



UNIVERSITY OF KWA-ZULU NATAL

An analysis of strategic Knowledge Management and Sharing: A case of Eswatini Water Services Corporation.

By

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## Declaration

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Business Administration at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville. It has not been submitted before any other degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained necessary authorisation and consent to conduct this research.

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**Date: 08/02/2022**

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## **Abstract**

The rise of a knowledgeable society calls for organizations to redefine the way they compete, so to meet the changing needs of their customers; be it a public or private entity. Among other strategies and success pillars, knowledge management and sharing could be leveraged upon as a means of ensuring a competitive advantage and a sustainable development for the society through leveraging the knowledge resource effectively and efficiently. The study sought to analyse the strategic Knowledge Management (KM) and sharing at Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC), a state-owned enterprise responsible for supplying water in and around the urban surroundings of Eswatini. The study employed the qualitative method anchored in the interpretivist design which uses the open-ended interview to gather data from a purposively selected sample of 17 senior managers who were deemed to have the pre-requisite, KM experience. Data analysis followed a thematic analysis sequence done manually leading to themes which were discussed as major findings of the study. The study revealed that although participants understood what KM and sharing entails, several aspects such as misalignment of performance management (PM) system with KM and sharing, an uncondusive organisational culture, and inadequate budget hindered the effective application of KM and sharing. In addition, lack of a clear KM and sharing strategy negatively affect the implementation of an effective KM and sharing process. Thus, the study recommended for a review of the organisation's overall KM and sharing strategy from a policy perspective to ensure effective implementation. The study also recommended the appointment of a key strategic leader who will be tasked to gradually introduce a fresh culture needed to change the way things are done at EWSC.

**Key terms:** Knowledge management, Knowledge sharing, organizational culture, strategy

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# **Chapter 1 – Introduction and overview of the study**

## **1. Introduction**

Today's world is knowledge driven as there are a lot of changes in the way business is done, fostered by innovations, disruptive changes, turbulences, and increased competition. The rise of a knowledge society calls for organizations to redefine the way they compete, so to meet the changing needs of their customers; be it a public or private entity. Among other strategies and success pillars, knowledge management and sharing could be leveraged upon as a means of ensuring a competitive advantage and a sustainable development for the society through leveraging the knowledge resource effectively and efficiently (Zaim, 2006).

Knowledge management and sharing in a public service bearing, state owned enterprise such as Eswatini Water Services Corporation, (EWSC), remains a very integral resource in ensuring efficiency and compliance to both internally set standards and international standards to which the organization subscribes to. An effective knowledge management and sharing results into a clear direction of what employees strive to achieve. It helps crystalize how they would go about doing their duties and helps them identify who they are within the organisation. This highlights the importance of such an initiative and its impact to the level of employee engagement as a result of a clear direction of what their organizational goals are and how they personally feed into those goals. In the same vein, Wong and Aspinwall (2004) confirms that knowledge management is viewed as a key resource and strategic resource from which firms stand to benefit, amongst others, improved competency, efficiency, quicker decision making, learning, innovation, responsiveness to customers and knowledge sharing.

This study relates to knowledge management and sharing in a state-owned enterprise referred to in this study as EWSC. Generally, employees would not share their knowledge as they think their knowledge is valuable and important. Hoarding knowledge and looking distrustfully upon knowledge from others are a natural tendency, Bock and Kim (2002). Hence, in an effort to break the information ceiling barrier of lack of freely sharing information amongst

employees, knowledge management can be adopted as a process of applying a systematic approach to acquiring, structuring, management and dissemination of knowledge in organizations. The main objective being to increase the level of knowledge in the workflow through the use of best practices and reduce the high costs of doing business in silos (Naydenov, 2018). Failure to address such an issue leads to inefficiencies in an organisation.

This study therefore investigates strategic knowledge management and sharing within EWSC following the realization that knowledge and information sharing are fundamental to every organization. And as alluded, the present state of knowledge and information sharing at EWSC leaves a lot to be desired. For example, the organisation is often placed in a crisis if a key officer is on leave as it grapples to locate critical information needed for the good of the organisation. The introductory chapter presents the background to the study, problem statement, objectives, questions and significance of the study as well as the brief research design and methodology as well as the organisation of the study.

## **1.1 Background of the study**

Water supply and wastewater industries continue to face various challenges due to operational environment changes, aging infrastructure and related tacit knowledge of the employees (Sandelin, Hukka and Katko, 2021) . Knowledge and information are needed at all levels of a utility to support business functions and assist in attaining business aims and objectives. Making information available to the right worker at the right time and in the right place is vital for managing large and complex infrastructure systems (Gianella and Gujer, 2006). The EWSC, established by the Water Services Corporation Act No.12 of 1992, is the sole provider of water services in and around the urban Eswatini areas (water supply, and sewage treatment and disposal) and it controls the abstraction of raw water from boreholes in those areas for which it is responsible. In today's increasingly competitive and cost-conscious operating environment, public utilities recognize the need to treat information as a valuable strategic asset, since a large proportion of the administrative budget is typically spent on information handling activities (Sandelin *et al.*, 2021).

According to Paroutis and Al Saleh (2009), knowledge management has endured a paradigm shift from a static, knowledge warehouse approach towards a rather more dynamic communication-based or network approach. In the same vein, Agrawal and Mukti (2020) states that in the mid 1980's, organizations started appreciating and focusing on an individual's knowledge and their importance as there was increasing emphasis on product quality, and facilities. All these were placed on an individual's knowledge placement. During the period between 1900 to 1980, the knowledge management field has transitioned through eight major mutations, (Khasseh and Mokhtarpour, 2016).

There are a lot of definitions of knowledge management found within literature, obviously going over all of them falls way beyond the scope of the study but a few which are fundamental to this study have been considered. Some writers focus on the aspects of knowledge management and some on the concept itself. To highlight a few, Zaim (2006: 3) defines knowledge management as, unlocking and leveraging the knowledge of individuals so that this knowledge becomes available as an organizational resource that is not dependent on those same individuals. This definition highlights a core aspect of this research paper as it presents knowledge management as a resource to the organization with or without the individual who came up with that particular kind of information. Others such as Ranf and Herman (2018: 2), further define knowledge management as the formalization of and access to experience, knowledge and expertise that create new capabilities, enables superior performance, encourage innovation and enhance customer value.

It is important to note that for any organisation to survive and out compete its rivals, it has to leverage on its competitive advantage, Louw and Venter (2013) and such includes investing in the human capital potential it already owns as such results into a learning effect in the organization and that's a key step into knowledge management, (Paulova, Vanova, Rusko, Hekelova and Kralikova, 2017). An effective knowledge management results into a clear direction of what employees strive to achieve, how they will go about and what they are to do thus highlighting the importance of such an initiative to the level of employee engagement as a result of a clear direction of what their organizational goals are and how they personally feed into those goals.

Knowledge management or rather the explosion of knowledge, information technology advancement and the notion of globalization have dramatically affected our society as we have seen the emergence of knowledge societies with new global challenges which call for a change on the ways knowledge is being transmitted, education, and produced, research, (Correia, 2012). All along it has been what could directly generate monetary profit which was regarded as the most valuable assets of the organization in the perspective of tangible assets as opposed to considering intangible assets too. However, the tide has turned drastically currently as organizations now place heavy emphasis on studying and valuing the intangible assets, knowledge being one of the most valuable intangibles as organizations realize that it is a fundamental resource in creating a sustainable competitive advantage. It reveals what an organization does, what it says and where it is positioned in terms of its strategic goal and activities (Othman,Arshad,Aris and Arif, 2015). The EWSC being a monopolistic, state owned enterprise supplying potable water and sewage disposal, serving the larger part of the country mostly urban and peri-urban areas, has the responsibility to ensure delivering of services in a satisfactory manner which ensures the value for money from a customer perspective. Customers of the knowledge driven century are well informed of their rights and can always switch to alternatives means of water supply, hence the need of a well-run public organization to serve the economy.

Knowledge management characterizes of the organizational strategies which seek a synergistic blend of data, the information capacity of information technologies, and the creative and innovative ability of human beings hence it has become a pivotal component and source of sustainable competitive advantage and superior profitability in the organisations of today (Jie,Hongming and Yongyao, 2011). As much as a public organisation is not directly involved in a competition, in essence it is since there are other substitute products customers can switch to. Public organisations ever have the necessity of continuous improvement and innovation on their products, services and process for growth, goal achievement and responding to the expected changes of the society, (Khorakian,Mohammadi Shahroodi,Jahangir and Nikkhah Farkhani, 2019). Meeting societal changes, understanding and being innovative on process can only be possible when there is knowledge of best practices, and employees feel it's their ethical duty to share knowledge. However, if employees feel what they shared is being ignored, they get discouraged to continue sharing, in contrast, when they feel that

information leads to innovations by other colleagues, they get encouraged to share knowledge freely, (Pyon, Lee and Park, 2009). EWSC has a reservoir of knowledge and information which should be used by employees to ensure effective service delivery. Examples include information about the civil engineering water plans detailing the maps, the water pipes, the five year and long-term strategic plans, the information on key suppliers of water treatment chemicals and refuse as day-to-day examples of what needs to be known and shared is critical component of knowledge and information sharing at EWSC.

### **1.2 Aims of the study**

The aim of the study is to investigate the strategic knowledge management and sharing at Eswatini Water Services Corporation, a state-owned enterprise, by conducting a survey in which interviews are used to gather data with an overall view of improving organisational efficiency and effectiveness anchored in knowledge and information sharing.

### **1.3 Research Problem and rationale of the study**

Knowledge and information sharing are fundamental especially in organisations that operate in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment characterised by scarcity of resources yet the expectation is that they thrive and deliver satisfactory service. Eswatini organisations which include EWSC frequently waste resources and incur pecuniary losses for repeating the same mistakes. Within EWSC, the loss happens through duplication of projects and being unaware of each other's knowledge as a result of no or lack thereof of knowledge sharing and transfer throughout the organisation (Zaim, 2006). It is in this context that this exploratory study is based. All knowledge exists in people's minds thus knowledge management in organisations seeks to identify, create, renew and apply the knowledge of its employees strategically in the company's life (Garcia and Coltre, 2017).

It is the researcher's observation that EWSC has no knowledge management strategy in place, believed to impede knowledge sharing interdepartmentally. This results to a silo mentality which leads to a bad customer experience. There is no free flow of

information amongst departments, thus even information which could enhance operations remains within a few people.

As stated by The\_Pacific\_Institute (2019), cultural survey report, EWSC scored very low on the communication index where the following parameters were examined; whether employees received the information they need to effectively perform their duties, whether information received from other departments is helpful and accurate, whether corporate communication is timely and relevant, checked on if co-workers shared information in a timely manner and if feedback received through surveys was acted upon. On all these parameters, the results fell on number 3 which meant, somewhat disagree. Again, results from focus group discussions held by a consultant crafting a customer experience strategy in January 2020, showed that EWSC employees feel like the environment is not a safe one to speak. This also confirms that sharing information and feedback within EWSC is not easy to share nor well received whenever shared, (EWSC, 2020).

Failure to circulate and share information results into mixed and at times contradictory messages being sent to customers by one company, which then impacts badly on the utility derived by the customer from their experiences with the product or service. When different units as components of a company fail to integrate and collaborate to achieve a common objective, not only are performances affected but also operations at all levels, (Mohapeloa, 2017).

Evidenced by the feedback from the customer satisfaction survey report of 2017/2018, EWSC suffers from such a problem hence the bad corporate image and low customer satisfaction index (EWSC, 2017/2018). Analysis of the customer feedback points to the issue of mixed messages and constant consultation of the contact centre, something which highlights a silo mentality as it is clear that information is not readily available across departments yet there are people or a department that readily has it. Also, the corporate image survey report of 2018/2019 highlights that EWSC lacks good communication. Customers cited that the various departments hardly speak in one voice, rather different versions on one issue usually emanate and this keeps customers moving from pillar to post while trying to get a service from the company.

This study would be the first of its kind being conducted in the Kingdom of Eswatini and it shall help create a foundation for other researchers and it gives an insight of the extent to which public organisations appreciate, implement and understand the potential benefits that come with knowledge management. Without the recommendations made, Eswatini Water Services Corporation and other state-owned enterprises would continue to miss out on intellectual asset management benefits as employees enter and exit these organizations.

#### **1.4 Significance of the study**

This study is significant to various stakeholders which includes the EWSC, the employees of EWSC, senior management of EWSC, the community of Eswatini and academia. Regarding EWSC, the recommendations made by this study would in the overall enhance organisational performance and effectiveness as knowledge and information is shared across the organisation. This is because knowledge and information are key drivers of organisational performance. The study is also significant to employees of EWSC for the obvious reason that when an organisation becomes effective and efficient in terms of its processes, the chances are that the organisation increases the rewards to the work force. Rewards come in the form of salary increases and benefits such as housing, transport and medical allowances. All these could improve due to improvement in knowledge and information sharing. The surrounding community of Eswatini, served by EWSC would stand to benefit as the board improves in terms of constant and continuous supply of water services and by so doing, livelihoods, hygiene and sanitation services are improved as water is key in supporting health service delivery. The study would also be of immense help to the senior management which include the board of directors as through the enhancement of knowledge sharing the EWSC would be in a better position to achieve its strategic objectives which would be to ensure that the surrounding communities served by EWSC have constant supply of water 24/7. To the field of academia, the study contributes significantly in the form of new literature on the significance of knowledge and information sharing with State Owned Enterprise (SoEs), such as EWSC.

## **1.5 Objectives of the study**

To address the above problem statement, the following objectives were developed:

- To examine the nature of knowledge management and sharing at EWSC;
- To determine the challenges and opportunities for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC;
- To determine the systems used by EWSC for knowledge management and sharing;
- To determine the role of managers/leaders in knowledge management and sharing at EWSC;
- To identify the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC, and
- To recommend ways to improve knowledge management and sharing at EWSC.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

To address the above objectives, the following questions have been developed;

- What is the nature of knowledge management and sharing at EWSC?
- What are the challenges and opportunities for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC?
- What are the systems used by EWSC for knowledge management and sharing?
- What is the role of managers/leaders in knowledge management and sharing at EWSC?
- What are the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC?
- What strategies can be recommended to improve knowledge management and sharing at EWSC?

## **1.7 Brief research design**

The research design for this study is exploratory and qualitative in nature, approached from a phenomenological paradigm. Research participants of this study are mainly from the human resources department and the leadership of the organisation which comprises of the managers, the strategy team, the directors and the Managing Director. The sample consists of leaders who have several subordinates and can relate to what it takes to replace employees, when it comes to their training and the expertise, creativity and knowledge that exits the organization whenever employees exit. These participants were selected using non-probability purposive sampling method, and interviewed to gain new insights, discover new ideas on knowledge and information sharing at EWSC. Descriptive qualitative data was collected from interviews and analysed to elicit research findings and make recommendations.

