

ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN CASE OF ETHIOPIAN DEFENCE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge represents the awareness and understanding of concepts, principles, procedures, or the relationships between various elements within a particular field or discipline. Organizations that recognize knowledge as a strategic asset can leverage it for resilience, problem-solving, decision-making, and innovation. Higher education institutions, as hubs of knowledge, play a crucial role in knowledge creation, organization, and dissemination. Effective knowledge management within these institutions enhances teaching, learning, research collaboration, and innovation. This research focuses specifically on the Ethiopian Defence University, a government higher education institution in Ethiopia. The study aims to assess the current level of knowledge management practices within the university, with a particular focus on its implementation for curriculum development. The research employs a quantitative research method with a descriptive survey design. The findings reveal a mixed state of awareness among academic staff members regarding the knowledge management system in higher education institutions. While some respondents demonstrated moderate familiarity with the system, the majority reported a lack of formal training. This highlights the need for increased attention to knowledge management practices within the university. The study also identifies deficiencies in the university's knowledge management policies, strategies, and infrastructure. These include the absence of a centralized repository and a dedicated responsible body. Furthermore, knowledge-sharing activities and collaboration among faculty members were found to be poor, with limited incentives or recognition mechanisms in place. The implementation of a knowledge

management system for curriculum development is also lacking, as evidenced by the absence of platforms for sharing knowledge and experience, a dedicated database system, and a centralized repository for curriculum materials.

Keywords: Knowledge, knowledge management, curriculum development, knowledge sharing, curriculum materials

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

Knowledge can be defined as the accumulation, assimilation, and utilization of information, facts, skills, and insights acquired through experience, study, or observation (Davenport and Prusak 1998). It represents the awareness and understanding of concepts, principles, procedures, or the relationships between various elements within a particular field or discipline. Knowledge empowers individuals to make informed judgments, apply learned information to novel situations, and engage in meaningful actions.

Knowledge is fundamental to human cognition, shaping our understanding, problem-solving, and decision-making (Uriarte, 2008). It encompasses explicit and tacit dimensions, each contributing to our overall mastery of domains. Tacit knowledge is unspoken, intuitive, and personal, rooted in an individual's experience, insights, and values (Nonaka and von Krogh, 2009). It is subjective, encompassing skills, expertise, and contextual understanding gained through involvement and practice (Muthuveloo, Shanmugam and Teoh 2017), often embedded in actions and decision-making, and primarily acquired through immersive experiences. Explicit knowledge is tangible, codified information that can be easily articulated, captured, and communicated through formal means (Frappaolo 2002). It is consciously recognized, documented, and expressed systematically, making it objective, transferable, and suitable for teaching and learning.

In today's competitive global market, effectively utilizing knowledge is crucial for organizational success and resilience (Bixler, 2005). Knowledge enhances problem-solving, decision-making, performance, and innovation. By recognizing knowledge as a strategic asset, organizations can cultivate adaptability and thrive in dynamic environments, leveraging their intellectual capital to stay ahead of the competition. The strategic use of knowledge empowers organizations to navigate challenges and seize global opportunities (Andreev, 2022). By capitalizing on knowledge assets, organizations can tap into collective expertise, make informed decisions, solve problems, and drive innovation. Furthermore, embracing knowledge as a core asset enhances organizational agility and adaptability, ensuring long-

term success (Shafique et al, 2022). Prioritizing knowledge management and knowledge-sharing platforms can create a culture that values and harnesses knowledge, fuelling the capacity to excel in the ever-evolving business landscape.

Higher education institutions are hubs of knowledge creation, organization, storage, and dissemination (Adhikari 2010). These institutions generate new knowledge, organize and preserve existing knowledge, and share it with students, scholars, and society. In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, effective knowledge management within these hubs has become indispensable. Knowledge management in higher education involves a systematic approach to identifying, capturing, organizing, storing, retrieving, and disseminating knowledge (Jashapara, 2004). It encompasses the strategic management of explicit and tacit knowledge generated by faculty, researchers, students, and staff. The primary objective of KM in higher education institutions is to enhance teaching, learning, research collaboration, and innovation (Eftekharzade and Mohammadi, 2011). Effective knowledge management practices enable the identification, documentation, and accessibility of valuable knowledge assets within the institution.

Knowledge management in higher education institutions encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, enabling innovative solutions to complex problems (Peng, Jiang and Zhang 2013). It facilitates access to relevant literature, sharing of findings, and identification of potential collaborators, fostering a vibrant research environment. Knowledge management also enhances teaching and learning by providing faculty access to a centralized repository of resources and best practices, promoting pedagogical innovation and student-centric approaches. Additionally, knowledge management contributes to preserving institutional memory by capturing and organizing explicit knowledge, enabling new faculty, staff, and students to learn from past experiences and build upon existing knowledge. Effective knowledge management empowers higher education institutions to harness intellectual capital, promote collaboration and innovation, enhance teaching and learning, and preserve institutional memory. It positions these hubs at the forefront of knowledge creation, dissemination, and application.

