

# Knowledge Management and Knowledge Capital in Kuwaiti Organizations

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## Abstract

Knowledge management as one of the principles of modern management system that effect on various development of organization in Kuwait. Knowledge management accessing and examining the current situation in Kuwaiti developing sectors to achieve the goals of organization as grow with competitiveness through increasing human and labor investment to achieve work effectiveness. This paper focus on the study of relational knowledge management system to invention and development purpose. 42 Kuwaiti governmental organizations and population involved managers of computing and administrative of human development those skilled employees focus on five-scale questionnaire-based research. Which bring the importance for the knowledge and diversity as sources for development of the performance in Kuwaiti organizations in its culture effect. Knowledge capital-based system focus to compile, form and crate new knowledge that help to access for transfer and share it in the public sector as enriching with knowledge management system as well as for its development of performance.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Knowledge Management, Knowledge capital-Kuwait.

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## I. Introduction

The current era is one of rapid change due to increased competition among institutions, global economic cooperation, continuous technological development, and changes with priorities, trends, and societal values. Economies and social norms are also rapidly changing due to the introduction of new laws, globalization, the emergence of the knowledge socioeconomic, and the growing size of the European Union (EU) (Ingrid.G & Zenona. A, 2015). Knowledge is the information that helps organizations to perform organizational activities effectively and efficiently and to engage in appropriate decision-making. knowledge management (KM) is a relatively new concept in managerial science, although many researchers in this field differ in their opinion due to its definition and interpretation of the meaning.

Information and knowledge where many researchers believe to be distinct concepts in that information is a composite part of data, whereas knowledge is greater and more comprehensive than that. Knowledge is defined as the cumulative beliefs, experiences and interpretations of information, and is dependent on the individuals' principles and beliefs, which are affected by participation, judgments, behaviours and manner of conduct. Furthermore, institutional knowledge is formed by the experiences of employees in the course of their work and can be

leveraged to improve the performance of the institution. The principles of the heart of KM systems, which enable organizations to use institutional knowledge to drive change. Therefore, KM can be defined as synthesizing the knowledge, experiences and employees in a format that easy to leverage knowledge as learning from mistakes, KM as finding a way that facilitates obtaining the wisdom and knowledge of the organization's employees and then making it available to use for other (Ragsdale, 1994) .

However, knowledge capital is the organized knowledge that can be used to produce wealth (Stewart, 1994). Furthermore, governmental and private organizations' practices intersect with regard to the use of knowledge management systems with the general objective of increasing employee understanding and developing their sectors through predefined learning processes. In the private sector, the processes of knowledge acquisition, creation, distribution and participation, aims to support inventions and gain a competitive advantage. The government sector, on the other hand, aims to utilize KM that increase efficiency, reduce expenses to increase the quality of services. Nonetheless, the main objective is to achieve proficiency in both sectors as mainly through the integration of knowledge management systems (KMS) via KC. Knowledge capital has become an important resource for large government institutions, municipalities, and counties. That define also in three sources like in Human resource management, relationship in between partners and competitors or in the organizational sources. E.g. process engineering, technology, or invention (Stewart, 1994).

## **II. Research Gap and Questions**

There are several main factors that affect the development of the state economy: the availability of information, growth of the knowledge society, and continued innovation in the government, private, industrial and service sectors. An important management factor influencing the performance of government and private institutions is the KMS, which can be defined as the ongoing processes by the organization to create new knowledge, identify new sources of knowledge, and then codify, distribute and share it among employees (Demigha, 2009). KMS also helps in organizational as survive in a competitive world by providing institutions valuable resources, effectively regulate their uses. As tangible resources of knowledge could be created, used, distributed, and shared for government or private sectors. Therefore, knowledge transformation into an economic commodity greatly helps in creating and developing inventions within institutions for their gap as necessary to disagreed (Ingrida & Zenona, 2015). Following questions are attempted to answer as found in this research gaps.