## **1.8 Organization of the study**

The study is presented in five chapters as outlined below:

### **1.8.1 Chapter 1 – Introduction and background of the study**

This chapter sets the stage of the study by introducing the study focusing on the background of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, study objectives and questions. In addition, the chapter presents significance of the study, brief research design, organisation of the study before winding off with a conclusion

### **1.8.2 Chapter Two – Literature review**

This chapter presents literature aligned to the study objectives. The chapter however starts by defining key terms such as knowledge and information and proceeds to review literatures on the nature of knowledge management and sharing, the challenges and opportunities for knowledge management and sharing, the systems for knowledge management and sharing, the role of managers/leaders in knowledge management and sharing and the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing in organisations.

### **1.8.3 Chapter Three – Research design and methodology**

This chapter documents the research overall research methods and designs used to collect, analyse and present data from the selected participants. Sections covered in

the chapter includes the research design, the research philosophy, methods, study population, sampling strategy, sampling techniques and sample size. The chapter also discusses the data collection instruments, their administration, data analysis, validity and reliability, elimination of bias, limitations and ethical considerations before winding off with a conclusion.

#### **1.8.4 Chapter four – Presentation of results and interpretation**

This chapter presents results under the various themes that would have emerged from the thematic analysis. The chapter tries to ensure that the results aligns with the study objectives.

#### **1.8.5 Chapter five – Conclusions and recommendations**

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations. Thus, the chapter documents the findings, draws conclusions and proceed to make recommendations drawn from the conclusions.

#### **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter laid out a background of this exploratory study and further highlighted the research problem. Furthermore, this chapter also presented the objectives, questions, significance of the study and organisation of chapters. The next chapter focuses on literature review

## **Chapter Two - Literature review**

### **2. Introduction**

The previous chapter introduced the study to set the stage. This chapter then then reviews literature aligned to the study objectives. Thus, the chapter begins by defining the key concept knowledge management. Thereafter the chapter covered topics such as organizational knowledge creation, exploring the origin of knowledge management and sharing as well as unpacking the concept of knowledge management and sharing in more detail. Other sections covered by the chapter include knowledge creation strategies, the meaning of knowledge sharing, ethics and knowledge sharing as well as strategic management in turbulent times. The chapter then winds off by critically reviewing the Resourced Based View (RBV) as the underpinning theory from which the study draws providing justification for the theory. The chapter also identifies the gap and explains how the study closes the gap.

#### **2.1 The meaning of knowledge management**

Knowledge management is quite a complex subject. It is important therefore to understand what makes up knowledge and organizational knowledge, as a foundation to understanding knowledge management as a concept. According to Kim, Kim and Yun (2015), knowledge is a multifaceted concept with multilayered meanings, hence it has varying explanations, concepts and arguments over what knowledge entails. Vali, Izadi, Jahani and Okhovati (2016), describes knowledge as a perception obtained from experience, reasoning, direct perception and learning. It is a critical organizational resource that provides a sustainable competitive advantage in a competitive and dynamic economy (Kharabsheh, Bittel, Elnsour, Bettoni and Bernhard, 2016). It is the major source of economic growth of the country and of the success of individual corporations, Bibi, Padhi and Dash (2021) defines knowledge as a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert in-sight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. It originates and is applied in the minds of the knowers and it often gets embedded not only in organizational documents or repositories but also in organizational routines,

process, practices and norms (Khan, Rahman, and Khan, 2015). In this study, knowledge is about ensuring vital organizational knowledge gets documented and managed for use in future as this study is about investigating the nature of knowledge management and sharing providing pertinent recommendations on identified bottlenecks.

According to Kim *et al.* (2015) organizations behave as knowledge markets, consisting of buyers (people seeking knowledge to resolve an issue), sellers (people with an internal market reputation for having substantial knowledge about a process or subject), and brokers (people who make connections between people who need knowledge and those who have it: gatekeepers, boundary spanners, corporate librarians). Closely related to this concept is that of Kessel, Kratzer and Schultz (2012), as they state that these are always based on the beliefs and interactions with the world. Knowledge allows humans to define, prepare, shape, and learn to solve a task or problem Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009). Knowledge is (i) the practicality of skillful action (we recognize that someone has knowledge through their performance of a task) and/or (ii) the potentiality of defining a situation so as to permit (skillful) action (Von Krogh, Ichijo and Nonaka, 2000). The above dimensions portray knowledge to be related to some action or form of implementation by individual's thus well managing and sharing information is viewed as a critical and strategic activity by this research.

On a fresh dimension comes Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009) stating that knowledge comes in two forms, tacit and explicit. Knowledge that is uttered, formulated in sentences, and captured in drawings and writing is explicit. Explicit knowledge has a *universal* character, supporting the capacity to act across contexts and is accessible through consciousness. Explicit knowledge maybe high likely to be known by everyone as it is documented and filed mainly though policies, daily routines, control systems and procedures Lartey, Kong, Afriyie, Santosh and Bah (2019). Tacit knowledge however, is knowledge tied to the senses, demonstrative experiences, movement skills, intuition, unstated mental models, or implicit rules of thumb Nonaka (1994)- is rooted in action, procedures, routines, commitment, ideals, values, and emotions. According Kim *et al.* (2015) tacit knowledge can be accessible through consciousness if it leans towards the explicit side of the continuum. According to Dick (2000), tacit

knowledge is deeply rooted in action, commitment, and involvement in a specific context, it indwells in a comprehensive cognizance of the human mind and body. For this research, knowledge is this organizational asset that should be viewed as a strategic resource, managed well and shared since the study seeks to examine the nature of knowledge management and sharing.

## **2.2 Organizational knowledge creation processes**

The ever increasing importance of knowledge in contemporary society calls for a shift in our thinking concerning innovation, product innovation, or strategic organizational innovation, Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009). This raises interest as to how organizations create and process new knowledge, hence Kantola and Hautala (2008) argues that organizational knowledge emerges from a chain of ongoing transformations among different types of knowledge which require that ideas and skills of different individuals be revealed and combined into collective routines and shared knowledge bases. This then allows individuals to internalize that encoded knowledge and share their skills with one another. Organizational knowledge creation is the ability of a company as a whole to create new knowledge, circulate it throughout the organization and express it in products, services, and systems, Yang, Fang and Lin (2010). Further, Yang *et al.* (2010) defines knowledge creation as a self-transcending, endless process through which one acquires new knowledge to go beyond the boundary of the old self into a new self. It is the process of making available and amplifying knowledge created by individuals as well as crystallizing and connecting it to an organizations knowledge systems (Nonaka and Von Krogh, 2009). This view brings in the human element into the creation of knowledge, which leads us to the two dimensions of organizational knowledge, the ontological and epistemological dimensions. Also, these dimensions draw attention to the human element involved in organizational knowledge transfer, underlining the need to ensure that knowledge gets advanced and shared by those individuals who possess it.

### 2.3 The epistemological dimension

The epistemological dimension of organizational knowledge creation centers on drawing a distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge. The epistemological dimension embraces a continuous dialogue between tacit and explicit knowledge which drives the creation and of new ideas and concepts Crane and Bontis (2014). The concept of tacit knowledge is critical in organizational knowledge creation as it covers the unspoken and tied to the senses, movement skills, physical experiences, intuition aspect of knowledge while explicit knowledge differs in the sense that it is uttered and captured in illustrations and writing, Hadjimichael and Tsoukas (2019). Having defined the two, the critical part is demonstrating how these two mutually complement each other in the creation of organizational knowledge.

In organizational knowledge creation, tacit and explicit knowledge should not be seen as separate entities but mutually complementary and based on the same continuum Yang *et al.* (2010). It is along the continuum where knowledge can momentarily take on different forms and human creativity enables the alternating forms for the purposes of effectively interacting, discovering truth, justifying observations, defining problems and solving them (Nonaka and Von Krogh, 2009). This view highlights the complementary nature and the different states knowledge can take while one attempts to communicate or solve a certain problem. An example of such is best seen in the process through which a scientist undertakes when carrying out their research. Scientists take their time in the laboratory researching on some concepts, conducting experiments and thus embedding information which indwells in them, tacit knowledge. However, for us to be able to learn and utilize that particular discovery or solution, it has to be presented in an explicit knowledge manner which now detaches the knowledge from being indwelling in one human's mind but into uttered and written format accessible to the masses. The basis of organizational knowledge creation is the conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge and back again, adds Bibi *et al.* (2021). However, Dick (2000) found that tacit knowledge has one troublesome property of having an inherent tension on its value and the elusiveness nature on the one hand as our body of knowledge is composed of more of what we know but we are unable to express. There is more that we know but we often cannot share as much as we know, Kantola and Hautala (2008). Managing tacit knowledge worsens as

organizations face the challenge of knowing who knows what as the size of the organization grows, Dick (2000), and the fact that tacit knowledge is never in an explicit form, makes it difficult to speedily share and make it available within an organization. These views seek to emphasize that the process of knowledge creation may not always be easy and seamless as projected by some authors due to the elusiveness of tacit knowledge. In summary, Dick (2000) cites the elusiveness of tacit knowledge to be owing cause to three reasons: we are ourselves not fully aware of it, there is no personal need to make it explicit on the individual level and there is potential risk of losing power and competitive advantage by making it explicit. Clearly there is a lot that goes into knowledge conversion, both from an individual and organizational level hence the need to strategically close this gap through effective knowledge management and sharing.

## **2.4 The ontological dimension**

Unlike the epistemological dimension, the ontological dimension is of the view that even though ideas are formed in the minds of individuals, interaction between individuals characteristically plays an important role in the development of these ideas. The communities of interaction contribute to the amplification and development of new knowledge over and above the individual who could have first come up with an idea (Nonaka, 1994). Regardless of whether these communities span departmentally or organization wise, Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009) emphasizes that this defines a further dimension to organizational knowledge which is related to the depth of social interactions between individuals that share and develop knowledge. At the core of this dimension lies the assertion that knowledge creation is synthesized through dynamic interactions among individuals, the organization, and the environment through social interaction between organizations and their environment (Yang *et al.*, 2010). According to Nonaka (1994), there are four modes through which organizational knowledge is created the conversion between tacit and explicit knowledge: socialization, externalization, combination and internalization, also referred to as the SECI model.

Table 1 below depicts this model.

**Table 1 MODES OF KNOWLEDGE CREATION**

		Tacit knowledge	To	Explicit knowledge
From	Tacit knowledge	Socialization		Externalization
	Explicit knowledge	Internalization		Combination

**SOURCE: Adapted from Nonaka (1994)**

According to Table 1, knowledge creation goes through the four modes shown in the tables. According to Yang *et al.* (2010), socialization is when an individual acquire tacit knowledge through sharing their experiences. Employees learn new skills through on the job training, through observation, imitation and practice, Nonaka (1994). The emphasis from this concept is that experience impact knowledge into human minds which they later shall apply or share with others too. Externalization however, refers to the conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit concepts through certain modes and abstractions Yang *et al.* (2010). After being socialized, where an individual acquires tacit knowledge, then comes such a time where they attempt to communicate the acquired knowledge through certain ways. As this process takes place, the tacit knowledge gets converted to explicit knowledge. The externalization process can also be triggered by dialogue or collective reflection, Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009), where two or more people communicate their tacit knowledge to each other through certain

mental concepts which may include trial-and –error until they understand each other. This view acknowledges the risk and error that exists whilst individuals attempt to communicate or pass knowledge, thus the gap this study seeks to address by ensuring that knowledge management and sharing be of a strategic nature.

After externalization comes combination, the process of creating explicit knowledge by bringing together explicit knowledge from various sources as individuals exchange and combine their explicit knowledge through meetings, telephone conversations, and memos (Yang *et al.*, 2010). The combination process brings together different concepts, databases, organized and sorted in various ways to produce fresh explicit knowledge (Nonaka, 1994). This research seeks to add to the body of knowledge through recommendations on knowledge sharing ways to Eswatini state owned enterprises. Finally, internalization- this is the process of expressing explicit knowledge into tacit, internalizing the experiences gained through the other modes of knowledge creation into individual's tacit bases in the form of shared mental models or work practices, (Yang *et al.*, 2010). This process gets enabled when the knowledge is put down into documents or conveyed in the form of stories so to allow individuals to indirectly feel or experience the experience of others. This process actually strengthens the aim of the study, highlighting the stages through which knowledge gets generated and shared shows us the need to actually ensure that knowledge is managed at each stage so to benefit from it.

Following is a discussion on the origins of knowledge management.

## **2.5 Exploring the origins of knowledge management and sharing**

According to Kimble (2013), the notion of knowledge management first came to prominence by the late 90's during a time when the world of business and economics saw new theories emerging and emphasizing on the importance of knowledge as a source of a sustainable competitive advantage. Underlining this notion was Nonaka (1994) with the claim that knowledge had become the one true basis of a lasting competitive advantage. Fueling the growth of knowledge management as a discipline resulted from the development of the resource based-view of the firm which emphasized to the idea that knowledge might be a resource that could be managed in the same way as more other traditional resources were managed. Knowledge management builds from other theories and disciplines such as information

economics, strategic management, organizational culture, organizational behavior, artificial intelligence, quality management, and organizational performance measurement (Baskerville and Dulipovici, 2006).

The different approaches to have been applied to knowledge management are normally expressed in terms of generations. In-order to logically unpack the origins of knowledge management, we shall follow the generational phases outlined by Kimble (2013) which depicts the first generation as one that focused on capturing knowledge and storing it in IT-based repositories and storing it while the second generation has a stronger focus on people and communities as sources of knowledge. This view is in line with the objective of the research which is seeks to highlight the role to be played by managers as people are viewed as a key pillar of knowledge generation and transfer.

### **2.5.1 The first generation**

The first generation of knowledge management was characterized by a very strong belief on technology as a tool that could be used to better manage knowledge, dominated by the idea that information could be captured and stored through IT based repositories for later use, Kimble (2013). This was during a time when, in the early 1990's, where authors such as Tsui, Garner and Staab (2000) were advocating for the modelling of knowledge management in the field of computer science and artificial intelligence. However, other scholars hold a different view, Pauleen (2017) argues that knowledge becomes embedded not only in documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices and norms. On the same vein was Mao, Liu, Zhang and Deng (2016) who added that IT alone could not ensure the leveraging on knowledge as it missed out on the human dimension or element of knowledge management. These differing views led to the birth of an alternative view which was named the second-generation approach to knowledge management.

### **2.5.2 The second generation of knowledge management**

To better distinct between the first and second generation of knowledge management, it is best to allude to tacit and explicit knowledge. Codified or explicit knowledge being the transmittable knowledge through a formal and systematic language whereas tacit

knowledge has that human factor making it difficult to formalize and communicate, (Hadjimichael and Tsoukas, 2019).

The first generation of knowledge management was concerned about making knowledge explicit in order for it to easily be transmitted throughout an entire organization. It was all about the codifying and systematizing knowledge and this knowledge is easily copied by competitors as it easily gets to leak out, Pauleen (2017). It was for this reason that the second generation of knowledge management tend to focus on tacit knowledge which was seen to be sticky and not so easy to copy. This view takes on the qualities of a good resource as outlined by Kim *et al.* (2015) who stated that for a competitive advantage to be sustainable, its inputs or resources ought to be distinctive, rare and not easily transferable.