Research conducted in Ethiopia indicates that knowledge management practices are still in the early stages of development. A study conducted by Kebede (2006) examined the knowledge management practices in Ethiopian higher education institutions (HEIs), specifically focusing on human resource management, organizational processes, and IT-based practices to support knowledge management. The findings revealed that the knowledge management practices in these institutions were below the expected level, highlighting the

need for improvement. This suggests that there is ample opportunity to enhance the effective management and utilization of knowledge within Ethiopian HEIs.

Statement of the problem

The Ethiopian Defence University is a government higher education institution in Ethiopia under the leadership and management of the Ministry of Defence. Originally established as the Defence University College through the Council of Ministers regulation No. 063/2001, the institution obtained university status in 2013 after evaluation by the Higher Education Relevance and Quality Assurance Agency (HERQA) at the time. The University lead three colleges and assist twelve defence Higher education institutions. As all other higher education institutions in the country, the knowledge management practice at the Ethiopian Defence University is in its early stages. The university's knowledge management system has not been thoroughly studied, and the level of practice has not been well identified. Despite being a university, where knowledge creation, documentation, and dissemination are essential, the implementation of a robust knowledge management system has not received significant attention. As a result, the university's knowledge management practice for curriculum development and program revision has not been fully realized. In a university, the priority should be given to implementing a knowledge management system, as universities serve as hubs for knowledge creation, documentation, and dissemination. However, in the Ethiopian Defence University, the significance of implementing such a system has not been adequately recognized. This represents a failure on the University as it is the educational institution.

Therefore, it is crucial to assess the current level of knowledge management practices within the university and specifically examine the implementation of a knowledge management system for curriculum development. The existing level of knowledge management practice is relatively low, indicating that its potential contribution to curriculum development has not been fully realized. Consequently, this study aims to identify the level of knowledge management practice within the university and investigate its implementation for curriculum development across various programs. By conducting this research, we seek to shed light on the current state of knowledge management practices within the university and explore how they can be effectively utilized to enhance curriculum development. Understanding the level of knowledge management practice and its implementation in curriculum development is vital for the university to address the existing shortcomings and fully exploit the potential benefits that effective knowledge management can offer. This

research endeavour has been undertaken to address the following general and specific questions:

General Question: The research aims to answer the following general research question

- What is the level of knowledge management practice and its implementation for curriculum development in the Ethiopian Defence University?

Specific questions: the research aims to answer the following research questions

- What is the extent of understanding within the Ethiopian Defence University community regarding the knowledge management system?
- What is the current level of knowledge management practice within the Ethiopian Defence University?
- How is the implementation of knowledge management practices utilized for curriculum development within the Ethiopian Defence University?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Knowledge Management System

A knowledge management system is a framework that facilitates the capture, storage, organization, retrieval, and dissemination of knowledge within an organization (Miller 1996; Stein and Zwass 1995). It encompasses both technological infrastructure and cultural/organizational aspects to effectively manage and leverage knowledge assets. The primary goal is to enable individuals and teams to access and utilize relevant knowledge for informed decision-making, problem-solving, and innovation. A well-implemented knowledge management system can prevent knowledge loss, promote knowledge sharing and collaboration, enhance operational efficiency, support informed decision-making, and contribute to organizational agility and competitiveness (Jennex 2005; Holsapple and Joshi, 2000).

A knowledge management system typically includes knowledge repositories, collaboration tools, knowledge capture mechanisms, search and retrieval functionalities, and analytics/reporting tools (Alhawary 2011; Spiegler 2000). However, implementing an effective knowledge management system can face challenges, such as resistance to change, cultural barriers (e.g., lack of trust, silo mentality), and technical issues (e.g., system

integration, data security) (Wiig 1993; Gupta, Iver and Jay 2000). Maintaining the freshness and accuracy of knowledge also requires ongoing effort and commitment from employees.

To ensure the success of a knowledge management system, organizations should foster a knowledge-sharing culture by promoting collaboration, recognizing knowledge contributions, and providing training, establish clear ownership and accountability for maintaining and updating the system regularly and balance technology and human interaction, as technology alone cannot fully capture and transfer tacit knowledge (Wang and Yang, 2016). In addition organizations should regularly monitor and evaluate the system's effectiveness to identify gaps and make continuous improvements (Gold, Malhotra and Segars 2001). In this way an effective knowledge management system can have a transformative impact, enabling organizations to leverage their collective knowledge and expertise to drive innovation, make informed decisions, and achieve strategic objectives.