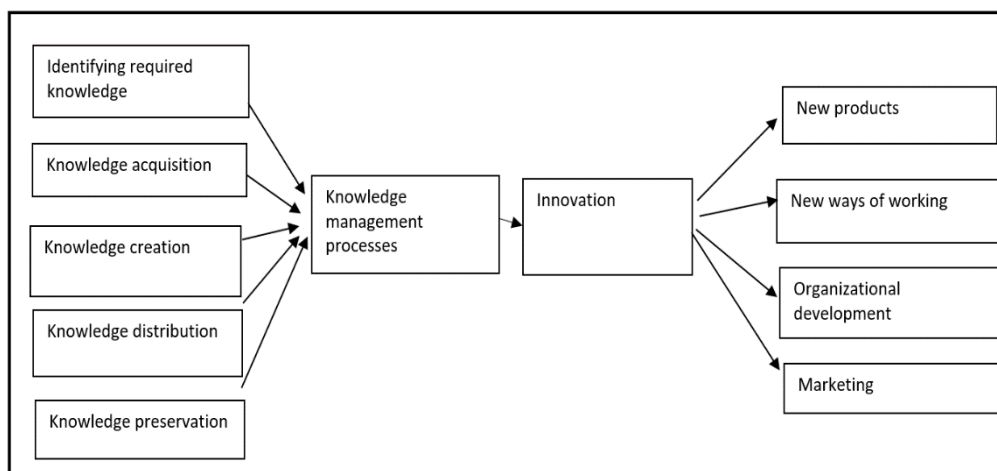
1. What role does knowledge from different sources play in improving the performance of local organizations in the State of Kuwait?
2. What is the impact of KMS organizational culture that used by local organizations within the State of Kuwait?
3. What are the sources of knowledge capital upon KMS that able to build in local organizations in the State of Kuwait?
4. What systems are used to collect, form and create new knowledge to measure and transfer the same knowledge to the government sector in the State of Kuwait?
5. What are the sources of enriching the KMS that used by local organizations in Kuwait?
6. What is the impact of knowledge capital on workers and work in the government sector in the State of Kuwait?
7. Are there any difficulties encountered in the implementation of KMS by local organizations in the State of Kuwait?
8. What are the expected results and impacts of the KMS on the performance of local organizations in the State of Kuwait?

Above all questions help to define from KM system as elaborately explain throughout from result and discussion section.

## **III. Knowledge Management VS Innovation**

The relationship between knowledge management (KM) and innovation has been extensively discussed in the existing literature. Studies have shown that KM is an essential element upon which organizations depend for creativity and, most importantly, innovation (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Two types of results depend on KM as focused with the transforming intangible into concrete knowledge, and creating the transforming knowledge into an economic commodity that facilitates innovation (Harkema, 2003). Organizational activities and the applications of innovations are very important for the commercial activities taking place within developed countries as contributing to the industry value chains which enabling organizations to maintain their position and competition in the global markets. Organizations use knowledge, modern management methods and urge their employees to showcase their creative side not only to make profits, but also to develop future strategies.

In this sense, knowledge economics, continuing education, invention and creativity are the main drivers of the economies of developed countries. On the other hand, linked knowledge and innovation showed that the way of working when knowledge is acquired and shared among employees is improved and leads to the production of new products or the enhancement of existing products (Harkema, 2003). In the sharing stage, the accumulated knowledge is applied to current situation of organization that analysed to identify the organizational challenges. The relationship between knowledge management and innovation is illustrated in the following figure 1, as outlining the results that can be achieved through the application of knowledge management (Ingrida & Zenona, 2015).



**Figure 1:** Knowledge management processes and types of inventions

The analysis leads to the appropriate decision-making regarding in the areas of innovation as used for the stage of forming ideas centered on the sharing of knowledge and access to the creation of new ones. E.g. new inventions and submission of high risks.

#### IV. Knowledge Management VS Innovation

Knowledge-based information economy is an important challenge in the digital era. National knowledge capital is used to improve institutional performance for its developing KM programs that help to preparing and developing the strong and effective administrative leaders. Some cases challenge lies in the availability of national intellectual capital. Study found the development of administrative leaders with KM able to determine the acquiring information alone is not sufficient to face the challenges and risks of competition and achieve business excellence (Bizan, 2010). KM also play a major role in developing and preparing administrative leadership. KM processes are applied in the Faculties of Physical Education in Jordanian universities from the viewpoint of the faculty members, and to establish whether there are statistically significant differences in this degree of application due to variables such as gender, experience, and academic rank . Survey conduct on representing the four basic areas in KM: formation and generation, storage and organization, transfer and sharing and lastly application.