Owing cause to the fact that tacit knowledge is embedded in people's minds and their interactions with the world, something which suggests that as people learn and adapt, their tacit knowledge will change accordingly, Kimble (2013). This then means tacit knowledge shall differ from one location to another and from community to community as people even develop certain shorthand codes to describe certain things they do. The second generation sought to offer a solution to this problem by acknowledging that communities share certain common beliefs which later translate to a worldview, something similar to the codification identified in the first generation, Kimble (2013). In summary, the second generation is of the assumption that the benefits of attempting to manage knowledge are realized from establishing a cognitive common ground between individuals.

## **2.6 Unpacking the concept of knowledge management and sharing**

With the world moving from being dependent upon physical and material resources to a world that depends on information and knowledge, knowledge has become the most valuable intellectual capital among organizations as they attempt to craft their competitive advantage (Vali *et al.*, 2016). Thus, managing knowledge is important since it is one of the strategic weapons through which an organization can achieve sustained increase in profits, (Choi and Lee, 2002).

According to Vali *et al.* (2016), Knowledge management is an organized process to identify, collect, organize, and process data to create knowledge. This approach enforces organizational knowledge and skill in order to create value and promote organizational efficiency and assist problem-solving activities, dynamic learning, strategic planning, and decision-making and is utilized as one of the main and major components for organizations to survive and maintain competitive ability. Similar to this school of thought is that of Bhatt Ganesh (2001) who defines knowledge management as a five-phased process of knowledge creation, validation, presentation, distribution and application. These phases allow an organization to learn, reflect, and unlearn and learn. Below is an outline of the five phases of knowledge management.

### **2.6.1 Knowledge creation**

Knowledge creation can be referred to as the ability of an organization to develop novel, useful ideas and solutions, Bhatt Ganesh (2001), by means of reconfiguring and recombining foreground and background knowledge using different sets of interactions. It is the capability of an entire organization to produce new knowledge, share it across all functions and reflect on its products, services and systems (Yang *et al.*, 2010). An organization's strategic concept assists it to pin point knowledge creation activities which strengthen its competitive position, support its mission and objectives, and create value for its customers (Yang *et al.*, 2010). An organization that knows more about its customers, services, technologies, markets and their links or sources of competitive advantage is likely to perform better (Louw and Venter, 2011). This phase of knowledge management provokes the thought of how organizations implement strategies to ensure that new knowledge gets created and embedded in their daily operations. This research seeks to determine challenges and opportunities that exist within organization they attempt to manage and share knowledge. Later, strategies relating to knowledge management shall be discussed, next is knowledge validation.

### **2.6.2 Knowledge validation**

According to Bhatt Ganesh (2001), knowledge validation is the process through which an organization monitors, tests and refines its knowledge base to ensure that it still meets and suits existing and potential needs and realities of the organization. With age, some information gets obsolete and require some reconfiguration and refinement to fit to existing organizational realities. Organizations rely on information technology, including one key class of knowledge management initiatives that employ information technology based repositories, to capture employee's knowledge and make it available to a broad range of potential recipients (Durcikova and Gray, 2009). This underlines the need to ensure that repositories contain high-quality knowledge, Durcikova and Gray (2009), hence knowledge management research highlights that contributions to a repository must undergo stringent validation process. Even though an organization's core competencies could be difficult to imitate, but they still become obsolete if not matched with existing developments within that specific sphere of operations (Bhatt Ganesh, 2001).

### **2.6.3 Knowledge presentation**

At the heart of knowledge presentation lies the fact that no two people understand information in the same way, different methods of presenting the same data could vary in preference from one person to another. According to Bhatt Ganesh (2001), knowledge presentation refers to the different ways in which an organization displays knowledge to its members. Knowledge could be distributed and scattered in different locations, embedded into different artifacts and procedures, and stored into different mediums and each of them requires different means of knowledge presentation for individuals to understand it, Bhatt Ganesh (2001). This view emphasizes the need of each knowledge medium to undergo a thorough scrutiny and accurate presentation format in order for it to be useful- this being a strategic approach to knowledge management and sharing.

#### **2.6.4 Knowledge distribution**

Knowledge needs to be distributed and be public throughout the organization prior to being exploited by the organization at every level according to their needs. Organizational structures and interactions between organizational technologies, techniques and people can have direct bearing on knowledge distribution, either positively or negatively, (Bhatt Ganesh, 2001). According to Bhatt Ganesh (2001), an organizational structure based on traditional command and control, interactions are minimized between technologies, techniques, and people and thus reducing the opportunities in knowledge distribution. However, with a horizontal organizational structure, empowerment, and open-door policy speed up knowledge flow between different participants and departments. This is why this research seeks to identify strategic drivers and to highlight the importance of embedding knowledge management within the organizational strategy so to influence the way organizational structures are laid out and ensure they allow and encourage this notion.

#### **2.6.5 Knowledge application**

Knowledge, innovation and creativity has become the hallmark of the present competitive arena, Bhatt Ganesh (2001), making it critical for organizations to be finding the right knowledge in the right form for the organization. Organizational knowledge needs to be employed into a company's products, processes, and services. Failure to locate the right kind of knowledge in the right form may make it difficult for an organization to sustain its competitive advantage. Knowledge application means making more knowledge active and relevant for the organization in creating values though the criteria for evaluating the usefulness of knowledge are not readily available, (Bhatt Ganesh, 2001).

On the other hand, Sin,Zailani and Ramayah (2010) brings in a fresh dimension arguing that any organization that wants to excel in knowledge management has to well perform three knowledge management processes: generation, codification and transfer of knowledge.

Knowledge generation, according to Sin *et al.* (2010) refers to the activities that add to the stock of organizational knowledge. It can be looked into from five modes which

are acquisition, dedicating resources, fusion, adaptation and building knowledge networks. An organization may acquire knowledge through hiring persons, company takeovers or through leasing external knowledge. Resources are dedicated through funding certain initiatives which at times may be research related and in turn birth research and development departments which then provide new knowledge to the organization. Fusion refers to when knowledge generation occurs through bringing together different individuals with different perspectives and specializations to work on a problem or project. Then comes adaptation, which is when an organization responds to external changes by aligning itself to competitive, economic or technological changes. This is done through human capital who acquire new knowledge quickly by learning new skills. Lastly, self-generated networks are one way to generate knowledge through networks of people in an organization who share common interests, face similar challenges and are motivated to exchange their knowledge, Sin *et al.* (2010).

The next process is knowledge codification and Pauleen (2017) outlines four principles which should guide the codification of organizational knowledge. The four principles are outlined in figure 1 below;

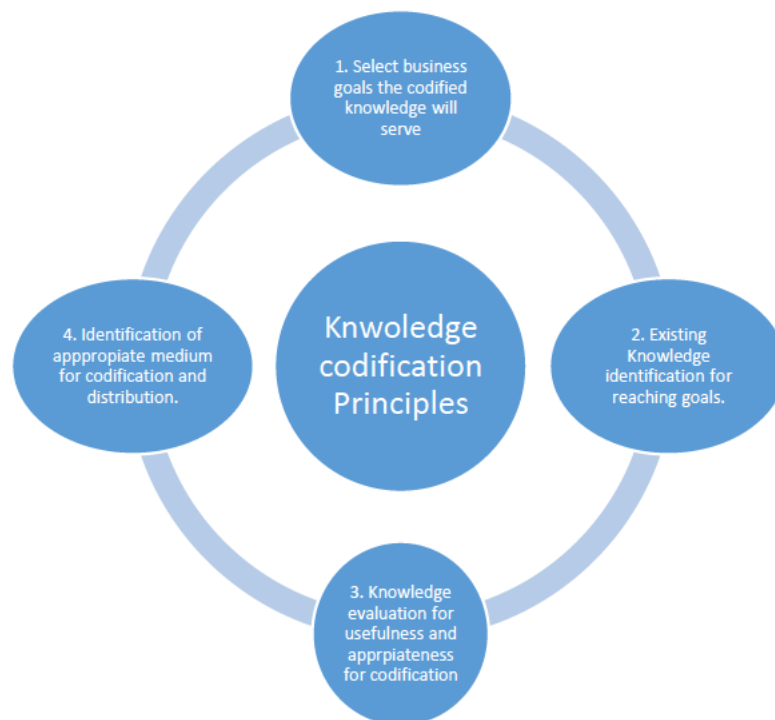


Figure 1: Knowledge codification principles

Source: Self

The four codification principles as outlined in figure 1, attempt addressing the challenge of codifying knowledge and still deliver it intact and with its discrete attributes, Pauleen (2017), having codification structures in place which accommodate rapid changes and flexibility just as knowledge itself is. Lastly, Bibi *et al.* (2021) mentions knowledge transfer and emphasizes on organization behavior as knowledge markets thus making it essential for them to create market spaces where the trading of information and knowledge can take place. Pauleen (2017) also adds to this dimension, stating that sharing of knowledge between individuals and groups within an organization may be a daunting task due to various impediments which could be as a result of the culture of that particular organization. Further, Pauleen (2017) outlines seven barriers of knowledge transfer, being lack of trust, different vocabularies, different cultures, framework of references, lack of time and meeting places, lack of absorptive capacity in recipients and intolerance for mistakes or need for help. An organization that claims to appreciate and value knowledge but discourages reading and talking during company time sends mixed messages as most knowledge exchange happens informally as individuals converse, (Sin *et al.*, 2010).

## **2.7 knowledge creation strategies**

According to the knowledge-based view, a firm's competitive advantage is embedded in its own knowledge and the ability it possess to obtain new knowledge, Yang *et al.* (2010). Therefore, to explain the dynamic processes of knowledge creation and the strategies to create knowledge become important issues to understand and to clarify organizational behavior.

Having outlined the knowledge creation process and its importance, Yang *et al.* (2010) argues that if any organization takes knowledge and its creation process so important and as a determinant of organizational performance, equally so, are knowledge creation strategies likely to be a significant area of strategic choice for the organization. Further, Yang *et al.* (2010) argues that organizations that do not have a clear connection between their knowledge creation process to business strategy are likely to suffer from lack of a well-developed strategic models that would enhance the ways to translate or further the goal of making their organizations more intellectual into a strategic action. This view advocates and depicts knowledge management and sharing to be a strategy-based notion.

Table 2 below depicts knowledge creation strategies model

Table 2. Knowledge creation strategies

Private knowledge to Public knowledge

Private knowledge	Exploration	Institutional Entrepreneurship
From		
Public knowledge	Exploitation	Combination

Source: Adapted from Yang *et al.* (2010)

According to table 2.2, knowledge creation strategies stem up from four dimensions which are exploration, institutional entrepreneurship, exploitation and combination. These dimensions build from Nonaka’s SECI model, Nonaka (1994) to form a strategic model of our assumption that organizational knowledge gets created through conversion between organizational level constructs. Matusik (2002) calls these four dimensions of knowledge creation strategies as the EICE model. Exploration strategy, this happens through a process of converting free private knowledge through organizational –specific unique knowledge. It can be a great tool for organizations to add on their intellectual capital by creating their inimitable private knowledge within its organizational confines, Yang *et al.* (2010). For the unique knowledge to be beneficiary, it has to be difficult to imitate, valuable and rare, Barney (1991), the generation of new private knowledge can be made possible through research and discoveries on existing private knowledge and this often happens through search, innovation, discovery, flexibility, experimentation and risk taking. The essence of this strategy in on the fact that knowledge exploration could be through formal or informal integrative mechanisms, as long those stimulate the creation of new private firm

knowledge and facilitate knowledge transfer within the various sections of the organization.

The second strategy is institutional entrepreneurship strategy, defined by (Yang *et al.*, 2010) as the process of expressing private knowledge into public knowledge, since knowledge is institutionalized, it gets exploited by members of each organizational field and become a basis of new organizational knowledge creation. This perspective emphasizes on organizational fields being social systems through which knowledge gets distributed, interpreted and different groups may use knowledge to influence particular institutional contexts, thus publicizing knowledge in the process. This theory underscores the theorization of new practices through political and discursive means. As departments or certain fields within an organization leverage on certain information for decision making, the information gets publicized and forms the foundation for new knowledge to stem up from it.

As per table 2.2, thirdly it's the combination strategies which put to light that public knowledge may not be unique to one firm but is alive even in outside environment thus combination occurs as there is integration and configuration of public knowledge collected from outside or inside an organization to form new public knowledge, (Yang *et al.*, 2010). This strategy is on the pulling together of all knowledge relevant for the benefit of the organization as it produces new knowledge from the combined public knowledge resources. Combination strategies refers to process of converting public knowledge into more complex and advanced sets of public knowledge, it also represents the synthesis and application of current and acquired public, (Yang *et al.*, 2010). The emphasis of the combination is highlighting that combining already existing knowledge on a certain field and synthesizing it gives birth to unique public knowledge. An example could be a water purification process which may go through all available data on how to reduce dirty to final purification. This is why we see formal training within organizations, the use of articles and conferences- something which underscores that knowledge has to be managed to ensure it is ethical, accurate and useful.

The fourth strategy as per table 2 are exploitation strategies, defined by Yang *et al.* (2010) as the process of converting public knowledge into firm-specific private knowledge achievable by collecting knowledge from outside its boundaries and

integrates this into its specific knowledge. This could be done through cooperative organizational arrangements such as strategic alliances focusing on integrating knowledge gained from their partners and transform it into firm-specific peculiar knowledge resource. According to Matusik (2002), public knowledge is in the technical drawings shared by engineers, research reports, conference publications, consultation manuals, textbooks and classrooms- all these are examples of readily available technical solutions in the market. This is the knowledge which a firm can exploit and integrate into its specific knowledge, not just by taking it as it is but through making better use of the information exploiting it to become part of firm's private information of unique routines, documentation or trade secret and that's what turns knowledge into a valuable asset and a competitive asset.

Having discussed the strategies through which knowledge can be created and the forms in which knowledge come; we shall then discuss how this knowledge can be shared below.

## **2.8 The meaning of knowledge sharing**

Knowledge has an interesting characteristic of growing in value when it's shared. According to Cabrera and Cabrera (2002), as one shares knowledge with other departments, not only do those units gain information, they share it with others and feedback questions, amplifications, and modifications that add more value for the original sender, something which creates exponential total growth. This highlights that information only gains value when shared as opposed to being viewed as loss of value and status from the one sharing it. Further, Cabrera and Cabrera (2002) contrast knowledge sharing to be unlike standard economic transactions as knowledge can be transacted over and over without the transacting party ever giving up the value of the item being transacted, and this creates the possibility of endless returns. Clearly, by sharing knowledge, there is more to be gained than loses hence the importance of understanding this concept for individuals to learn to freely share information within an organization.

