties to train and facilitate the process of learning, as we believe that such processes provide us with the necessary information.*

Discussion

This study investigated the understanding of KM for KMS implementation for efficient KM practice in MT companies in Namibia. The analysis revealed that the two MT companies in Namibia comprehend KM, which centres around a process that stems from the belief that OK is inherently linked to enhancing employees' work understanding for improved performance, thereby managing it, contributing to the two MT companies' success, and providing a competitive edge. Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2015), Garcia-Perez *et al.,* (2019), as well as Wang and Wang (2020), assert that the goals of KM are to improve an organisation's situational awareness and obtain a competitive advantage over its competitors. This perspective on the importance of managing OK has been further described by White (2004) and Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2015), who acknowledged that the broad scope of KM involves various tools and strategies to manage the OK of individuals, teams, and communities for an organisation's success.

In the data-driven world of modern business, particularly MT companies in Namibia, understanding KM is crucial for competitiveness and success in KBS and 4IRs. KM plays a critical role in enabling MT companies to manage their OK effectively, and the various approaches and techniques within the field offer valuable resources for optimising their KM strategies. In light of the above, KM in MT companies could enhance growth and improve employees and organisational competitiveness by effectively utilising OK. The findings reinforce a disparity between the anticipated and realised degree of recognition regarding the significance of understanding KM in connection with prevalent KM principles among operational staff and management, as delineated in the organisation's strategic plans and directives. Therefore, the KM initiative's progression and awareness must depend on raising the importance of understanding KM for a successful KMS implementation for effective KM practices in Namibian MT companies.

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It is essential to further expand on exciting findings which point out technology as a significant aspect of understanding KM related to transmitting and storing OK via ICT from the perspective of the concepts mentioned in MT companies in Namibia. Islam et al. (2020) argue that ICT aims to improve customer service delivery by recording, processing, and giving numerous access points to the repository, making companies more dynamic. Using ICT components may have a more substantial impact on KM practices in MT companies in Namibia. Usman and Ahmad (2012), Chigada and Ngulube (2015), and Shropshire et al. (2020) offer guidance on KM initiatives that ought to focus on creating an enabling organisational environment that permits innovation out of OK, connect employees, go beyond best practices, and create, acquire, store, transfer, retrieve, share, and retain OK. This purview of managing OK using technology is necessary for a KBS, particularly in the era of 4IRs, which makes OK a vital asset worth investing in order to deal with challenges that manifest while achieving development goals. This requires employees to learn information technology skills such as website building, database design, and network administration (Shropshire *et al.,* 2020).

For MT companies to implement KMS effectively, they must understand the concept of KM. KM allows organizations to classify information into comprehensive subjects for search, guidance, navigation, data handling, analysis, schema management, customization, and information dissemination. Document management systems have garnered worldwide acclaim for knowledge management, closely linked to KM. The study highlights its importance for efficient control, information administration, and KM in mobile MT companies. KM in mobile MT companies involves various processes that significantly influence KMS processes, such as classifying, sharing, disseminating, acquiring, and facilitating information. These are essential KM concepts that entail effective managing OK. MT companies must understand the importance of capturing, sharing, and acquiring information from various sources through an efficient KM for KMS to induce innovation. It becomes necessary to mention that employees go through different phases in learning and acquiring abilities or skills that lean toward knowledge management. Senior management generates and cultivates an atmosphere that confirms KM issues as essential components at the centre of systems in MT companies.

It is therefore argued that MT companies consider capturing, storing, and preserving data crucial for KMS implementation's success to derive practical and efficient KM practice in MT companies in Namibia; hence, rigorous awareness and training from middle management to operational employees and KM policy development is essential. Chigada and Ngulube (2016) propose that KM practices should be able to migrate online from one domain to another. Yulistia *et al.,* (2019) and Adesina and Ocholla (2020) suggest that it lays the groundwork for the data collection on how new OK is converted into explicit OK captured into organisational KMS for KM and retained in documents, repositories, and databases for employee use. KM takes OK from inside and outside sources and chooses, combines, and processes it to make more complex and organised OK sets (Farnese *et al.,* 2019; Canonico *et al.,* 2020).

Conclusion and Recommendations

As knowledge is a crucial element for most organisations, it is essential to evaluate the scope of KM to determine its effectiveness in Namibian MT companies. Therefore, many organisations worldwide have adopted KM with varying levels of success. It is necessary to assess the understanding of KM within the KMS framework to ensure that MT companies in Namibia can practice KM successfully. The study indicated that technology plays a critical role in understanding KM, which is crucial for implementing KMS that facilitates KM practices in a KBS and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). The key themes of KM

include creation, acquisition, storage, transfer, retrieval, sharing, and retention via technological adaptation. The study also revealed that senior management members are improving their understanding of KM, as opposed to than operating staff, which can help them advocate for developing a KM policy that delineates effective KM practices.

Given the noticeable importance of concepts that form KM, MT companies in Namibia utilise KM to benefit from their senior management's expertise in proficiently disseminating KM information. Namibian MT is leveraging KM to enhance its KM practices. However, a lack of understanding of KM could lead to insufficient KM methodologies, causing employee discontent and hindering OK acquisition and KM practices. To achieve successful KM practices, MT companies should focus on formal awareness training initiatives and establish KM policies. Implementing KM that spells out core KM concepts for KMS can promote innovation in a competitive global environment. To ensure the successful integration of KM practices, MT companies should consider the KM implementation framework for the future efficiency of KMS. Senior managers and operational employees need a comparative analysis of KMS-facilitated KM's effects on employee performance across various sectors. National ICT policy is crucial for formulating independent or integrated KM policies across the nation's public and private sectors. Consultation with key stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT), the National Planning Commission (NPC), and universities, will facilitate the formulation of national KM and ICT policy, ensuring their adoption and adaptation align with the broader national context, particularly with Namibia's Vision 2030 project.

Theoretical, Policy and Practical Implications of this Study
The study contributes to KM theories and practices, particularly in the context of Namibian MT companies understanding of KM for KMS implementation, through the Socialisation, Externalisation, Combination, and Internalisation (SECI) model and the knowledge-based approach to help organisations understand KM and use it more effectively in KBS and 4IRs. The study could create a supportive environment where understanding KM for KMS implementation and integrating it into daily work routines is essential for MT companies to achieve their overall organisational objective hence contributing to socio-economic development. The findings are essential for the academic and corporate worlds, as they provide an in-depth analysis of the current understanding of KM for an efficient KMS implementation via KM practice in the Namibian context. Furthermore, by implementing the findings, MT companies can play a significant role in helping Namibia achieve its objective of becoming a KBS by 2030. The finding could further impact the development of standalone KM policies in MT companies in Namibia, guiding the implementation of KMS for KM practices.

Limitation of the Study
The study investigated the understanding of KM for KMS implementation for efficient KM practice in MT companies in Namibia. The study's scope was restricted to examining two MT companies exclusively operating in Namibia. The study's findings should not be generalized to only some companies that operate in varying conditions.

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