Importance of Knowledge Management in Higher Education

In higher education institutions (HEIs), the primary focus should be on fostering intellectual and academic pursuits. As knowledge hubs, HEIs should strive to provide an environment that fosters research, teaching excellence, and the generation and dissemination of knowledge (Adhikari, 2010). Effective knowledge management system in HEIs involves ensuring the availability of crucial resources like research facilities, libraries, and information systems to facilitate knowledge acquisition and dissemination (Sohail and Daud, 2009). It also involves fostering an environment that nurtures collaboration, interdisciplinary exchange, and scholarly discourse among faculty and students (Saeed, Tofiq and Aziz 2022). HEIs can effectively fulfil their role as knowledge hubs and promote the advancement of scholarship and excellence in teaching and research by placing a strong emphasis on managing the intellectual and academic aspects. Consequently, knowledge management plays a vital role in higher education institutions for several important reasons

- **Enhancing Teaching and Learning:** Effective knowledge management practices enable educators to capture, organize, and share valuable educational resources, including lesson plans, course materials, and best practices (Maayah 2008). This facilitates collaboration among faculty members, encourages the sharing of innovative teaching methods, and ensures consistent and high-quality instruction.
- **Supporting Research and Innovation:** Knowledge management is crucial for advancing research and innovation in higher education. It allows researchers to

share scholarly work, research findings, and methodologies, enabling the exchange of ideas and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration (Rowley,2000).

- **Fostering Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:** Higher education institutions thrive on collaboration and the exchange of ideas. Knowledge management provides platforms and tools that facilitate collaboration among faculty members, researchers, and students (Saeed, Tofiq and Aziz 2022). It enables the creation of communities of practice, where individuals with common interests or expertise can share knowledge, engage in discussions, and collectively solve problems
- **Preserving Institutional Memory:** Higher education institutions are dynamic environments where faculty and staff members come and go. Knowledge management helps capture and preserve institutional memory by documenting processes, procedures, and lessons learned (Rowley 2000).
- **Enhancing Decision-Making:** Efficient knowledge management provides decision-makers in higher education institutions with access to reliable and up-to-date information (Nonaka 1994). By centralizing and organizing knowledge resources, administrators can make informed decisions based on data, evidence, and best practices.

In general, by implementing effective knowledge management practices, institutions can create a vibrant and intellectually stimulating environment that empowers faculty, researchers, and students to thrive and contribute to the advancement of knowledge and society as a whole.

Challenges of Knowledge Management in Higher Education

Implementing knowledge management system in higher education institutions can be challenging due to various factors:

- **Cultural Resistance:** Higher education institutions often have deeply rooted academic cultures that prioritize individual autonomy and traditional modes of knowledge dissemination (Gupta et al 2000).
- **Technological Infrastructure:** Adequate technological infrastructure is essential for effective knowledge management (Alhawary 2011). However, limited resources, out-dated systems, and insufficient IT support can hinder the implementation and adoption of knowledge management platforms and tools.
- **Intellectual Property Concerns:** Protecting intellectual property rights while promoting knowledge sharing can be a delicate balance (Wu 2012). Establishing

clear policies and guidelines regarding ownership, attribution, and usage of intellectual assets is crucial to address these concerns.

- **Change Management:** Implementing knowledge management practices requires a change in organizational culture, workflows, and mind sets (Holsapple and Joshi, 2000).

The role of Knowledge Management for Curriculum Development

Curriculum refers to the overall plan and structure of educational experiences in an institution, encompassing the selection of courses, content organization, instructional methods, assessment, and desired learning outcomes (Sohail and Daud, 2009). Curriculum implementation involves translating the curriculum design into actual teaching and learning activities, including developing course syllabi, designing instructional materials, delivering lectures, conducting assessments, and providing student support (Saeed et al., 2022; Maayah 2008). Knowledge management plays a significant role in curriculum development within higher education institutions, enabling the design and delivery of relevant, up-to-date curricula aligned with the needs of students, industries, and society. Here are some key ways in which knowledge management contributes to curriculum development:

- **Identifying Learning Outcomes:** Knowledge management helps in identifying the desired learning outcomes for each program or course (Sohail and Duad, 2009).
- **Access to Current and Relevant Information:** Knowledge management ensures that faculty members have access to the latest research, scholarly publications, industry developments, and best practices relevant to their fields (Rowley 2000).
- **Curriculum Mapping and Alignment:** Knowledge management facilitates the mapping and alignment of curriculum components (Sohail and Duad, 2009).
- **Collaboration and Expertise Sharing:** Knowledge management platforms promote share expertise, exchange ideas, and cooperate on curriculum design initiatives among faculty members, subject matter experts, and curriculum designers (Adhikari 2010).
- **Integration of Experiential and Tacit Knowledge:** Knowledge management recognizes the value of experiential and tacit knowledge and encourages the incorporation of real-world experiences, practical applications, and industry insights into the curriculum (Nonaka and von Krogh, 2009).

- **Continuous Improvement and Evaluation:** Knowledge management supports the continuous improvement and evaluation of curriculum effectiveness (Eftekharzade and Mohammadi 2011).
- **Curriculum Repository and Documentation:** Knowledge management provides a centralized repository for storing, organizing, and documenting curriculum materials (Peng et al 2013).
- **Adapting to Changing Needs:** Knowledge management enables institutions to remain agile and responsive to changing educational needs, industry demands, and technological advancements (Mertler 2014).