On the other hand, Lartey *et al.* (2019) argues that the collective knowledge possessed by an organization may not be known to everyone within the organization, especially

at the time they need it. Possibly they may not have access to it or be aware of where to find it or it could not be in existence at the time of need. At times, the person holding the knowledge may not be willing to share it, Dalkir (2017), especially in the public sector where it is almost impossible to identify valuable knowledge as it is embedded in the minds of a few technocrats who are more or less the custodians of public policy and governance principles. This highlights the problems of knowledge sharing and the impediment that need to be dealt with for information to freely flow within an organization. Further, Larney *et al.* (2019) indicates that not all knowledge can entirely be acquired through formal education, as there is no simple way to extract knowledge from experts without their willingness to transfer; thus, each individual's creativity and commitment is required in the pursuit of knowledge. The above literature gives meaning to one aim of this research which is encouraging ethical knowledge sharing, it is evident that individuals intentionally not share information.

In support of the above report by KPMG Consulting (2000) which also underlines that employees sometimes do not share what they know with co-workers because of insufficient understanding of the benefits of knowledge sharing or the failure to manage and integrate such tasks into their everyday duties. This speaks to lack of time as some individuals get so focused on their deliverables and fail to make time to share their experiences or even learn how to use available information hubs or systems. Further, KPMG Consulting (2000) states that some employees fail to recognize the personal benefit from sharing knowledge as they may feel there is insufficient top management support to new ideas on their work. This is also supported by Pauleen (2017) who argue that creating a culture that values creativity, continuous improvement and the sharing of ideas becomes necessary for knowledge sharing initiatives to succeed. In order to manage and share knowledge well, employees must be motivated to explore new market opportunities, new work procedures, new products, and willing to try out new ideas on their work – for this to happen, the organization must be willing to have structures and work systems which are flexible to allow innovative changes, allow or grant employees a fair level of autonomy and most importantly set up mechanisms by which new ideas shall be shared, (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2002). Having understood and discussed on knowledge sharing, it becomes important to also look into ethics and knowledge, hence the following discussion is on ethics and knowledge management.

## **2.9 Ethics and knowledge management and sharing**

One of the objectives of the research is to encourage ethical knowledge management and sharing. According to Akhavan, Ramezan and Yazdi Moghaddam (2013), ethical issues do not just get created from humankind, however it stems from human nature which makes up the fundamental frame of law implying that, actually, human laws follow the ethics. The word ethics actually represent the standards and ideals which cover a group or a community of people, (Masrom and Ismail, 2011). Hence Akhavan *et al.* (2013) underlines that the respect of ethics by human resources helps to improve the implementation of knowledge management. This highlights the role and importance of ethics in knowledge management as it contributes to the worth and quality of the information being shared.

The goal is to ultimately achieve just knowledge management practices, Rechberg and Syed (2013). Tseng and Fan (2011) further highlight the importance of an ethical organizational climate so to facilitate knowledge management and sharing as this aids organizations to engage employees in the knowledge process and further retain the individual's knowledge and experience. According to Rechberg and Syed (2013), power and knowledge are inseparable, once an individual is called knowledgeable, their knowledge processing behavior gets influenced by their attitude which is usually as a result of how much recognition they received for their participation.

The above data draws our attention to the fact that individual can either make an ethical or unethical decision depending on their attitude, thus making it critical to always ensure that gathered information gets documented for ease of reference as opposed to heavy reliance on individual who may not always be ethical. This study seeks to address that gap through advocating for ethical knowledge management and sharing.

## **2.10 knowledge loss**

In as much as knowledge and sharing is critical to crafting a competitive advantage, it remains important to also acknowledge that organizations often lose information through many ways thus making the subject of knowledge loss critical. According to

Daghfous, Belkhdja and C. Angell (2013), knowledge loss refers to the intended or unintended evaporation of knowledge which has been accumulated through the learning of an individual and collective actions. Knowledge loss can happen from various perspectives and Vnoučková and Urbancová (2015) highlights two main ways of knowledge loss to be aging of staff and employee turnover. Their assumption is based on the fact that the aging population shall retire and strong employees be lost in that way. Secondly, Vnoučková and Urbancová (2015) highlights employee turnover and defines it as the movement of skills from one organization to the other and that gain of knowledge poses a competition to the former organization. These two issues strongly underline the significance of knowledge continuity and makes it critical for managers to proactively manage and plan on how to cope with the potential leaving of their employees for competitors or to retirement Vnoučková and Urbancová (2015).

### **2.11 The role of knowledge management and sharing in organizational setting**

With so much discussion around knowledge management and sharing, it is also critical to appreciate the role played by this function within an organization. If it be that organizations view knowledge as a critical competitive advantage factor, then they should be concerned of how to transfer it from experts who possess it to novices who need to know (Kharabsheh *et al.*, 2016). One of the most important objectives of knowledge management is to systematically influence knowledge exchange, application and creation, thereby creating value, Ahmad and Karim (2019). This means that organizations ought to be strategic on how to efficiently utilize the knowledge resource already at their disposal. According to Kharabsheh *et al.* (2016), research has shown that when knowledge is shared properly within an organization, it can result to reduced production costs, firm innovation capabilities may increase, including sales performance and revenue from new products. Therefore, this highlight the role played or the outcome of knowledge management and sharing.

Furthermore, Ahmad and Karim (2019) highlight that knowledge sharing with employees has proven to be a fundamental factor contributing to joint creativity and learning. Additionally, it also improves team's idea generation and their absorptive capacity. Knowledge sharing helps build a mental model directing the organization as to who knows what, absorptive capacity, and this is a crucial component in enhancing

creativity within a team Lee,Shiue and Chen (2016). Various studies have also revealed that novel ideas are as a result of knowledge sharing since it enables the critiquing of the feasibility of creative solutions, Kharabsheh *et al.* (2016).

## **2.12 Strategic knowledge management in turbulent environment**

According Kianto,Vanhala and Heilmann (2016), strategic knowledge management (SKM) offers a distinct approach to the management of people and systems and a response to the changes occurring in a turbulent environment, a means of improving organisations performance and achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Mahdi, Mahdi,Nassar and Almsafir (2019) argue that SKM emerged in the area of management as an interdisciplinary field in the core of which articulate a large number of both formal and informal knowledge from diverse fields that include economics, management sciences, computer systems, sociology of knowledge and complexity theory. The growing interest of organisations to deal and manage information in the direction of efficient use of resources gave birth to the need to creation and management knowledge management systems in the contemporary industry 4.0 organisations, leading to what is now referred to as intelligent organisations and knowledge revolution. The emergence of technological infrastructure that includes social media, forums, blogs and virtual networks are the most common infrastructures, but knowledge portals also play an important role in strategic knowledge management. Through these portals, people can access, create, organize, share and use knowledge. Knowledge portals can be an effective way to provide open access to all relevant information. Organisations can also extend their knowledge of access to their business partners and customers, even if specific areas will have to be restricted. This can play an important role in collaborative product development, service delivery, and project accomplishment. Technology can significantly promote a knowledge culture by changing employees' habits regarding communication, collaboration, information sharing, learning, and decision-making.

Sousa and Sousa and Rocha (2019) highlight that in context of emerging knowledge infrastructure, top management have a key role in the promotion of knowledge management systems, creating conditions whereby people are willing to apply their knowledge, share it and exchange it with each other. Developed knowledge can be

continually documented through reports, images or even metaphors, and made available to everyone in the organisation. Informal contacts, internal lectures, conferences, problem-solving and project review meetings, dialogue sessions, internal reports, and memos are essential means to share knowledge. Organisations can also use some mechanisms that facilitate knowledge sharing: The Internet, the Intranets, the library, the meeting rooms, an auditorium, a digital archive and even a digital documentation system Sousa and González (2016). The organisation can also create networks of knowledge with workers with different backgrounds for developing new knowledge using several processes to develop and share knowledge like using images, metaphors, and intuitions. Not only the internal actors perform a relevant role in the process of organizational innovation and change, but also external actors, like universities, consultant companies, trade unions and others. As innovation agents, their knowledge can be necessary for the organizational development itself (Bayoudhi,Sassi and Jaziri, 2018). In some organizations, knowledge is continually being implemented and incorporated into new products, services, and processes. For instance, processes like benchmarking are done systematically to gain new knowledge and develop new practices or new business models.

The benefits for workers derived from the more efficient processing of information and knowledge by, for example, eliminating the duplication of efforts or saving valuable time. The benefits of processes could be translated into benefits that can be expressed concerning efficiency or effectiveness (Lim,Kwon,Park,Cho,Park and Kim, 2016). Databases are a typical example since they help eliminate less efficient operations by reusing knowledge. The impacts on organisations affect some of the organisation's key goals, such as productivity, performance, and innovation. Moreover, strategic knowledge sharing can also be viewed as organizational innovation Ahmad,Lodhi,Zaman and Naseem (2017) with the potential to generate new ideas, develop workers to be knowledge workers (lazzolino,Laise and Gabriele, 2017) and create advantages for the organisations.

### **2.13 Theoretical framework – the resource-based view**

In line with the research aims and the approach of the entire research which highlights knowledge management being integral to the success and long-term sustainability of an organization, the resource-based view theory becomes foundational to this study.

Knowledge is regarded as a key resource in the knowledge driven societies which we now live in thus its management is a key issue to organizations, Olmos and Rodas (2013). On the other hand, Louw and Venter (2013) defines the resource-based view model as one which expresses an organization as one made of conceptualised groupings of resources heterogeneously distributed across the organization and exist over a period of time. Louw and Venter (2013), further state that these resources should be unique so as to allow organizations to implement value-creating take advantage of new market opportunities. On the same note, knowledge as a resource can be leveraged upon for the better good of an organization, hence this research borrows from the resource-based view model.

This model, the RBV, is applicable to the study due to the increasing turmoil in the external organisational setting or business environment which now focuses attention on capabilities and resources of an organisation as the primary source of competitive advantage. This statement points to the application of the RBV on organisational management. Nevertheless, what constitutes RBV remains an illusion in many quarters of organisational management, as scholars have managed to put up their personal ideas, and managed to converge on phenomenon-driven theories. This study utilises the RBV to highlight the critical knowledge management and sharing issues facing EWSC the subject. Thus, the relevance of RBV lies in the fact that it simplifies the concept knowledge and information as key aspects that affect the performance of EWSC. It is critical to note that primarily, RBV plays an important role as it assists organisations not only create, nurture, and maintain competitive advantage, but also understand the collective resources needed to compete favourably in a globalized and highly competitive market with expert knowledge workers playing a centrifugal role to provide support for knowledge creation, sharing, and utilisation. Thus, the RBV model is a backbone of the study that serving as a methodological approach to ensure competitive advantage. The RBV makes a significant incremental statement that RBV does play a key contribution in the organisation's modest improvement in organizational performance and efficiency which could translate in service delivery in the context of EWSC.

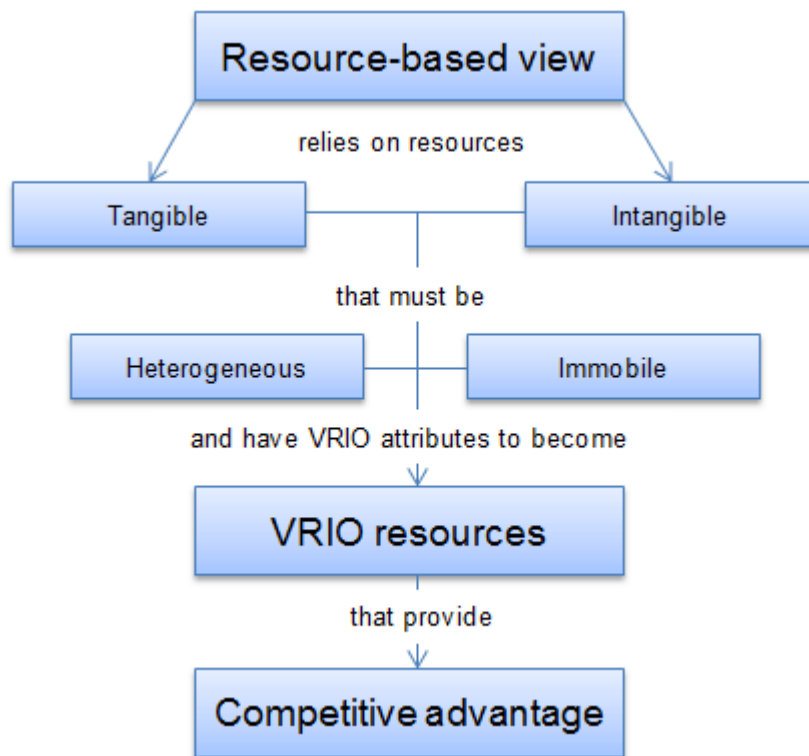


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Source: (Barney, 1991)

Of the elements of the resource-based view framework depicted in figure 2, this research builds on the intangible resources which are immobile and not easy to be copied or acquired by other firms. Unlike resources such as equipment which can be bought by any organization, knowledge pose as an intangible resource which in most cases will satisfy the elements of being valuable, rare, inimitable and organisational so to provide a competitive advantage. In the same thought, the researcher views knowledge as a critical resource for EWSC thus its management being imperative for efficient service delivery and breaking the silo mentality.

The resource-based view model further defines components that qualifies a resource as one that is of value to an organization. To qualify as a key resource, a resource must be valuable, rare, inimitable and organised (Johnson,Whittington,Scholes,Angwin and Regner (2017). By being valuable, a resource gives an organization a competitive parity and the rarity gives it a temporary competitive advantage. Inimitability shows the organization the potential it holds and the unused competitive advantage within its possession and lastly, what matters most

is whether or not the company is organized enough to handle and strategically use the resource so to realise a sustainable competitive advantage. Resources which are simultaneously valuable, rare, imitable and non-substitutable are regarded as a firm's strategic assets (Smith, 2008).

However, there are critics of the resource-based view theory who argue that it tends to focus mostly on how a firm in a highly competitive market could exploit key resources yet that is not always true as it ignores factors beyond the control of the organization. It does not consider an industry as a whole but focuses only on the firm whereas there exists theories such as Porter's industry structure analysis which emphasizes on external issues affecting the competitiveness of an organization Johnson *et al.* (2017). Thus, it is critical not to be blinded by strong emphasis on resources but also acknowledge the role of extraneous factors. Having said that, we have seen organizations who have used the theory and thrived, such as Honda in making their petrol engines and Apple Inc who thrived on the innovation capability resources and is highly competitive and successful.

#### **2.14 The Gap to be filled by the study**

Literature shows in general, employees do not feel comfortable to share their knowledge as they think their knowledge is valuable and important to them only. Thus, hoarding knowledge and looking distrustfully upon knowledge from others are a natural individual tendency (Bock and Kim, 2002). Contrary, organisations of today believe that knowledge should be shared to drive organisational programmes towards the goals of the organisation. This gap ought to be filled by this study in the first instant Knowledge and information sharing are critical fundamental activities in organisational settings. The strategic importance of knowledge and information sharing is central in knowledge-based view of the firm in the private or corporates (Felin and Zenger, 2014). Nevertheless, the mere presence of knowledge resources does not guarantee success (Omotayo, 2015). Driven by the pursuit to develop sustainable competitive advantage, employees ought to share and apply knowledge in their day-to-day practice Cabrera and Cabrera (2015). Previous studies emphasized the benefits of knowledge sharing in the form of cost reduction, short product development cycles,

increased customer satisfaction and improved innovation and performance capabilities in the private sector (Ozer and Vogel, 2015).