The data were processed statistically by using arithmetic means, standard deviations, t-tests, and single-factor variance analyses. The results showed that the degree of knowledge management application in the Faculties of Physical Education was generally high. The fields of knowledge transfer and sharing were ranked highest, followed by the fields of knowledge application, knowledge storage and organization operations, followed by knowledge formation and generation. The results also showed that there are no statistically significant differences in the degree of application attributable to the variables of gender, experience, and academic rank. Research also conducted in health sector institutions Ma'an Governorate and found that the effects of KM process and practices on technical and administrative creativity (Al-Mahamid, , Saud Muhammad, Bani Atta, 2013). Survey conducts to find the goal of study completion rate of 74%. The study identified the following, upon which practical recommendations were developed:

- a) A statistically significant impact of knowledge management processes related to the documentation of knowledge on artistic creativity.
- b) A statistically significant effect of the practice of applying knowledge on administrative creativity.
- c) A statistically significant effect of administrative creativity on artistic creativity.

KM plays a major role in developing and preparing administrative leaderships. It is one of the solutions that all community institutions seek, whether from the public or private sector, as it provides a great advantage that enables them to compete and achieve distinction in the midst of a globalized information economy. In some case, acquiring information alone is not sufficient to face the challenges and risks of competition or achieve business excellence in the field of KM or among administrative leaders (Bizan & Hanan-Sadiq, 2010). Educational administration leaders as PhD holders take as part sample included 24 education leaders in the United States and England to explored the build knowledge capital for their organizations in congruence with the culture of the society, historic roots, low economic income, ethnic cultural and linguistic diversity (Taysum, 2016). Another study conducted on primary education service area office perspective in order to develop KM model where the resulting research hold three stages: 1) Current situational result, 2) Problematic organizational knowledge and 3) Quality of public sector management. The indicators of success were generally at a high level

(Khotbancha, Chantarasombat & Sriampai, 2015). Evidence proved that Malaysian public sector, the study sheds light on the role and importance of training in improving service quality (Zumrah, 2015). That study as followed a survey methodology, where responses were collected from three source groups: workers in public sector institutions in Malaysia who participated in administrative and financial training programs, the workers' bosses and their colleagues. The results revealed that there is a relationship between the quality of performance, training, and management in the public sector which needs to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in the workplace in order for the training to yield a rewarding return on investment. School of leadership challenges at public sector in Pakistan was based on educational conventions, its system and paradigm shift for teachers focus on the classroom for learner where English as main teaching language (Mansoor, 2015). The impact of the role of school principals in this distinctive paradigm shift was a prominent one, as the results showed improvement in the performance of the principals in Punjab State, Pakistan. In addition, it was established that the biggest challenges facing the principals issues of the environment, infrastructure, human resources, teacher recruitment, school organization, student enrollment, parental interference, and political pressures.

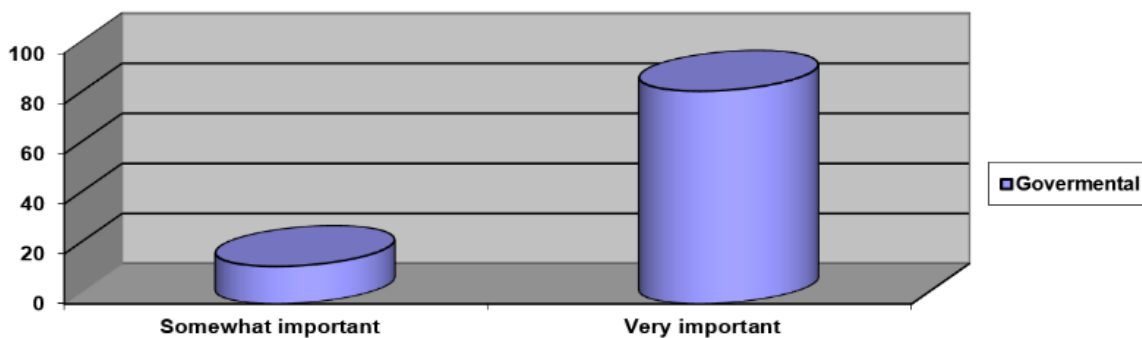
**V. Objectives and Methodology**

Research goal define the demonstrate the importance of KM as one of the modern management principles which impact on the development of the organization and workers. This specific task verifies the extent of the existence of a KM in Kuwait's public institutions. Additionally, this research aims to examine the current state of knowledge management in Kuwait which identify the possible improvements to achieve the goal of development, growth and competition for organizations which help to increasing investment in human resources. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a questionnaire was designed based on existing literature. The research was comprised on 42 government institutions in Kuwait, and the respondents consisted of directors of IT, administrative and human resource departments. Total 38 responses were received with the questionnaires and responses those were analyzed for compliance with scientific methods. The criterion of selecting the sample was the size is institution and its financial position.