In conclusion, knowledge management provides access to current information, promotes collaboration, integrates tacit knowledge, supports continuous improvement, and ensures curricular adaptability.

Knowledge Management Experiences for Curriculum Development in Ethiopian HEIs

From the available research, there is a general lack of research on knowledge management systems in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ethiopia. However, some studies have been conducted on the practices, challenges, and knowledge management strategies in a few universities, such as Addis Ababa University, Debre Tabor University, and Dire Dawa University. The research outcomes indicate that there is insufficient practice of knowledge management systems in the universities, there are numerous challenges in implementing knowledge management systems and there is a relatively high level of agreement for exploitative and codification strategies in most universities. Based on these findings, the research recommends a component-based and process-focused hybrid knowledge management strategy model, with emphasis on the codification approach, as well as personalization, to address the knowledge management needs in these Ethiopian universities (Raman et al., 2022; Takele 2019; Messay, Lowrence, and Worku, 2018).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories of knowledge management provide frameworks and insights into how organizations can effectively manage and leverage their knowledge assets. Here are some key concepts and theories in the field of knowledge management:

Knowledge Creation and Conversion

An essential framework in knowledge management is the SECI model, innovated by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995). This model intricately elucidates the phases of knowledge creation and transformation: socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization.

- **Socialization:** Socialization marks the outset of knowledge evolution, emphasizing the exchange of tacit knowledge in a social milieu through direct interactions and shared experiences.
- **Externalization:** Externalization is the metamorphosis of tacit knowledge into explicit forms. During this stage, individuals articulate and convey their underlying tacit knowledge into tangible and communicable formats.
- **Combination:** Combination embodies the fusion and synthesis of diverse explicit knowledge sources. In this phase, explicit knowledge from varied domains and origins is amalgamated, refined, and harmonized to engender fresh insights, frameworks, or solutions.
- **Internalization:** The concluding phase, internalization, centers on reabsorbing explicit knowledge back into tacit knowledge through learning and experience. Individuals internalize externalized knowledge by assimilating it into their existing mental frameworks, skills, and practices.

The SECI model delineates a structured pathway for comprehending the intricacies of knowledge creation and conversion across different organizational domains. By mapping out the stages of socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization, the model elucidates the fluid movement of knowledge between tacit and explicit forms, propelling innovation, learning, and organizational advancement.

Knowledge Codification and Personalization

Codification and personalization represent different knowledge management strategies. Codification involves the process of transforming knowledge into explicit forms, such as documents, databases, or best practice guidelines (Tarnekar 2014). This approach allows for the systematic storage, retrieval, and transfer of knowledge. It is particularly effective for capturing explicit knowledge that can be easily articulated and shared (Holsapple and Joshi 2000). It provides a structured and standardized format for knowledge, making it accessible to a wider audience. On the other hand, personalization focuses on direct interaction and knowledge sharing among individuals to transfer tacit knowledge, which is often deeply rooted in personal experiences, insights, and skills. Personalization relies on social

interactions, such as communities of practice, mentoring relationships, and social networks, to facilitate the exchange of tacit knowledge (Tarnekar 2014). The two approaches have their own strengths and limitations. Codification enables the dissemination of explicit knowledge on a broader scale, facilitating efficient knowledge transfer and reuse. It provides a basis for standardization and helps establish best practices. However, it may struggle to capture the richness and complexity of tacit knowledge. Personalization, on the other hand, promotes direct engagement, relationship-building, and a deeper understanding of tacit knowledge. However, personalization can be time-consuming, relies heavily on interpersonal connections, and may limit the scalability of knowledge transfer (Liu, Chai and Nebus, 2013).

Knowledge Transfer and Absorptive Capacity

Knowledge transfer is a critical process that involves the dissemination of knowledge from one individual, team, or unit to another within an organization. It encompasses the sharing of both explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. The absorptive capacity theory, developed by Cohen and Levinthal (1990), sheds light on an organization's ability to effectively acquire, assimilate, and apply new knowledge. This theory highlights the importance of knowledge flows within an organization and emphasizes the need for the organization to recognize, absorb, and utilize both external and internal knowledge effectively.

Absorbing knowledge entails the organization's ability to effectively assimilate and understand the new knowledge acquired. This involves processes such as interpreting, integrating, and organizing the knowledge in a meaningful way that aligns with the organization's existing knowledge base. Utilizing knowledge refers to the organization's capacity to apply the newly acquired knowledge to improve its practices, processes, and decision-making (Tarnekar 2014; Rowley 2000).

Knowledge Mapping and Taxonomies

Knowledge mapping is a process that visually represents and categorizes an organization's knowledge assets. It uses taxonomies, structured frameworks for organizing information, to classify and organize knowledge (Ashok 2008). This enables organizations to identify gaps, locate expertise, and promote collaboration. Knowledge mapping creates visual representations of knowledge distribution, helping to utilize resources effectively and facilitate knowledge transfer (Bixler, 2005).