It is important to note that for a very long time, research on different aspects of knowledge sharing has dramatically increased. It is important to note that knowledge and information sharing is to systematically influence knowledge exchange, application and creation towards value creation in private firms (Kozhakhmet and Nazri, 2017). Consequently, success of knowledge management policies in an organisation hinges on the knowledge sharing between employees and its resulting outcomes (Omotayo, 2015). Due to the complexity of knowledge sharing, which is influenced by many individual, organisational, and contextual factors, a major research focus has been on the identification of factors that inhibit or support it (Omotayo, 2015).

Consequently, one of the criticisms of knowledge-sharing studies has been too much focus on the private sector knowledge-sharing enablers, such as technology, organizational culture, rewards, and pays comparatively less attention to the value realization of knowledge sharing in the private sector such as SoE's. This study is the first of its kind in Eswatini, focusing on a SoEs.

## **2.15 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed knowledge management and sharing from a strategic perspective. Organizations achieve their objectives through the application of and through proper knowledge management strategies. Knowledge management is wide and complex thus it needs to be strategically implemented for return to be realized. This chapter has outlined knowledge forms, knowledge creation and sharing models, and highlighted the essence of knowledge in relation to a sustainable competitive advantage. The chapter also covered knowledge loss as it is one critical issue organizations have to overcome through their knowledge management strategies. Lastly, the chapter also highlighted the role of knowledge management and sharing within organizations. The next chapter presents the research design and methodology.

## **Chapter 3 – Research design and methodology**

### **3. Introduction**

Chapter two reviewed literature aligned to knowledge management and sharing in the context of the contemporary and old organisation. Effort was made to apply the literature to ESWC, an SoE that faces a challenge of effective service delivery rooted in failure to manage knowledge and share organisational information among and across employees towards enhancing organisational efficiency. This chapter is driven towards presenting and critically discussing the research design and methodology employed to gather, analyse, present and interpret data to solve the problem at hand. The specific sections covered by the chapter include the research design, the population, sampling strategy, the sampling techniques, sample size. In addition, the chapter discusses the data collection instrument, the administration of the interview, data analysis, validity and reliability, limitations and ethical considerations. However, the study begins by locating the study site.

#### **3.1 Study site**

This study is based on a state-owned enterprise called Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC) located in the heart of Eswatini, at Ezulwini town, about 20 km from the capital city. The headquarters houses the Managing director, the directors, the managers and their officers. The headquarters consist of the entire target population which the researcher seeks to interview.

#### **3.2 Research design**

According to Kozhakhmet and Nazri (2017), a research design is the blue print guiding the entire process of research encompassing the planning that includes data gathering, processing up to the drawing of conclusions and recommendations. Wiid and Diggines (2010) state that research design is about what is being planned, what is being aimed at, and what kind of evidence is needed to address the questions. Thus, Cooper, Schindler and Sun (2006) list the kinds of designs, which include exploratory, explanatory, descriptive and causal designs as outlined in the following section:

### **3.2.1 Exploratory/interpretivist studies**

In exploratory/ interpretivist studies design, the intention of the researcher is to start by reviewing the problem using the literature lenses then followed by a qualitative procedure to gather data using the interviews (Saunders, Palesy and Lewis, 2019). The studies are appropriate for relatively new areas of study Cooper and Schindler (2003:151). In this study, knowledge management and information sharing has been extensively done in corporate and private sector but non-in Eswatini public sector. The main benefit of embracing knowledge management and information sharing is the advantage it provides to the organisation towards organisational competitiveness, leading to effective service delivery. Thus, based on the fact that this study employs the qualitative method and that the study is conducted to gain an insight into a new study in Eswatini, this design was found more appropriate.

Choosing the research design largely depends with the kind of objectives and the recommendations to be made (Kolb, 2008). Considering that the study aimed to gather data through interviews after extensively discussing with experienced participants dealing with knowledge management and information sharing, the exploratory design was most suitable. Contrary to descriptive, causal research and correlational, exploratory studies are about theme identification as opposed to testing hypotheses (Wiid and Diggins, 2010). This aspect was effective in addressing the main objective of the study, which was to investigate the strategic knowledge management and sharing by senior managers of EWSC and make recommendations to improve organisational efficiency, ultimately enhancing service delivery.

Considering that, the study on knowledge and information sharing is the first of its kind in Eswatini, exploratory research was deemed more suitable ahead of explanatory, which also favoured the qualitative studies. The other designs were dismissed on the basis of their quantitative lineage. It is however important to note that this study was fundamental or was of fundamental significance. This fundamental study follows an exploratory/interpretivist paradigm as it explores how certain problems occurring at EWSC can be solved. A fundamental or basic research is research that is carried out to gain a body of knowledge by trying to understand how particular problems occur

and how they can be solved, Sekaran and Bougie (2016). Often times some organizations may later find information of this nature useful and apply it to solve their own problems, (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). This kind of research is usually driven by the broader objective of generating knowledge and understanding phenomena and problems that occur in various organisational setting by following a systematic inquiry to arrive at solutions to problems and carried out in a scientific manner for reliability of results Sekaran and Bougie (2016). Therefore, this study is a fundamental study as it attempts to describe how certain issues bordering around knowledge management affect EWSC and making recommendations on how these could be solved.

### **3.3 Research methods**

Research normally commence with at least one critical question about a phenomenon of interest, culminating into research questions helping researchers to focus their thoughts, manage efforts and choose an appropriate approach or perspective from which to make sense of each phenomenon of interest, Abdul Rehman and Alharthi, (2016). According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), there are three research approaches, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods.

#### **3.3.1 The quantitative method**

Quantitative methods entail a method that emphasise objective measurements and numerical analysis of data collected in a research study. It focuses on gathering numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon. According to Wiid and Diggines (2010:120), quantitative methods use numbers, measurements and calculations to provide answers to a problem.

#### **3.3.2 The qualitative methods**

According to Saunders et al. (2019), qualitative approach entails a systematic inquiry into a social phenomenon, under natural settings. These phenomena can include, how interactions between individuals shape their relationships, how individuals behave and how organizations function. In a qualitative approach, the major focus is put on non-

numeric data, and the participants' experiences and views are used to get the meaning of the phenomenon. In addition, the qualitative methods are narrative based as they use detailed narratives to explain phenomena Wiid and Diggins (2010:125). Qualitative methods are therefore, more systematic but rather subjective and less structured as compared to quantitative research (Keele, 2011:154).

### **3.3.3 The mixed method**

A mixed method approach is a research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates findings and draw conclusions using both qualitative and quantitative within a single study, (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007). Finally, a mixed approach combines both the quantitative and qualitative approaches (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

### **3.3.4 The selected method**

In this study, a qualitative approach was used as the study's intention was to investigate the participants' lived experiences and perspectives on knowledge management and sharing in the context of EWSC (Bless, 2013). Bless (2013) argue that qualitative approach is suitable for a researcher who want to gain an understanding of people's perspectives and experiences on a certain phenomenon of interest. Another reason for employing the qualitative approach was that the focus was on the explanations and the descriptions of how employees strive to understand the critical importance of knowledge management and information sharing.

## **3.4 Research philosophy**

Any research study is guided by some paradigm of some sort, which relates to the philosophies and assumptions about what constitutes valid research and which research methods are appropriate for the development of knowledge (Gray, 2013). There are two main research philosophies with worldviews having opposing assumptions about reality and view of the world; namely, positivistic paradigm and phenomenological paradigm (Imai, Keele, Tingley and Yamamoto, 2011).

### **3.4.1 Positivist philosophy**

The premise for a positivistic paradigm is that reality exists externally to the researcher and must be investigated through the rigorous process of scientific inquiry Gray, (2013). This paradigm seeks the facts and causes of a phenomenon, with little regard to the subjective state of individuals (Collis and Hussey, 2003). In contrast, the premise for phenomenological paradigm is that an essential aspect to creating truth and meaning is the interaction that the subject has with the world Gray (2013). Thus, a phenomenological paradigm is concerned with understanding human behaviour from the participants' own frame of reference (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

### **3.4.2 Phenomenological philosophy**

The phenomenological philosophy is a philosophy that aims to explore in order to understand the lived experiences and insights of participants in relation to subject under investigation. Thus, phenomenological approaches are based on personal knowledge and subjectivity, and emphasise the importance of personal perspective and interpretation Collis and Hussey (2003). Phenomenology aims to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of the meaning of participants' experiences. Central to this research, is determining the 'meaning' of substantial knowledge management and information sharing practices within EWSC.

### **3.4.3 Selected philosophy for the study – phenomenological philosophy**

This study selected the phenomenological paradigm with the aim of investigating and understanding the lived experiences and insights of participants in relation to knowledge management and information sharing in a water-based management SoE in the name of EWSC. Epistemological and phenomenological approaches are generally anchored in a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity, and emphasise the importance of personal perspective and interpretation Collis and Hussey, (2003). Thus, in-depth knowledge of water management as well as experience in knowledge management and information sharing, by participants

formed the critical mass of the study. Based on this, phenomenological philosophy was selected.

### 3.5 Target population

According to Saunders et al. (2019), a target population entails the sum total of the individuals or subjects under consideration. The study focuses on knowledge management from a strategic perspective, which makes the main targeted population to be mainly on the human resources department and the leadership of the organization which comprises of the managers, the strategy team, the directors and the Managing Director. The sample consists of leaders who have several subordinates and can relate to what it takes to replace employees, what comes into their training and the expertise, creativity and knowledge that exits the organization whenever employees exit.

The EWSC has five executives, 16 top managers and 17 middle managers giving a total population of 38. It is from this 38 that the sample size was determined and selected. Table 3 below provides the detail of the target population.

**Table 3 Target population**

Population	Quantity
Executive	5
Top management	16
Middle management	17
Total population	38
<b>THE SAMPLE</b>	
Executive	5
Departmental Managers	11
Total Sample	16

### 3.6 Sampling methods

Creswell (2014) states that for the benefit of cost and time it is not possible for researchers to collect data from all the population members. Curtis and Morris (2015)

identifies two main sampling methods referred to probability and non-probability sampling which are discussed in the following section.

### **3.6.1 Probability sampling method**

According to De Voss (2011), probability sampling refers to a selection of the sample from the study population without applying conditions. In probability sampling, every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected, and thus removes the aspect of biasness De Voss (2011). It is however important to note that the probability sampling techniques that aligns with the quantitative and descriptive design includes simple random technique, systematic sampling technique, stratified sampling technique, clusters sampling technique and quota sampling technique Saunders et al., (2016). Since they are not used in this study, they were not discussed.

### **3.6.2. Non-probability sampling method**

According to De Voss (2011), non-probability sampling method entails a deliberate sampling method, with some purpose or focus in mind. Thus, in non-probability sampling, the intention of the researcher is to select participants from the population who would provide the needed answer to solve the study problem, which is what this study ought to follow.

### **3.6.3 The selected sampling method – non-probability sampling**

Since this study was exploratory and qualitative in nature, participant selection was done deliberately in order to select only those participants who would provide answers to the study problem using non-probability sampling method.

## **3.7 Sampling techniques**

There are several non-probability sampling techniques, which includes convenience sampling, snowball sampling and judgmental sampling. The suitable technique for the study was purposive sampling technique as discussed below:

### **3.7.1 Purposive sampling**

This study used purposive sampling technique aligned with the non-probability sampling techniques because the techniques enabled the researcher to select participants that would provide the needed information towards solving the objectives of the study (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). With a purposive sampling technique, the investigator needs to use judgement to pick cases which shall best enable them to answer their research questions and to fulfil their objectives, Sekaran and Bougie (2016). Likewise, all participants were chosen based on a certain criterion justifying their relevance to the research. One can say that the sample has a cohesive characteristic, being in the management of EWSC.

### **3.7.2 Sample size**

According to Saunders *et al.* (2019), a sample size refers to the selected members from the target population from which data is gathered. The sample size for the study was 16 and was purposively selected based on experience and involvement of participants in knowledge management and sharing within EWSC. The 16 included executives, top managers and middle level managers. The selection of participants was based on the number of years one has spent as a senior manager handling and making decisions that deal with knowledge issues and information sharing at strategic level. The minimum of 5 years was used as the inclusion and exclusion criteria for one to be selected as a participant. In-depth background information was checked before the commencement of the study, which includes information on their demographic details, professional level and their experiences in knowledge management and sharing.

### **3.8 The data collection method – the interview**

Data was collected through in-depth interviews since at the root of an in-depth interviewing is an interest to understand the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience. Mears (2012), defines an in-depth interview as a purposeful interaction where an investigator endeavours to learn what another person knows about a particular topic, to discover and record what that person has experienced, what she or he thinks and feels about it, and what meaning it might have.

In-depth interviews allows the researcher to learn from individual perspectives of one or a few narrowly defined themes ( Brounéus (2011)).

In the light of the corona virus pandemic, the traditional face to face method of conducting interviews was not applied to all participants and to comply with the stipulated health guidelines and overcome the challenges posed by the corona virus, interviews were thus conducted through zoom meetings and over the telephone. If necessary to have a face to face interview, a two-meter social distancing was observed and the interviews were conducted in a spacious board room.

This being a basic business research study, as it focuses on generating a wealth of knowledge by understanding how certain problems affecting organisations could be solved- there exists a possibility that other organisations in the future may leverage on the knowledge gained from this study thus in-depth interviews were used to collect data so to reap much from the richness of data it allows ones to collect.

For this study, the interview schedule was the research instrument. According to Saunders et al. (2019), a semi-structured interview is a combination of structured and unstructured statements within the interview flow, often used in the social sciences. While a structured interview has a rigorous set of questions which does not allow one to divert, a semi-structured interview is open, allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says De Vos (2011). The semi-structured interview guide was used as the instrument to gather information from the participants on a one-to-one basis. The interviewees can express their opinions and ask questions to the interviewers during the interview, which encouraged them to give more useful information, such as their opinions toward sensitive issues, to the qualitative research. And they could more easily give the reasons for their answers during the interviews De Vos, (2011).

### **3.9 Administration of the interview**

Due to COVID 19, most interviews were conducted via zoom as an attempt to avoid a lot of physical interactions as normally is on face-to-face interviews. Participants' involvement would be requested via email or phone call and when consenting, an interview appointment would be set confirming date, and time. Time taken for each interview ranged between 20 and 40 minutes.