The selection was based on statistical publications released by the Ministry of Planning in Kuwait, complimented by case studies that were selected from specialized accordingly field references. Many reasons find that why KM is high importance for the organizational development as found that the quantum shift within organizations which relying on industrial information that amplifying the impact on organizations or individuals (ASTD, 1999). KM also try to be gaining a competitive advantage for developing the organization and services to increasing the creativity and innovation. As a result, this research finds the understand of extent that existence or absence the KMS in Kuwaiti organizations. Result and discussion section provide elaborately regarding this matter.

**VI. Result and Discussion**

Different source of knowledge improving the performance of local organizations in the state of Kuwait. In this case, the source of knowledge defines the importance of knowledge for organizations. Survey found that most people believe the knowledge which bring the development of organizations.



**Figure 2:** The importance of knowledge management to develop the organization's performance.

Figure 2 depict that 15% believe somewhat is important while others are fully believed. Knowledge has meaning only when it is used. From this standpoint, the importance of knowledge appears through its exploitation in the development decisions of the organization (Sweiby, 1997). The participants were also asked to indicate their opinion of the importance of knowledge sources for their organizations and their KM systems. The responses are summarized in Table (1). Where 46% believe that the knowledge of those dealing with the organization is most important, 38% believe that the knowledge of the companies and entities that deal with the organization which is most important.

**Table (1):** The importance of knowledge sources

Sources of Knowledge	Agree	Not sure	Do Not Agree	Total
Workers' personal knowledge	80 %	20%	—	100 %
Knowing those who are dealing with the organization	46 %	44%	10 %	100 %
Knowing the companies and entities that deal with the organization	38 %	34%	28 %	100 %
Knowledge of internal regulations and systems	90 %	10%	—	100 %

Due to the lack of diversity of knowledge sources KM system somewhat behind in relation to the use of government sector. Indeed, KM system should have a variety of sources to be effective (Coate, 1999).

**a) Impact of KMS**

Impact of organization culture on the KMS used by local organizations within the state of Kuwait. In this case, KMS define the way as the facilitate the process of capturing and collecting the wisdom of workers in the organization. This means sharing experiences and knowledge is one of the bases of building a KMS. In the same context, participants were asked to clarify that how employees can view their acquired knowledge and experience. Among those 70% from government sector see knowledge and expertise as the source of the workers' strength within organization, while 75% believe that knowledge and expertise of employees are personal property, and 60% were agree is nothing forcing workers to share their experiences and knowledge with others. Furthermore, 76% of respondents believe that preserving knowledge and experiences is the basis for the survival and promotion of the organization's workers, whereas 45% believe that their knowledge and experiences gained through working in the organization. 42% believe that their success at work stems from the availability of a system and the knowledge management culture of the organization. Table 2 below summarizes the information.

**Table (2)** The organization's culture for a knowledge management system

Group	Agree	Not Sure	Do Not Agree	Total
Knowledge and experiences are the source of strength for the organization's employees	70 %	20%	10%	100 %
Knowledge and experiences are the personal property of the employees	75 %	13%	12%	100 %
There is no reason for employees to share their experiences and knowledge with others	60 %	15%	25%	100 %
Preserving knowledge and experiences is the basis for survival and promotion of the organization's employees	76 %	14%	10%	100 %
The culture of the organization helps employees to exchange experiences and share knowledge	20 %	30%	70%	100 %
Workers see that their knowledge and experience gained through working for the organization as their property	45 %	20%	35%	100 %
Workers see that their success at work stems from the availability of a knowledge management system and culture in the organization	42 %	22%	42%	100 %

The above analysis makes it clear that difficultness of creating KMS in Kuwait organizations. The most obstacle to building a KMS is the workers' view of knowledge on the basis that it is power and individually owned (Meyer & Zack, 1996). Most employees see the knowledge as a force, the preservation of which allows them to preserve their positions and jobs. Success rate of KMS in this case is very low. In this perception, the organization must create a sound environment and culture that facilitates the exchange of experiences or knowledge in a healthy and acceptable way (Schwarzwalder, 1999). It is important for top management to support such a system and model transferring experiences among employees (Meyer & Zack, 1996). It also demonstrated that many organizations have succeeded in implementing such systems began their efforts with departments in which there was a sound environment with open minded workers who are capable of transferring knowledge and experience (Tahinah, Ziad Lotfi & Hassan 2015). In this context, the Kuwaiti administration

should encourage workers to think about other workers who could grow and develop the organization when transferring knowledge and experiences. Furthermore, the administration should also look to departments that have similar goals and then encourage workers in these departments to participate in knowledge and experience transfers. On the other hand, a culture must be built in which workers accept the transfer of knowledge and experiences to others in a mutually beneficial manner with complete confidence. Moreover, the administration should also identify the workers who must transfer their knowledge and experiences before they leave the organization for any reason. The environment that facilitates such transitions will provide extensive benefits to the organization (Harkema, 2003).