Taxonomies provide a structured and standardized approach to organizing knowledge. They enable consistent categorization, classification, and tagging of information, making it easier to locate and explore knowledge repositories or databases (Peng et al 2013). Taxonomies enhance the efficiency of knowledge retrieval, allowing individuals to quickly find relevant information and leverage existing knowledge assets (Alhawary 2011).

These concepts and theories serve as a basis for comprehending and implementing successful knowledge management practices in organizations. By utilizing these frameworks, organizations can create strategies, processes, and tools to capture, share, and leverage knowledge to improve innovation, decision-making, and overall organizational performance. In the context of the study, these theories are employed as a theoretical framework to evaluate the knowledge management practices related to curriculum development at the Ethiopian Defence University.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Method

The purpose of the research is to investigate the knowledge management practice for curriculum development in the Ethiopian Defence University

The quantitative research method is employed to assess the level of knowledge management practice in the university by utilizing numerical data collected from a diverse sample size of academic staff. This method is chosen because it involves the collection and analysis of numerical data to provide a comprehensive understanding of a specific phenomenon or action (Mertens 2009; Kothari 2004). Quantitative research provides a systematic approach to collecting and analysing numerical data, ensuring that the findings are reliable and replicable. By using statistical techniques, researchers can summarize and interpret the collected numerical data, identifying patterns, trends, and relationships related to knowledge management practice (Cooper, Schindler and Sharma, 2012).

Research Design

The research design in place for the study is descriptive survey, because descriptive survey research design is a quantitative research method that aims to systematically describe and summarize a phenomenon or population. It focuses on providing an accurate and detailed account of the characteristics, behaviours, or attributes of the subject of study (Mertler 2014). This research design is commonly used when researchers want to answer questions about "what is" or "what exists" in a specific context.

The main objective of descriptive research is to present an objective and comprehensive picture of the phenomenon being studied (Manjunatha 2019). One of the strengths of descriptive research design is its ability to provide a snapshot of a specific population or phenomenon at a given point in time. It allows researchers to gather a large amount of data, which can be useful for identifying patterns, trends, or characteristics within the population (Mertens 2009). The objective of this study is to assess and describe the current state of the knowledge management system in Ethiopian Defence University and its role in curriculum development. To achieve this objective, the most suitable research method is the descriptive survey method. This method allows for collecting comprehensive data that will enable an accurate and detailed understanding of the existing level of the knowledge management system and its impact on curriculum development in the university.

Data Collection Instruments

The research method employed in this study is quantitative research, which focuses on gathering numerical data and using statistical methods for analysis and drawing conclusions. Specifically, the study utilizes a descriptive survey design, a quantitative approach that aims to systematically describe and summarize a phenomenon or population (Mertens 2009). In the study, standardized questionnaire that is consisting of closed-ended questions composed of multiple-choice and Likert scale questions is used to collect data from the selected sample. The use of a standardized questionnaire allows for consistency in data collection, making it easier to compare and analyse responses. Closed-ended questions provide predetermined response options, enabling efficient data collection and analysis. When conducting a survey, it is essential to select a sample that accurately represents the target population.

Population, sampling technique and sample size

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the extent of knowledge management practice in the curriculum development process at Ethiopian Defence University. The target population for this study consists of the academic staff, including teaching and research staff, at the university. The population size is approximately 421 individuals. To gather data, a sample is taken from this population. The process of selecting the sample involves using simple random selection, ensuring that each member of the population has an equal opportunity to be included in the study (Macfarlane 2003). Through this method 25 per cent of the population is considered and as a result 106 academic staff members are randomly chosen from the

population to be part of the study. By employing simple random sampling and selecting a representative sample, the study aims to gather data from a subset of the academic staff that accurately represents the entire population. This allows for drawing meaningful conclusions about the level of knowledge management practice in curriculum development at Ethiopian Defence University.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS

About the Participants

The study involved the distribution of 105 questionnaires to collect data, and a total of 100 questionnaires were returned and analysed, resulting in a response rate of 94 per cent. Among the 100 academic staff members who completed the questionnaire, 25 individuals (25%) held a Third Degree (Ph.D.), 55 individuals (55%) held a Second Degree (Masters), and 20 individuals (20%) held a First Degree (Bachelor). Regarding the gender distribution of the participants, 70 individuals (70%) were male, while 30 individuals (30%) were female. In terms of the participants' length of service in higher education institutions, including the Ethiopia Defence University, 10 individuals (10%) had served for 1 to 5 years, 25 individuals (25%) had served for 6 to 10 years, 20 individuals (20%) had served for 11 to 15 years, and 45 individuals (45%) had served for more than 15 years.

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the characteristics of the surveyed academic staff members at the Ethiopian Defence University. The participants represent a diverse range of academic ranks within the university, encompassing both genders. Additionally, the surveyed staff members have significant lengths of service within the university. These findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the profile of the academic staff, considering their educational qualifications, gender distribution, and extensive experience within the institution.