Before each interview, when confirming appointment details, the researcher also obtained details of a participant in an attempt to gain insight of the knowledge that participant could have on the organization depending on their experience. The researcher also did additional basic research on the participant's previous contributions on knowledge management and sharing initiatives . This was done in preparation for the interview for purposes of relating questions and concepts to the actual work done by the participant. As alluded above, the researcher conducted interviews personally via zoom. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher began by introducing himself followed by an explanation of the business of the day as well as providing the purpose of the study while thanking them for agreeing to take part in the study. The researcher then moved to ask questions in line with the interview schedule. While the respective participants responded, the researcher would record and make written notes. After the end of the interview session, the researcher thanked the participants for their time and contribution towards the study. Immediately after the interview, the research set aside some time to reflect on the interview and internalize the notes made during the interview to enhance clear understanding of the notes while fresh in the mind.

### **3.10 Pilot study**

According to Saunders et al. (2019), a pilot study is meant to test the readiness of a research instrument in collecting the data that is needed to address the study problem. If the pilot study reveals some inadequacies, then a revision of the research instrument must be done to align it with the research study. A pilot study was done on three participants who did not take part in the main study. The pilot study revealed that;

- Some interview questions did not address the study questions. For example, interview question two originally read as what is the level of information generation within the organization, and was thus revised to align with study objectives;
- The interview questions were rather inadequate, to solve the demands of the study objectives especially that of investigating the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC thus questions 9 and 11 were added to the list of questions.

- A number of participants could not understand the context of interview question 6, in fact the question was ambiguous in their view. The question was revised from what are the foundational initiatives meant to support information generation, management and sharing, to what are the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC?

### **3.11 Data analysis**

The data was analysed in six steps using manual thematic analysis. In particular, data analysis method used in this study was thematic analysis, which enabled the researcher to move the analysis from a broad reading of the data collected from interviews towards discovering patterns and developing themes Harvard (2018). Thematic analysis, while it minimally organises and describes data sets in rich detail, is also relatively easy to conduct without prior detailed theoretical and technical knowledge of the method, which shall be of great benefit to the researcher, (Braun,Clarke and Weate, 2016).The first step involved getting familiar with the data by a thorough overview of all the collected data as suggested De Vos, (2011). This was followed by the second step of generating codes, which were the features of the data that appear interesting and meaningful. These codes provided an indication of the context of the participants' responses, as ascertained (Creswell, 2014). The third step involved searching for themes, where relevant data was sorted by combining or splitting it according to overarching themes. The themes were then reviewed in the fourth step by either combining, refining, separating or discarding the initial themes. In the fifth step, themes were named and clearly defined in a way that captures the essence of each theme in a concise and meaningful manner (Creswell, 2014). At this point, a unified story of the data emerged from the themes. Step 6 involved writing a report, which relay the results of the analysis and supported with empirical evidence that addresses the research question.

### **3.12 Validity and reliability**

Validity is concerned with whether the research is believable and true and whether it is evaluating what it is supposed or purports to evaluate, Saunders,Lewis and Thornhill

(2007). To ensure validity of the instrument, a content validation was carried out. Content validity refers to the relevance of the items of the instrument towards achieving the objectives of the study,(Shirali,Shekari and Angali, 2018). Upon construction of the data collection instrument, the researcher made sure that contents tie up with the determined objectives so to get the desired outcome.

Long and Johnson (2000) firmly state that there is generally an agreement that all research studies must be open to critique and evaluation, failure to assess the worth of a study- the soundness of its method, the accuracy of its findings, and the integrity of assumptions made or conclusions reached could have dire consequences. Ambiguous or meaningless findings may result in wasted time and effort, while wrong findings could lead to the adoption of dangerous or harmful practices thus making the concept of rigour a fundamental one.

### **3.13 Limitations of the study**

This study was conducted during a time at which the organization was undergoing a strategic reformation through the introduction of a new managing director and with some restructuring ongoing. However, this was used to the advantage of the research through finding out if the restructuring can be associated to knowledge sharing and to find out how the corporation manages and harvests knowledge before or when employees exit.

The study was conducted alongside many other studies being carried on the company due to its strategic repositioning, hence the decision to keep the sample small but objective by ensuring its suitability for the purpose of the study. The characteristics observed in this sample are those of being in strategic management positions which are directly related to all knowledge management related initiatives. Lastly, the study was conducted at a time when the world was hit by the Corona virus pandemic, something which may impede the decided upon data collection methods, hence the researcher adopted another method, zoom interviews on top of the face-to-face interviews.

### **3.14 Ethical considerations**

According to Creswell (2017), research ethics govern the standards of conduct for a research and it is important to adhere to ethical principles in order to protect the dignity, rights and welfare of the research participants. In this study, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity and permission to undertake the study were given attention. In the section that follows, more detail is provided on the issues. Informed consent is a voluntary agreement to participate in a research, where the participant understand the research, its potential risks and benefits of participating in the study (De Vos, 2011). In this study, the objectives and the purpose of the study were explained to participants and their right to withdraw from the study at any time was without negatively impacting on the study was emphasized. Their informed consent was obtained after participants signed the consent form without being coerced or deceived.

Confidentiality refers to a condition in which a researcher is conscious and takes a step to keep the information about the participants private. While anonymity is a situation where the identity of the participants in the study remains unknown to any third party without their permission (Creswell, 2017). In this study, confidentiality was achieved by guarding against unauthorised access to the collected data. On the other hand, anonymity was achieved by using code or pseudo names to hide the identity of the participants including their departments and physical addresses.

Permission is a necessary formal authorisation obtained from organisations under study and does allow researchers to access data to get access for researcher purposes. Permission letter or gatekeeper's letter is usually obtained before seeking consent from the participants (Babbie, 2010). In this study, a written approval to conducted study was given by EWSC, which was used to apply for ethical clearance by the university. Thus, the study was approved by the university and the ethical certificate, HSSREC/ 00002378/ 2021, is attached on appendix of the study.

Harm refers to a conduct or behaviour that causes physical or psychological injury to the participants during or after the study De Vos (2011). To reduce such risk of harm in this study, any kind of practices that coerce participants was minimised. Further, anonymity and confidentiality which usually a source of harm to participants was

protected. Arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, rules and regulations such as social distancing and mask wearing were enforced to minimise the risks of contracting the dreadful diseases.

### **3.15 Conclusion**

Chapter three laid and discussed the design and methodology employed, provided justification on the methods and designs chosen. The study was undertaken from a phenomenological school of thought using the exploratory, interpretivist/qualitative design. The interview guide was used to gather data. Validity and reliability of data gathered was ensured based on the principle of trustworthiness. In addition, the pilot study was performed to ensure that the interview was fit for purpose. The following chapter presents the results, discussions and interpretations of findings.

## Chapter 4 - Results, discussion, and interpretation of findings

### 4. Introduction

Chapter three presented the research design and methodology employed by the researcher to explore strategic knowledge management sharing at EWSC. This chapter presents the results followed by a discussion and interpretation of the findings in an attempt to address the aim of the study. Thereafter, the results are linked to the literature. The discussion, however, follows the themes derived from the interview narratives in keeping with the study objectives as stated in the chapter.

#### 4.1 Demographic data

##### 4.1.2 Gender

**Table 4 Employee gender distribution**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Number of participants	47% (n = 8)	53% (n = 9)

Table 4 Shows that 53% of the participants were females while the remainder 47% were males, an indication that EWSC aligns with the national policy on women empowerment, as the organization appoints women on strategic leadership positions.

##### 4.1.3 Age

**Table 5 Employee age range distribution**

<b>Age range</b>	<b>18 -29</b>	<b>30 – 39</b>	<b>40 -49</b>	<b>Above 50</b>
No of participants	11.76% (n=2)	23.49% (n=4)	47.1 % (n=8)	17.65% (n=3)

Table 5 shows that EWSC employees were in the age range of 40-49 as reflected by the 47.1%, followed by those in the age range 30-39 as reflected by 23.49% followed by those in the age range of 50 and above as reflected by 17.65%, while those in the age range between 18 – 29 were 11.76%.

## 4.2 Results from interviews

This section presents the results that emerged from the thematic analysis process performed manually followed by a discussion of the themes. Thus, arising from the interview narratives below is a tabulation of 13 main themes, and 26 sub-themes with each of the main theme and subthemes explained, discussed and linked to literature that was reviewed in chapter two. On certain instances, new literature may be brought in to support the findings.

**Table 6 KM sharing at EWSC**

### Themes that emerged from thematic analysis

Main Themes	Subthemes
1. Understanding of knowledge management and sharing	a. What is already known b. Strategic resource
2. Embracing the notion of KM	c. Knowledge positively viewed d. The knowledge storage challenge
3. Departmental alignment to knowledge management and sharing	e. Monthly reports f. Inter and intranet KM sites
4. Knowledge based decision making	g. Knowledge for the organization's future h. Decision making i. Improved operations
5. culture of knowledge management	j. positive relationship between PM & KM k. Adverse relationship between PM & KM
6. Use of gathered knowledge	l. The team approach m. Customer experience
7. Information sharing	n. mass meetings o. Hierarchical management decisions

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>8. Common Information storage</b>                       | p. Central records office<br>q. Technological networks  |
| <b>9. Leader role on knowledge management</b>              | r. multidimensional Communicator role   |
| <b>10. Promoting KM and sharing</b>                        | s. Reports that change the organization for the better  |
| <b>11. Strategic Drivers of KM and information sharing</b> | t. Culture shift<br>u. Operational matrix   |
| <b>12. Challenges and benefits of KM sharing</b>           | v. Organizational performance<br>w. Managing change   |
| <b>13. Challenges and benefits of KM sharing</b>           | x. Implementing obstacles<br>y. Emergence of Covid-19 pandemic<br>z. Workplace heterogeneity                            |
| <b>14. Building organizational changes</b>                 | a1. Culture of openness<br>b1. Workforce freedom<br>c1. Integration of knowledge & info systems<br>d1. Improved budgets |

#### **4.3 Themes and subthemes**

##### **4.3.1 Interview question 1 - What is your understanding of knowledge management sharing? Kindly elaborate?**

The first interview question sought to gain participants' views regarding their understanding of KM sharing. Data from the interview narratives, after thematic analysis revealed that participants understanding of KM sharing revolved around understanding of KM as the main theme, with two subthemes which include what is already known and the strategic resource. Below is a discussion of the findings.

#### 4.3.1.1 Main theme 1 - Understanding of knowledge management sharing

KM is critical to an organisation's performance, effectiveness and ability of the organisation to meet goals and objectives, and so is the sharing of knowledge. Hence participants revealed that KM sharing was significant for EWSC.

##### Subtheme 1 - What is already known

Participants revealed that they understood knowledge management and sharing as what is already known about the organisation to the extent that everyone within the organisation has access of such knowledge. Verbatim statements attesting the statement include:

*"Knowledge management means, whatever knowledge we collect over the years has to be archived..." (Participant 9)*

*"I view knowledge management as the ability of EWSC to store its critical information and how to use that information to improve the functioning of the organisation..." (Participant 2)*

*"I think knowledge management is all about knowing what is important for EWSC and how such information is handled to the benefit of the organisation..." (Participant: 13)*

The finding shows that EWSC employees do appreciate what Knowledge management and sharing is all about as they have a clear understanding of what it entails. In my view this finding sends a clear message that EWSC has employees who know the importance of knowledge, its management as well as the sharing of such knowledge. In other words, the findings suggest that EWSC employees view Knowledge sharing as the tacit and explicit knowledge that is subject to be utilised and shared for the benefit of the organisation. The finding resonates with literature by Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009) when they state that knowledge comes in two forms, which include tacit and explicit. In support of the finding Lartey et al. (2019) argue that KM relates to the senses, demonstrative experiences, movement skills, intuition, unstated mental models rooted in action, procedures, routines, commitment, ideals, values, and emotions. Regarding the sharing of knowledge Kim *et al.* (2015) highlight that tacit knowledge can be shared through consciousness if it leans towards the explicit side of the continuum. In this study, and in line with the finding, knowledge remains the most important or critical element of the organisation's success factors.

## **Subtheme 2 – Strategic resource**

Participants also revealed that they understood KM as resembling the strategic resources of the organisation. Strategic resource is a resource that is critical for achieving organisational goals and objectives and of course in line with the mission of the organisation. This therefore places KM and sharing as the driver of the entire organization as without knowledge the organisation has no information, and no data to make critical decisions. The following verbatim statements by participants demonstrate KM as a resource for EWSC.

*“To me KM means the strategic resource that we should effectively utilise to provide effective service to the community...” (Participant 17)*

*“KM is very important to me because we are here as employees utilising what the organisation has in the form of processes, and systems as reservoirs or fountain of what we know...” (Participant 5)*

*“Knowledge is a resource, an asset that EWSC desperately needs to be functional as without knowledge and how it is shared, there is no way we can move from one step to another...” (Participant 11)*

The finding shows that employees view KM as a significant item of the organisation that plays a strategic role in the sense that, empowered with knowledge about the organisation, EWSC employees can effectively thrive to meet the organisation’s vision, goals and objectives and once this has been met, the organisation would have achieved its purpose. In line with the finding, literature postulates that the most important objectives of knowledge management is to unleash the strategic capabilities that emerge from systematically influencing performance, exchange, application and creativity, thereby creating value (Ahmad and Karim, 2019). In this line of thought, organisations that include EWSC ought to be strategic on how to efficiently utilize the knowledge resource that are already at their disposal. Kharabsheh *et al.* (2016) argue that studies indicate that when knowledge is shared effectively within an organisation, it saves sizeable amount of production costs, while promoting sound innovation capabilities all pointing at enhancing the strategic capacity of the organisation to meet its goals.

### **4.3.2 Interview question 2 - Does the company embrace the notion of KM?**

The second interview question sought to determine if EWSC embrace the notion of KM. Under the question, embracing KM emerged as the main theme followed by two subthemes which include knowledge positively viewed and the knowledge storage challenge. Below is a discussion of the theme and the subthemes.

#### **4.3.2.1 Main theme 2 - Embracing the notion of KM**

Participants revealed that EWSC embraced the notion of KM. This is a very important finding in that the organisation takes KM seriously as a positive first step in the KM and sharing process. In line with this finding Sousa and González (2016), highlight on the importance of embracing KM by respective organisation as without doing so, organisations would not effectively function. A study conducted by Jaziri (2018) on the importance of KM, revealed that failure to embrace KM was the main reason for decline in organisational performance.

#### **Subtheme 1 – Lack of organisational support on KM**

Participants under this section revealed that EWSC does not fully embrace KM from a systematic and structural view and for this study it is a significant statement. Significant in the sense that, organisations ought to provide systems, processes and structures that enable the organisation to manage, store and share the knowledge it has in the present and future. The essence derived from this subtheme is the lack of goal congruency in as far as KM and sharing is supported within EWSC. Participants expressed dissonance and lack of evident support on this notion, hence some felt it's partially embraced. If EWSC does not provide for these, then there is a possibility that the organisation may fail to effectively deliver. Verbatim statements attesting to the findings are provided below:

*“the actions of the organisation as a body do not support or encourage KM&S in the sense that that there are no systematic ways laid down to advance this notion...”*

**(Participant 1)**

*“while the organisation thrives to be a KM and sharing driven organisation, on the ground there is very little the organisation does to support this view...” (Participant 9)*

If the organisation does not support KM sharing which it purports to be one of cardinal points, it sends a negative message towards the firm’s performance, service delivery and the achievement of organisational goals. Pauleen (2017) argues that organisational support by embracing KM and sharing enables cohesion that may translate into better performance and improved service delivery. Yang et al. (2010) posits that a climate of organisational trust about knowledge as a fountain that positively contributes to the performance and growth of the organisation, is the bedrock of every organisation. Thus, the finding that EWSC does not embrace KM sharing as it should be, defeats the organisation’s thrust to effectively meet its service delivery obligations.