**b) Source of Knowledge capital**

The sources of knowledge capital upon which KMS are build in local organizations in the state of Kuwait. Survey analysis define that the most important source of knowledge is conferences and internal bulletins, 80% identified human knowledge as their main source, while 62% of the sample see the importance of relationships as a source of knowledge for their knowledge management systems. 60% of respondents believe that the organization’s website is a source of knowledge and experience, while 58% rely on organizational sources, and only 45% remain on performance measurement and failed experiences. Responses are summarized in Table 3.

**Table (3): Sources of knowledge**

Source of Knowledge	Agree	Not sure	Do Not Agree	Total
Human	80%	15%	5%	100%
Relationships	62%	13%	25%	100%
Regulatory sources	58%	13%	29%	100%
Performance measurement and failed experiences	45%	21%	34%	100%
The organization’s website	60%	10%	30%	100%
Conferences, magazines and internal newsletters	86%	14%	-	100%
Distributors, consumers and reviewers	40%	25%	35%	100%

The previous analysis shows that the main sources of knowledge capital used and upon which the KM system relies do not occupy the top positions -- human sources of knowledge came in the second place, followed by relationships in third and organizational sources in fifth. Knowledge of distributors, consumers and auditors came last. As it was explained previously, the KMS should not depend on a single source, whether it can be either internal or external. The sources of knowledge should be diversified and include a network of knowledge and experiences of distributors, consumers, auditors, service or raw material providers, society, public relations, government agencies, and any other available source. On the other hand, knowledge and experience system is about measuring performance that might learning from mistakes. This point receives very little attention from Kuwaiti organizations.

**c) Creating New Knowledge from Various Sector**

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD, 1999) stated in its report that knowledge management should fall under the following classifications:

- Forming and storing knowledge that helps in development.
- Measuring the financial value of knowledge.
- Facilitating the transfer of knowledge and expertise.
- Creating an environment conducive to sharing knowledge and experiences.

To evaluate the knowledge management systems in the State of Kuwait, the participants were asked about the system that used to collect, form that create new knowledge which measure and transfer as the form of knowledge. 40% of respondents stated in the internal bulletins and journals as like most important method used in the process of facilitating the transfer of knowledge and experiences. While the regulations and laws come in second place at 35% and the Internet in third place at 20%. Only 5% of the participants use the intranet and software as an important means of transferring and exchanging knowledge (Al-Mahamid, 2013). Table 4 summarizes the responses of overall survey.

**Table 4:** The means used to obtain, store and share knowledge in the government sector

Means	Usage Percentage
Internal newsletters & magazines	40%
The Internet	20%
The intranet & computer software	5%
Regulations & laws	35%

The most important point related to the knowledge management system is the process of forming knowledge and experiences that placing this knowledge in the appropriate time and format at the disposal of workers who need it.

**d) Enriching the knowledge management systems in Kuwait**

A question was directed to the participants about enriching the sources of knowledge, and their answers centered on the use of publications and magazines as the most important means in facilitating the transfer of knowledge and experiences in Kuwaiti organizations. The participants were asked about the most important employee inputs to the organization’s KMS. They indicated that their system recorded the daily business of the organization as 70% using for record performance, and 35% for recording the information about service or raw materials providers. Whereas 31% use it to record information about consumers and customers, 24% use it to record mistake and failed.

**Table (5):** Employees' participation in enriching the knowledge management system

The answers	Significantly	Reasonably well	Slightly	Total
New ideas at work	20%	22%	58%	100%
Mistakes and failed experiences	24%	30%	46%	100%
Information about customers and consumers	31%	44%	25%	100%
Information about the service provider or the raw materials	35%	40%	25%	100%
Information about the organization’s daily business	70%	25%	5%	100%
Information about the organization's performance	76%	14%	10%	100%

experiences, and only 20% use it to record new ideas, a tendency that is congruent as presented from table 5.