About the University Academic staff Level of Awareness on the Knowledge Management System in Higher Education Institutions.

The Level of Awareness Among Academic Staff Members of the Ethiopian Defence University Regarding the Knowledge Management System in Higher Education Institutions

Among the total respondents, 25 individuals (25%) reported having a somewhat familiar awareness of the knowledge management system in the higher education system. Furthermore, 45 individuals (45%) expressed having a moderate awareness, while 25 individuals (25%) reported being very familiar, and 5 individuals (5%) expressed being extremely familiar with the system.

These findings suggest that the majority of the respondents (70%) possess at least a moderate level of familiarity with the knowledge management system in higher education institutions. This indicates a significant proportion of individuals who have some level of understanding and awareness of the system, which can be valuable in promoting effective knowledge sharing and management within the higher education context.

Training delivered about Knowledge Management System in the University

Regarding training on the knowledge management system of higher education institutions, 20 per cent of the respondents expressed that they have received training, while 80 per cent of them responded that they have never received any training on the issue.

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents (80%) have not received any training on the knowledge management system of higher education institutions. This suggests that there is a lack of formal training opportunities or initiatives for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills related to the management of information and knowledge in the higher education context.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE IN THE ETHIOPIAN DEFENCE UNIVERSITY

About documented knowledge management strategies or policies in place at the University

Out of the total number of respondents, 40 individuals (40%) expressed that while there are policies and strategies in place at the University, these are not well-established or widely

communicated to the University community. On the other hand, the remaining 60 individuals (60%) stated that there is no documented policy or strategy in place at the University.

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents (60%) are unaware of any documented policy or strategy regarding knowledge management at the University. The responses from both groups suggest that the University's practice in designing and implementing knowledge management policies and strategies is inadequate, and in some cases, non-existent.

The level of importance given to knowledge management in the University.

Regarding the level of importance attributed to the knowledge management system (KMS) in the university, the findings reveal that 40 respondents (40%) expressed a low level of importance, while 30 respondents (30%) indicated a moderate level of importance. Additionally, 20 respondents (20%) stated that the level of importance given to the KMS is high, and 10 respondents (10%) expressed that it is very high.

Overall, the majority of the respondents conveyed that the level of importance assigned to knowledge management systems in the university is low.

Existence of designated individuals or teams responsible for overseeing knowledge management initiatives in your university.

In this case, 40 respondents (40%) expressed that there is a designated individual or team responsible for overseeing the knowledge management practice in the university. However, it was noted that their specific role is not solely focused on knowledge management, but rather it is an additional task assigned to them. On the other hand, 60 respondents (60%) indicated that no individual or team takes the responsibility of overseeing the knowledge management practice in the university.

These findings suggest that the knowledge management practice in the university does not receive appropriate attention. While there are some individuals or teams tasked with overseeing it, their responsibilities extend beyond knowledge management. As a result, the dedicated focus and attention required for effective knowledge management may be lacking, as indicated by the majority of respondents who reported the absence of a specific responsible body for overseeing knowledge management.

Availability of centralized knowledge repository or database where information and expertise are stored and shared.

Regarding the availability of a Knowledge Management (KM) repository or database in the university, the findings reveal that 20 respondents (20%) reported the presence of a regularly updated KM repository or database system. However, 25 respondents (25%) indicated that while there is a KM repository or database system, it is either not well-maintained or not effectively communicated to the academic community. On the other hand, 55 respondents (55%) stated that there is no KM repository or database in the university.

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents expressed that the university does not have a centralized KM repository or database. While a portion of the respondents reported the existence of a KM repository or database, the lack of proper maintenance or communication suggests limitations in its effectiveness. Additionally, a significant number of respondents reported the absence of a KM repository or database altogether.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING PRACTICES IN THE UNIVERSITY

The frequency of knowledge sharing activities, such as seminars, workshops, or conferences, organized within the university

Regarding the frequency of knowledge sharing activities in the university, 60 respondents (60%) expressed that such activities are conducted occasionally. Additionally, 35 respondents (35%) stated that knowledge sharing activities are conducted rarely, while 5 respondents (5%) indicated that knowledge sharing activities are never organized in the university.

These findings suggest that knowledge-sharing activities, such as seminars, workshops, or conferences, are organized occasionally in the university. While a majority of respondents reported occasional knowledge-sharing events, a significant portion indicated that such activities are conducted rarely or not at all.

Availability of incentives or recognition programs in place to encourage knowledge sharing and collaboration among faculty and staff

Regarding incentives and recognition programs for encouraging knowledge sharing among faculty, 35 respondents (35%) expressed that such programs exist in the university. However, they noted that these programs are not well established and are not widely recognized by the faculty members. On the other hand, 65 respondents (65%) stated that there are no incentives or recognition programs in the university to encourage knowledge sharing and collaboration among academic staff members.

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents (65%) expressed the absence of incentives or recognition programs in the university to promote knowledge sharing. While a portion of the respondents reported the existence of such programs, they highlighted that these programs are not well-established and lack recognition among faculty members.