#### **Subtheme 4 - Knowledge management and storage challenge**

While, some participants believed that EWSC to an extent embraced KM and sharing, there was a strong belief that the organisation faced insurmountable challenges on knowledge storage. Verbatim statements attesting to the findings are provided below:

*“Actually, we have challenges in technology use, as not every employee is familiar with the information sites and how to retrieve the information...” (Participant 7)*

*“Long ago, organisations relied on physical filing system which was accessible to all, but these days, it is all about computers...” (Participant 11)*

It is important to note that storage of information as knowledge before the emergence of technology was in the form of physical filing cabinets which required huge space, arranged in structured way of storage and retrieval process (Kimble, 2013). While this was an easier and understandable methods of KM and sharing, the storage space was a challenge and then came the emergence of technology. Pauleen (2017) states that the introduction of information technology as a storage tool, despite being a welcome development to organisations in terms of better management, it requires the skilled personnel to do the capturing and processing of data (Kimble, 2013). Pauleen (2017) further states that knowledge is embedded not only in documents or

repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices and norms which calls for competent skills to leverage knowledge for appropriate actions and decisions of which the skills to do so are scarce. On the same vein was Mao *et al.* (2016), adding that information technology alone cannot ensure the leveraging of knowledge as it does not have the human dimension or element of knowledge management. It is thus critical to note that despite making use of IT for storing and managing knowledge, there is need for skilled personnel who will interpret and make informed decisions based on available knowledge. There is a gap at EWSC as findings pointed out that there is no one responsible of ensuring that all useful information gets stored in a manner that is usable and accessible to all for decision making purposes.

#### **4.3.3 Interview question 3 – Elaborate how is key information generated by departments shared/ accessed by the other departments within the company?**

The third interview question sought to understand participants' views on how information is generated and shared by the various departments, as well as being accessed by other departments. The interview narratives under the question revealed departmental alignment and sharing as the main theme emerging followed by two subthemes namely monthly reports, and locating KM sites. Discussion of the themes is provided below.

##### **4.3.3.1 Main theme 3 - Departmental alignment of KM and sharing**

Participants revealed that the sharing of information generated by departments at EWSC, depends on the extent of the alignment of the organisation's KM reservoirs with departments. It is important to emphasize that *alignment* is a common denominator in strategy related issues at all times. This finding place departmental alignment of KM and sharing as fundamental to EWSC's trajectory in achieving its goals. Yang *et al.* (2010) argues that organisations that do not have a clear connection between their KM processes to overall business strategy are likely to suffer from lack of a well-developed strategic models that would enhance the ways to translate or further the goal of making their organizations more intellectual into a strategic action.

### **Subtheme 5 - Monthly reports using inter and intranet technologies**

Participants revealed that key information about the organisation is generated and shared from monthly reports using inter and intranet technologies. For instance, the following verbatim statements support the finding:

*“Through monthly reports that are shared with other departments through a system called the management information system (MIS) for access whenever they needed these...” (Participant 11)*

*“we produce reports and share them on website so that all the departments can utilize the information” (Participant 17)*

Thus, study revealed that information is shared through reports using technology platforms such as internet and intranet. However, not all managers have the skill and experience to use the technology platforms. Reports generated by every unit, department and of course the entire organisation save as the fountain of knowledge. Such reports are a responsibility of those who hold senior and strategic positions. In line with the finding, Sousa and González (2016) argue that top management have a key role in the promotion of knowledge management systems, as they create conditions whereby employees apply their knowledge, share it and exchange it with each other through critical report writing. Cognisant of these Sousa and González (2016) further notes that developed knowledge is continually documented through reports, and images made available to everyone through the various organisational platforms.

### **Subtheme 6 – Meetings**

The study also revealed that at EWSC, key information is generated by departments through meetings (formal or informal meetings) held in any form (zoom, telephonically or physical meetings). Examples of participant’s comments are reflected below:

*“At EWSC, we hold meetings weekly and monthly meetings to update all employees on what going on...” (Participant 14)*

*“I believe in holding specific meeting on projects meant to ensure the sustainability of the project...” (Participant 16)*

*“We hold meeting in good, and bad times to ensure that EWSC functions smoothly and we do so to provide the critical knowledge and information required for the day to day functioning of the organisation...” (Participant 8)*

The findings suggest that at EWSC, information is generated by holding meetings with employees and other stakeholders to gather, and or share information. Indeed, the study views meetings as a critical platform for sharing knowledge and information to address urgent needs and for the day to day functioning of the organisation. Views by Yang et al. (2010) attest on the importance of meetings as a KM sharing platform. Yang et al., (2010) further argue that besides the externalization of knowledge, is the combination and process of creating explicit knowledge by bringing together explicit knowledge from various sources as individuals exchange and combine their explicit knowledge through meetings, and telephone conversations. In line with this finding Sousa and González (2016) reiterate that project review meetings and dialogue sessions are essential means to share knowledge

#### **4.3.4 Interview question 4 - What is the significance of KM and sharing in your role as a manager who makes decisions**

Under this interview question, the focus was to establish participants' views on the significance of KM and sharing in their roles as managers, and how they perceive KM/sharing would enhance decision making among managers. The interview narratives aligned to the question revealed knowledge-based decision making as they main theme underpinned by three sub-themes which include knowledge for the organisation's future, decision making and improved operations as discussed below.

##### **4.3.4.1 Main theme 4 - Knowledge based decision making**

Participants believed that KM and sharing was significant as knowledge-based decision-making process. The finding is fundamental in that a KM and sharing platform that enhances the overall decision making of an organisation would go a long way in ensuring organisational efficiency and of course service delivery in the context of our organisation. For example, participant 3 narrated that knowledge management becomes critical for decision-making, collecting information and analysing it, thus creating knowledge for the organization, to be able to ensure that the experiences that

we create for our customers are compelling experiences that ensure positive results for the organization. In line with this main finding, Jahmani, Fadiya, Abubakar and Elrehail (2018) argues that managers are saddled with the responsibility of leading their organisations by making excellent decisions to achieve objectives and stated goals.

### **Subtheme 7 - Knowledge for the organization's future**

Participants revealed that KM sharing was important for the organisation's future as it is grounded in decision-making ethos within organisations. Coming to EWSC, KM is significant for serving as the knowledge reservoir of the organisation. Even the participants attest to this view as reflected by the verbatim statements below:

*“So, knowledge management is very critical because it should inform our every day to day activities as an organization. So, for us, any decision, or in the customer life journey is, and has to be informed by the experiences of our customers...”*

**(Participant 15)**

*“The significance of knowledge management and sharing is basically to make sure that everyone is moving in the same direction as we all have the same goals, the same information- only then can we enhance decision making...”* **(Participant 2)**

It stands out that KM sharing is significant as knowledge source or fountain that informs the future of the organisation. The purpose of KM is to provide information that would help the organisation in meeting its future needs in terms of customer needs, while ensuring efficiency in work processes (Jahmani *et al.*, 2018). In this regard, managers ought to understand the significance of KM going forward (Jahmani *et al.*, 2018). However, as leaders, it is necessary to have the ability to communicate information as knowledge and be in a position to objectively manage knowledge combined with contextual confidence which would enable the manager to communicate appropriate information in an understandable manner. Otherwise, while the knowledge may be completely correct, it may be useless to the organisation (Maciarelo, 2014).

### **Subtheme 8 - Improved operations**

Participants also revealed that KM and sharing improves operations of the entire organisation. In support, below are the verbatim statements:

*“KM and sharing help us improve our operations in terms of efficiency and thus shorten our turnaround times as we resolve faults using learnings and solutions that have worked in the past...” (Participant 5)*

*“This organization has an operations department, being the biggest one of all, and leveraging on KM and sharing could help us not to trouble shoot each time a fault occurs but could help us proactively manage interruption and therefore shorten our turnaround times...” (Participant 9)*

The finding makes a clear statement that KM and sharing has improved EWSC operations. In line with the finding, studies by Louw and Venter (2011) posit that organizations that know more about their customers, services, technologies, markets and their links or sources of competitive advantage are likely to enhance their operational activities. Ganesh (2001) argues that the subject of KM provokes the thought of how organisations implement strategies to ensure operational excellence. Bearing in mind that the study sought revolved on how knowledge is managed and shared and how this affects meeting of organisational goals in the form of organisational efficiency, service delivery.

#### **4.3.5 Interview question 5 - Does the company’s PM systems promote KM/sharing in the company**

The fifth interview question sought to understand participants’ views if EWSC’s performance management system promoted KM sharing, as well as establishing if the system served the purpose of KM sharing. The interview narratives revealed one main theme (culture of KM) grounded in two sub-themes (the relationship between PM and KM and adverse relationship) as discussed below.

#### **4.3.5.1 Main theme 5 - Culture of knowledge management**

It emerged from the interview narratives that EWSC's culture of KM was hindered by the PM system as they are related structurally and systemically. The point raised is that organisational culture plays a key role in KM and sharing provided there is an effective PM system. In this study, the findings reveal that PM and KM were counterproductive. Interestingly and aligned to the finding Nonaka (1994) argue that the way knowledge is managed and shared across organisations has gradually become a culture or a way of doing things. KM builds from other theories and disciplines such as information, strategic management, organizational culture, and organizational behaviour (Baskerville and Dulipovici, 2006).

#### **Subtheme 9 – Positive relationship between PM and KM**

Participants revealed that in pursuance of PM, KM and sharing is enhanced or promoted. In other words, participants stated that in meeting their PM obligations they should work towards enhancing KM and sharing. In this regard, the following verbatim statements attest to this view:

*“PM looks mainly on a section of the strategy and how the strategy builds into the KM processes and how such knowledge is shared...” (Participant 3)*

*“PM is a vehicle to meet organisational goals using the available knowledge as shared across the entire organisation...” (Participant 10)*

*“PM and KM are not complementary, despite using and sharing the knowledge to effectively perform towards goals using agreed strategies...” (Participant 16)*

The finding emerging from this theme is that PM does not promote KM and sharing, implying that EWSC's PM system hinders KM sharing which is counter-productive to the organisation's objectives. Previous studies emphasized the connection or link between KM sharing, and PM (Ozer and Vogel, 2015). In the same vain Kianto et al. (2016), argue that PM is strategic knowledge management practice that align with the KM principle that seek to improve organisational performance in view of the turbulent environment in which today's organisation functions.

#### **Subtheme 10 – Adverse relationship between PM and KM**

Participants revealed that the relationship between PM does affect KM sharing and can be adverse if there is lack of congruency. Thus, the two must have goal congruency so that they work towards a common goal. To quote the statements by some participants, it emerges that adverse relationship between the two could derail the organisation's performance targets.

*“There is every reason to suggest that some of the performance management targets do not agree with the efforts to knowledge creation and sharing...” (Participant 11)*

*“Performance management, and KM sharing is a function of the human resources department, towards ensuring that the two are synchronised...” (Participant 14)*

The finding suggests that PM and KM and sharing have different goals and are thus not synchronised defeating the purpose for which EWSC thrives to fulfil. The finding can be understood from, the RBV in which knowledge is regarded as a resource utilised to achieve the desired organisational performance level (Louw and Venter (2013). Mindful of the RBV model as a backbone of the study, and the dichotomy of goal incongruence between PM and KM presents a watershed on the effect PM has on KM given the context of EWSC (Louw and Venter (2013).

#### **4.3.6 Interview 6 – What steps does the company take to implement survey findings on services offered by the company?**

The interview sought to establish the steps EWSC takes to implement survey findings on services offered. The interview narratives revealed two themes which include the team approach and customer experience all anchored in “gathering knowledge” as the main theme under the question as discussed below.

##### **4.3.6.1 Main theme 6 - Gathering knowledge**

Participants revealed that primarily, EWSC's first step in implementing survey findings on services offered starts with the gathering of knowledge relevant to the organisation. After gathering of knowledge, comes the team approach and customer experience as tool or strategy used to gather knowledge. It is important therefore to note that the goal to implement findings is to achieve the implementation of KM practices (Rechberg and Syed, 2013).

##### **Subtheme 11 - The team approach**

Aligned to gathering knowledge, participants revealed that they often utilise the team approach as step to implement survey findings on services offered by EWSC.

*“Findings are discussed with all teams; each leadership team member has the responsibility to take the findings back to their teams...”*

*“Teamwork allows the organization to share knowledge quickly and effectively, hence we will continue to use for implementation of strategic deliverables such KM practices as well as PM...”* **(Participant 4)**

Aligned to the team approach, Ahmad and Karim (2019) state that the use of the team approach in KM and sharing within departments and employees is a fundamental factor that contributes to joint organisational creativity and learning. Additionally, it also improves team’s idea generation and their absorptive capacity. In addition, the teamwork approach is significant for building a mental model that directs the organization towards crucial components that enhance creativity (Lee *et al.*, 2016).

#### **Subtheme 12 - Customer experience**

Customer experience also emerged as step in the right direction for implementing survey findings on services offered by the company as revealed by some participants:

*“I believe in the customer experience as the basis for implementing the organization’s surveys... I think with time, this will add huge value to knowledge management.”*

**(Participants 2)**

The finding on customer experience makes a fundamental statement, in that organisations are there for a reason and that reason is the customer. Related to EWSC, communities in and around Eswatini, often complain of poor service delivery, hence it would be critical to make a step ahead by exploring customer experience perspectives in terms of their experience. Aligned to this finding, previous studies emphasized the benefits of knowledge sharing in the form of increased customer satisfaction and improved innovation and performance capabilities in the private sector (Ozer and Vogel, 2015).

#### **4.3.7 Interview question 7 - How are management decisions cascaded to departments in the company?**

The focus of this interview was on how management decisions get cascaded to departments within EWSC. The interview narratives revealed two themes, which include mass meetings and hierarchical managerial decision all grounded in information sharing as the main theme as discussed below.

#### **4.3.7.1 Main theme 7 - Information sharing**

Participants revealed that management decisions at EWSC are cascaded through information sharing as the basis or foundation of standard practice. This finding aligns to other views as alluded by Nickerson and Zenger (2014) when they argue that Knowledge and information sharing are fundamentally critical functions that continue to take precedence in organisational settings. Cabrera and Cabrera (2015) emphasis on the strategic importance of knowledge and information sharing as central in knowledge-based firms inclusive of EWSC. Hislop (2013) corroborate that the mere presence of knowledge as a strategic resource does not guarantee success, in the eyes of a weaker management and leadership oversight. Hence, guided by the pursuit to develop competitive advantage, leaders, and employees ought to share and apply knowledge in view of the prevailing complex environment (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2015).