**e) Impact of Knowledge capital in the government sector**

The impact of knowledge capital of government sector in the state of Kuwait get the value from survey evaluation. Responded from survey analysis as indicated that 75% agree the greatest impact of knowledge management systems and knowledge capital on workers is to contribute on the process of creating a new product as consider of their creativity. This is in line as the findings from previous research (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

**Table (6):** The effects of knowledge capital on the organization

Category	Agree	Not sure	Do Not Agree	Total
Employees morale	35%	20%	45%	100%
Creativity at work	60%	15%	25%	100%
Productivity	55%	20%	25%	100%
Job satisfaction	45%	20%	35%	100%
Financial payoff	10%	30%	60%	100%
Creating a new product or service	75%	25%		100%
Development of the training system	30%	25%	45%	100%
Teamwork	60%	15%	25%	100%

The encouragement of teamwork came in second place, the effects on productivity in third, followed by impacts on job satisfaction and employee morale. As results summarized and present on Table 6.

**F) Implementation of KMS by local organizations**

Implementations of KMS by local organizations in the state of Kuwait as found in this section. Respondents ask about the most important difficulties as they face. The answers focused on changing the culture of workers and their perceived ownership of knowledge in order to accept the process of sharing knowledge and experiences across the organization. The second most common challenge was measuring the value of knowledge transfers, followed by determining as the return on investment.

**Table (7)** Difficulties in implementing a knowledge management system in Kuwaiti organizations.

Difficulties	Very high	High	Reasonably well	Total
Changing the employees' culture and their ownership of knowledge	97%	10%	3%	100%
Measuring the value of knowledge capital	85%	15%	0%	100%
Determining the needed type of knowledge and experience to be obtained, stored, managed and shared	80%	15%	5%	100%
Return on investment on the tools used in knowledge management	75%	25%	0%	100%

These findings are in line with the studies conducted which showed that the most important obstacles facing the knowledge management system in American institutions are the creation of an environment that facilitates the process of sharing experiences, measuring the quality of knowledge and experiences, and identifying the associated benefits (Drucker, 1993). Table 7 summarizes the responses.

**g) Expected Results and Impact on KMS performance**

Performance depends on various sites. As seen that 85% of the sample indicated that one of the most important benefits of a knowledge management system is to encourage teamwork, while 82% believe that the knowledge management system contributes to building a new work system based on new knowledge. Furthermore, 80% of respondents a knowledge its effects on creativity and innovation, and 75% see its impact on developing employees and improving their performance. Furthermore, 70% identify as important the implementation of an internal quality system and using the quality score system (benchmarking) to know their position compared to other institutions. 60% of the participants see the impact of the knowledge management system on building an educational and learning organization. These results are in line that has no doubt about the importance of the knowledge management system for the development of the organization and its growth (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). However, if the organization sincerely intends to move on the path of development, the administration must reconsider as the administrative style that used in the social and cultural work environment to see whether it is moving in the right direction, which is in agreement with the course of development (Bizan, 2010). Overall, table 8 summarizes the results.

**Table 8:** Knowledge Management System and its role in developing the performance of Kuwaiti organizations

Effecs	Agree	Not Sure	Do Not Agree	Total
Direct effects on the development of the employees and their performance	75%	15%	10%	100%
Building a new work system based on new knowledge	82%	10%	8%	100%
The application of the international quality system	70%	13%	17%	100%
Teamwork	85%	10%	5%	100%
Building an educational and learning organization	60%	35%	5%	100%
Creativity and invention	80%	20%	0%	100%



## VII. Recommendations

Various strategies applicable in KMS. In this case, develop strategies and policies for the process of transferring knowledge between departments and divisions within the institution as recommended in this study within few points below.

- Spread awareness of the concept of knowledge and the importance of exchanging and sharing knowledge between members of the institution, which would develop the institution in general and the individuals.
- Exchange KMS experiences by upper management across companies to define the roles and responsibilities of those individuals and departments.
- Form a permanent work team of experts in the field of knowledge management and information systems to train workers and solve problems arising from the application in a timely manner.
- Carry out informal activities and events between workers within the organization to build trust and develop social relations.
- Activate the technological infrastructure and the continuous updating of implicit and explicit knowledge to facilitate access to it.
- Activate social communication tools within the institution.

## VIII. Conclusion

Results indicate that using the knowledge management system helps organizations that continue in the competitive world through equipping organizations with the necessary means to control their valuable resources, regulate their uses effectively, and re-produce their sources. Top managements should reconsider the administrative system that they adopt with the social and cultural environment of work so that they can assess their success. The researchers make several recommendations and suggestions for introducing the knowledge management system which open up to other cultures to exchange the experiences with them.

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