The level of knowledge sharing and collaboration among faculty and staff in your university

Regarding the level of knowledge sharing and collaboration among faculty and staff at the Ethiopian Defence University, 15 respondents (15%) expressed a very low level of knowledge sharing and collaboration. Additionally, 60 respondents (60%) stated that there is a low level of knowledge sharing and collaboration, while 25 respondents (25%) expressed a moderate level of knowledge sharing and collaboration among faculty members.

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents expressed a low level of knowledge sharing and collaboration among the faculty members of the university. However, it is worth noting that 25 per cent of the respondents expressed a moderate level of knowledge sharing and collaboration, while 15 per cent indicated a very low level.

IMPLEMENTATION OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY

Presence of knowledge sharing platform for sharing knowledge and experience among faculty members to support curriculum development process.

Regarding the presence of a knowledge sharing platform for sharing knowledge and experience among faculty members to support the curriculum development process in the university, the findings reveal that 5 per cent of the respondents strongly disagree with its existence. Additionally, 50 per cent of the respondents expressed disagreement, 15 per cent expressed neutrality, 20 per cent expressed agreement, and 10 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed that such a platform exists.

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents disagreed with the presence of a knowledge-sharing platform that facilitates the sharing of knowledge and experience among academic staff to support the curriculum development process.

Existence of knowledge management database system in the University that sources for curriculum development are stored and preserved

Regarding the existence of a knowledge database system that serves as a source for curriculum development, the findings reveal that 15 per cent of the respondents strongly disagree with its existence. Additionally, 35 per cent of the respondents express disagreement, 35 per cent hold a neutral position on the issue, 10 per cent agree, and 5 per cent strongly agree on the existence of a knowledge management system that serves as sources for curriculum development.

Based on these findings, it is evident that there is a lack of consensus among the respondents regarding the existence of a knowledge database system for curriculum development. While a significant portion expressed disagreement or a neutral stance, a smaller percentage agreed or strongly agreed with its existence.

Availability centralized knowledge management repository for storing, organizing, and documenting curriculum materials, including syllabi, lesson plans, assessment tools, and teaching resources

Regarding the availability of a centralized knowledge management repository for storing, organizing, and documenting curriculum materials in the Ethiopian Defence University, the findings indicate that 20 per cent of the respondents strongly disagree, while 30 per cent disagree. Furthermore, 15 per cent expressed a neutral position, 25 per cent agreed, and 10 per cent strongly agreed on the availability of such a repository.

These findings suggest that a significant majority of the respondents (70 per cent) either strongly disagree or disagree on the availability of a centralized knowledge management repository in the university. It indicates that a considerable portion of the respondents do not perceive the existence of a repository for storing and organizing curriculum materials in the Ethiopian Defence University.

Availability of a purpose-built knowledge management system that supports capturing feedback from stockholders enabling the University to identify areas for curriculum revision

Regarding the availability of a purpose-built knowledge management system that supports capturing feedback from stakeholders for identifying areas for curriculum revision in the university, the findings reveal the following: 15 per cent of the respondents strongly disagree, 50 per cent disagree, 15 per cent take a neutral position, 15 per cent agree, and 5 per cent strongly agree with the availability of such a system.

These findings indicate that the majority of the respondents expressed their disagreement on the availability of a purpose-built knowledge management system that supports capturing feedback from stakeholders to enable the university in identifying areas for curriculum revision. While a small proportion agreed or strongly agreed with the existence of such a system, a significant number of respondents disagreed with its availability.

Existence of knowledge management system that acknowledges the utilization of both tacit and explicit knowledge for curriculum development

Regarding the existence of a knowledge management system that acknowledges the utilization of both tacit and explicit knowledge for curriculum development in the university, the findings indicate the following: 50 per cent of the respondents strongly disagree, 15 per cent disagree, 15 per cent take a neutral position, 5 per cent agree, and 10 per cent strongly agree with the existence of such a system.

These findings reveal that the majority of the respondents (65%) expressed their disagreement, either strongly or simply disagreeing, on the existence of a knowledge management system that acknowledges the utilization of both tacit and explicit knowledge for curriculum development. A smaller percentage of respondents expressed agreement or strong agreement (15%) with the existence of such a system. This suggests that there may be a need for improvements or further efforts to establish a knowledge management system that effectively incorporates both tacit and explicit knowledge for curriculum development in the university.

CONCLUSION

About the Level of Awareness Among Academic Staff members of Ethiopian Defence University on the Knowledge Management System in Higher Education Institutions

The findings present a mixed state of affairs regarding knowledge management in higher education institutions. While a significant proportion of respondents demonstrated a moderate level of familiarity with the knowledge management system, indicating a foundation of understanding and awareness, whereas, the majority reported not receiving any training on the system. This highlights a gap in formal training opportunities, leaving faculty members to rely on their own efforts, such as reading, to create moderate familiarity. It is evident that the university lacks training opportunities for academic staff members concerning the knowledge management system in higher education institutions.

Concerning Knowledge Management practice in the Ethiopian Defence University

In conclusion, the findings highlight the inadequate attention given to knowledge management practices in the Ethiopian Defence University. The majority of respondents expressed various concerns:

- The design and implementation of knowledge management policies and strategies are insufficient or non-existent.
- There is a low level of importance assigned to knowledge management systems within the university.
- There is a lack of a dedicated responsible body overseeing knowledge management, resulting in a lack of focus and attention.
- The university does not have a centralized knowledge management repository or database system.

These findings collectively indicate that there are significant gaps and deficiencies in the knowledge management practices of the Ethiopian Defence University.

About Practicing Knowledge Sharing Activities such as seminars, workshops, or conferences organized in the University

The findings suggest that knowledge-sharing activities, such as seminars, workshops, or conferences, are organized in the university is poor. This is indicated by the following points

- The majority of respondents reported knowledge-sharing events organized occasionally and a significant portion indicated that such activities are conducted rarely or not at all.
- There is no or poor incentives or recognition mechanisms in place in the university to promote knowledge sharing among faculty members.
- There is a low level of knowledge sharing and collaboration activity among the faculty members of the university.

Concerning Implementation of knowledge management practice for curriculum development in the University

As a higher education institution, it is crucial for the Ethiopian Defence University to establish and implement a knowledge management system that serves as a means of preservation and supports the curriculum development process. However, based on the

findings, it is evident that the university has yet to implement a knowledge management system dedicated to curriculum development and implementation. This can be demonstrated by the following outcomes of the study

- The majority of the respondents disagreed with the presence of a knowledge-sharing platform that facilitates the sharing of knowledge and experience among academic staff to support the curriculum development process.
- The majority of the respondents expressed their disagreement or take neutral stance, regarding the existence of a knowledge management database system for curriculum development.
- The majority of the respondents indicate either strongly disagree or disagree on the availability of a centralized knowledge management repository that serves for storing and organizing curriculum materials in the Ethiopian Defence University.
- The majority of the respondents expressed their disagreement on the availability of a purpose-built knowledge management system that supports capturing feedback from stakeholders to enable the university in identifying areas for curriculum revision.
- The majority of the respondents expressed their disagreement, either strongly or simply disagreeing, on the existence of a knowledge management system that acknowledges the utilization of both tacit and explicit knowledge for curriculum development.

RECOMMENDATION

The following are the recommendations to address the shortcomings of the university in organizing a knowledge management system that supports knowledge creation, preservation, and dissemination activities.

For the University Management

- To enhance the knowledge management system in the Ethiopian Defence University, it is essential to capitalize on the existing familiarity and awareness while addressing the limited availability of training opportunities. Although academic staff members and instructors may possess some familiarity with knowledge management theories and concepts, investing in comprehensive training programs will empower faculty members with the requisite knowledge and skills to effectively utilize the knowledge

management system. This strategic approach will foster a more robust and efficient knowledge-sharing culture within the university, resulting in advancements in curriculum development, research, and overall institutional effectiveness.

- To improve the knowledge management activity in the Ethiopian Defence University, it is recommended to take the following actions:
- Implement robust policies: Develop and implement comprehensive knowledge management policies that outline the processes, roles, and responsibilities related to knowledge management in the university.
- Increase importance placed on knowledge management: Raise awareness among university stakeholders about the significance of knowledge management in enhancing teaching, research, and overall institutional effectiveness.
- Establish a dedicated body for oversight: Create a dedicated knowledge management unit or committee responsible for overseeing and coordinating knowledge management activities across the university. This body should be tasked with developing and implementing strategies, providing guidance, and monitoring the progress of knowledge management initiatives.
- Introduce a centralized repository: Develop a centralized knowledge management repository or database system that serves as a single source of truth for storing, organizing, and accessing curriculum materials, research outputs, and other relevant knowledge assets. This repository should be easily accessible to faculty members, staff, and students, ensuring efficient knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- To bridge the gap in knowledge management practice for curriculum development, it is essential for the university to prioritize the installation and utilization of a dedicated knowledge management system. This system should be purposefully designed to facilitate the storage, organization, and dissemination of knowledge resources specifically relevant to curriculum development. By implementing such a system, the university can significantly enhance its capacity to effectively manage and leverage knowledge, resulting in improved curriculum design and more efficient implementation processes.

For The University Researchers

- To improve the knowledge management practices of the University, researchers should conduct further comprehensive assessments to identify areas for

improvement. These assessments should consider the specific needs, resources, challenges, and goals of the university regarding knowledge management. Additionally, researchers should assist the university management in formulating a clear and actionable strategy that outlines the objectives, priorities, and steps necessary for establishing an effective knowledge management system. This strategy should align with the university's overall mission and vision and involve input from relevant stakeholders. By conducting thorough research and providing valuable insights, researchers can play a crucial role in guiding the development and implementation of a robust knowledge management system at the university.

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