#### **Subtheme 13 - Mass meetings**

In cascading management decisions to departments, participants revealed that mass meetings were used. This is attested in the following verbatim statements by some participants:

*“We have the mass meetings, which happens periodically, however currently we also have the MD’s desk which basically is supposed to be read by each and every employee on what’s happening...”* **(Participant 6)**

*“And we have monthly meetings whereby further cascading of management decisions to all employees. Also, the use of notice boards, newsletters and emails are employed to communicate management decisions to the masses...”* **(Participant 7)**

The finding indicates that at EWSC, mass meetings are critically important as they are used as a means to communicate managerial decisions. In support of the finding,

meetings constitute a vital situation where critical ideas are discussed and how certain processes are initiated (Yang *et al.*, 2010). In meetings managers must first of all prepare the kind of decisions they intend to communicate, decide on who will communicate the decisions and which media should be used (Sousa and González, 2016). In using mass meeting as a means or tool to cascade managerial decisions, managers ought to decide on how often such meetings would be held. Considering the amount of time that employees spend in meetings, this result is disturbing. It is however important to observe increasing request for employees to attend meetings in now linked to decreased well-being and increased fatigue and subjective work load (Jaziri, 2018). However, abolishing meetings altogether is not a likely option, hence this calls for using effective meeting approaches such as team members' expertise, which in turn requires interaction. Thus, meetings are a necessity for building successful organisational cohesion and teamwork.

#### **Subtheme 14 - Hierarchical managerial decisions**

Participants also indicated that managerial decisions at EWSC are grounded in hierarchical managerial decisions. Put simply, managers at EWSC cascade decisions hierarchically following the reporting line of authority. Below are some of the verbatim statements:

*“Our management decisions get cascaded to departments in the company, firstly by the directors to the head of department, from the head of department, to managers and subsequently to all officers”.* **(Participant 16)**

*“So, in general, the way information is cascaded follows the hierarchy of positions, I think it is very efficient since if we were to wait for the Electronic Document Management System communicate, a lot would run late.”* **(Participant 9)**

*“It is through the hierarchy, supervisors involved too. I report to the director, a member of the executive committee- they have that executive committee meeting where decisions are taken...”* **(Participant 13)**

The finding suggests that management decisions are cascaded to departments in the company hierarchically. According to Vali *et al.* (2016), the essence of the decision-

making process in large organisations is to solve strategic, tactical and operational decision problems and to take adequate decisions in their multi-layered decision-making hierarchical structure. In this view, EWSC, just like any other large organisation, public enterprise for the matter, does require to address the strategic, tactical and operational imperatives.

#### **4.3.8 Interview question 8 - *Does the company have information storage systems?***

This interview question sought to establish if EWSC had information storage systems, and the types of systems if available. The interview narrative revealed two themes which include the availability of the central records office and the intra technological networks all grounded in common information storage as the main theme arising from the question. Below is a discussion of themes and subsequent subthemes.

##### **4.3.8.1 Main theme 8 – Common information storage**

Participants revealed that EWSC does have a common information storage platform where all the information for the organisation is stored. In the interest of the organisation, the finding makes a statement that EWSC has made deliberate efforts to store the information, and knowing that information is knowledge, this organisation will go a long way in meeting its strategic obligations. Below are some participants' verbatim statements:

*“At EWSC, we believe in a common pool of information as a reservoir or fountain of knowledge that the organization should use objectively to meet the strategic goals of the organization...” (Participant 3)*

In line with the view of “common pool of information as a fountain of knowledge” Vali et al. (2016) corroborate that, knowledge has become the most valued intellectual capital critical for meeting organizational objectives. Vali et al. (2016), proceed by arguing that organizations create a reservoir of information data bank. The pool of information enforces organizational knowledge and skill in order to create value that promote organizational efficiency that assist problem-solving activities,

#### **4.3.9 Interview question 9 - *In your capacity as a strategic leader, what role do you play in promoting a conducive environment for KM and sharing?***

The interview question sought to understand the role played by managers as strategic leaders in promoting a conducive environment for KM and sharing. From the interviews, it emerged that EWSC senior management play a key central role as a multidimensional communicator grounded in Leader role on KM as the main theme. Below is a discussion of the theme.

#### **4.3.9.1 Main theme 9 - Leader role on knowledge management**

Participants revealed that leader's role on KM was fundamental to EWSC managers as strategic leaders in promoting a conducive environment for KM and sharing. Interestingly, all participants had the similar view on this aspect attesting the importance strategic leadership in promoting a conducive environment for KM and sharing. In line with the finding, the following verbatim statement testify the finding:

*"-I ensure that the right information is communicated, ensure clarity and develop tools and management systems and routines that will ensure that information is passed on. So, routines are in our leadership meetings in all communication platforms, as well, and checking the accuracy and, and updating this, those different platforms that we're using to share information and then check in with my team..." (Participant 12)*

In support of the finding, Pauleen (2017) outline key principles which should guide the managers as strategic leaders in the codification of knowledge. The principles state that managers as strategic leaders ought to decide what business goals the knowledge would serve, identify knowledge to achieve the goals, evaluate knowledge for usefulness, as well as identify appropriate to store and share such knowledge. In agreement with the findings (Emary, Golubchik, Aley, Ariani, Angus, Bibi, Blane, Bonsall, Cicconi and Charlton, 2021) postulates that leaders are strategic players in the management and sharing of knowledge organization. Pauleen (2017) further adds to this dimension, by stating that the management and sharing of knowledge between individuals and groups is a managerial leadership function considered a daunting task because of the challenges that go people management and the fluidity of knowledge.

### **Subtheme 15 - Multidimensional Communicator role**

Aligned to leader role on KM and sharing, participants revealed that EWSC managers play a multidimensional communicator role in promoting a conducive environment for KM and sharing as reflected in the following participants' verbatim statements:

*“As a manager I use an open approach, where employees and other stakeholders could easily interact amongst themselves and their line managers. I do this especially when the environment does not allow one to express themselves. That's the starting point to me. So, I create an environment where we can talk anyhow, but in a respectful manner but we can talk about any subject matter anyhow...” (Participant 7)*

*“I try and make sure that I also get intricately involved in terms of getting feedback on what is being communicated, for instance, I normally will ask my teams to share me minutes of meetings that they have with their sub teams so that I make sure that you know it is happening and I get some of these things from the people...” (Participant 14)*

*“I allow managers, as leaders in my team to have the time to meet with their teams so that they can have the space to make, create platforms for communication which will bear fruit. So, one of the things that's one of the things that I do, but in terms of also, just trying to ensure that it's not just the time that I allow them to have with their teams...” (Participant 10)*

The finding under this section shows that in the context of EWSC, managers as strategic leaders have a multidimensional or multifaceted role to promote a conducive environment for KM and sharing. The finding implies that in the hands of managers to whatever they can to promote KM sharing. According to Sin et al. (2010), one of the key roles of a manager is the information communicator role. The managerial role includes the informational and spokesperson role, in this sense, comprises of things a manager does to cascade information across the organisation (Yang et al. (2010). As a communicator, the manager should conduct industrial scanning to stay abreast of developments, analyse and send memos outlining new organisational initiatives as well as making a speech to discuss important informational issues relating to the organisation (Yang et al. (2010).

#### **4.3.10 Interview question 10 - Please elaborate on environmental improvements that can promote KM and sharing in the organization**

The tenth interview question was designed to tap participants' views on the environmental improvements EWSC has made to promote KM and sharing. The interview narrative revealed that the organisation generates reports that change the organisation for the better under the theme promoting KM sharing.

##### **4.3.10.1 Main theme 10 - Promoting KM and sharing**

Participants revealed that EWSC had made efforts to promote KM and sharing.

*“I have identified the lack of a system for documenting lessons learnt. There is a lot of work that is done but there is no system in place to document lessons learned, such that if you were to embark on any type of project or assignment there is no system where you can access and save that three or four last similar assignments that were done, what was good about them what was bad...” (Participant 1)*

*“I think for me the first thing is that if we were to just identify knowledge development and management as a key function in each department, to say, at any point, if you come to me and say, no matter what knowledge do you generate and share, I can easily tell you that this, this and this is what we generate, you go to finance they also need to know, good...” (Participant 3)*

The finding suggests that EWSC is serious about the promotion of KM and sharing across the organisation. Linked to this finding, Sousa and González (2016) argue that in view of emerging knowledge infrastructure, top leadership ought to play a key role towards the promotion of KM systems, the creation of conducive conditions which would allow all players to engage in KM and sharing. In this view, developed knowledge can be continually documented through reports, images or even metaphors, and made available to everyone in the organisation

#### **4.3.11 Interview question 11 - What strategies or frameworks does the company use in inculcating a culture of knowledge management and sharing**

This question sought to tap into the views of participants on possible strategies employed by EWSC in inculcating a culture of KM sharing. The interview narratives

revealed two subthemes which include a culture mix and operational matrix grounded in strategic drivers of KM sharing. The themes are discussed below.

#### **4.3.11.1 Main theme 11 - Strategic drivers of KM and information sharing**

Participants revealed that EWSC could consider use of the culture mix and operational matrix as strategic drivers of KM and information sharing. A strategic driver is a strategy that considers the organisational mission, vision, and goals of the organisation, otherwise deciding on a strategy anyhow would be directionless. Thus, the finding by participant's shows that managers of EWSC does have the right mind on what a strategic driver ought to achieve, however the big question is whether the managers are doing this at the moment. The answer is no, as the leader responses demonstrated that this is what they thought the future would be. Aligned to this finding Bhatt Ganesh (2001), state that due to the need to achieve organisational goals, organisations need strategies. In addition, Yang et al. (2010) corroborate that organisations that do not have a business strategy that deals with KM

#### **Subtheme 16 - Culture mix**

In achieving the main theme on strategic drivers on KM sharing, participants revealed that there most important thing was anchored in the culture mix across the entire organisation.

*“It is all about how we plan and execute our KM and information sharing in this company, and this goes to the history of this organisation in terms of the culture here”*

**(Participant 6)**

*“The key framework used by the organization is a culture change management that we are currently journeying on. This is a key tool that we're using to try and change our culture and improve interactions and communications between employees and management...”* **(Participant 17)**

Organisational culture being a way of doing things in the organization should be key for EWSC and in this case the “things” referred to here are the KM and sharing practices. To cite some authors, KM and sharing builds from organisational culture, and impact on organizational performance (Baskerville and Dulipovici, 2006). In addition, Pauleen (2017) state that sharing knowledge between individuals and groups

within an organisation largely depends on the prevailing organisation culture of that particular organisation. Pauleen (2017) further argue that creating a conducive organisational culture should be the first and foremost leadership practice towards a strategy driven organisation in meeting the KM and sharing initiative.

#### **4.3.12 Interview question 12 - How would the company benefit from a KM and sharing strategy?**

The interview question aimed at establishing how EWSC would benefit from KM and sharing strategy. The interview narratives on this question revealed two themes which include organisational performance and managing change grounded in the challenges and benefits of KM sharing discussed below.

##### **4.3.12.1 Main theme 12 - Challenges and benefits of KM sharing**

Participants revealed that they view the strategy in two-dimensional angle which include the challenges and benefits of KM sharing. As alluded by participants;

*“In my view success of strategies on KM sharing depends on how the organization implements such strategies, otherwise a well-orchestrated strategy would yield benefits while a bad one would be met with relative challenges...” (Participant 12)*

The study revealed that EWSC could benefit from designed strategies, but would experience challenges with strategies that were not properly designed to suit their organisation. According to Yang et al. (2010), strategists ought to be careful in design strategies and they should achieve this by understanding first the environment in which the organisation operates. Matusik (2002) argue that a firm’s competitive advantage is embedded in its strategy to obtain new knowledge. According to Yang et al. (2010), organisations ought to understand their dynamic processes of knowledge creation as key issues in order to succeed.

##### **Subtheme 17 - Organisational performance**

In line with the main theme of challenges and benefits of KM sharing, participants revealed that they consider KM strategies as ones that would bring or enhance EWSC’s performance.

*“The strategy would certainly benefit a lot by increasing performance. So, we do have the various knowledge management strategies guiding us on the right action to follow...” (Participant 5)*

*“So if you were to consolidate the strategies, and formalize them, you would improve performance. And because of your deliberate intention to have that, then you would derive much more value in that it would be coordinated. It would be supported from the top, and would likely enhance organisational performance...” (Participant 2)*

*“It would benefit it a great deal in terms of performance as we save on time, because there are a lot of consultations going on in the organization. We are ever held up in meetings...” (Participant 8)*

The finding indicates that KM sharing strategies would increase the overall performance at EWSC, which would be a positive development. Knowledge has an interesting characteristic of growing in value when it's shared. It is critical to note KM sharing strategies remain the frontiers of a successful knowledge driven entity, to the extent that an organisation without such strategies would fail to meet its deliverables (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2002), This highlights the significance of KM sharing as opposed to the view that knowledge shared is akin to knowledge lost (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2002). Effective KM and sharing strategies would have spill over benefits that would translate in boosting the country's economy and wellbeing of the general public (Lartey *et al.* (2019) . For example, in this study, employing effective KM and sharing strategies would improve organisational performance at EWSC which may benefit the Mbabane city economy as well as the economy of Eswatini. Clearly, by managing and sharing knowledge effectively, there would be more to be gained than loses, hence the importance of embracing KM and sharing by senior managers at EWSC.

### **Subtheme 18 - Managing change**

Linked to the main theme of challenges and benefits of KM sharing, participants revealed that KM sharing experienced the challenge to manage the change that comes with KM sharing to the extent that the whole process countered organisational cohesion and performance at EWSC. In brief, KM sharing strategies have become a

hindrance as leaders spent most of their time managing the change that goes with this process. Managing change on its own is a difficult process which in most cases becomes counterproductive, and such is the development at EWSC.

The findings resonate with Kianto, et al. (2016), when they view strategic knowledge management change strategies as one that include the management of people and systems leading to one of the most feared outcomes of implementing changes – managing change. According to Kianto, et al. (2016), the introduction of new strategies to KM and sharing can degenerate into resistance to change which is often difficult to manage and counterproductive. Thus, while strategies to manage, and share knowledge maybe a good idea, they come with challenges. According to Mahdi, Nassar, and Almsafir (2018), the change from manual to a technological infrastructure that includes social media, forums, blogs and virtual networks are the most common infrastructures, while a good strategy for managing and sharing knowledge, is so complex to manage to the extent of being counter-productive.

#### **4.3.13 Interview question 13 - What are the obstacles or challenges encountered by the company/departments in implementing KM and sharing strategies?**

This interview question sought to establish the obstacles or challenges encountered by EWSC in implementing KM sharing. Data gathered from the interview narratives revealed two main themes which include managing change, and the emergence of COVID -19 grounded in implementation obstacles as the main theme. Following is a discussion of the themes

##### **4.3.13.1 Main theme 13 – Implementation obstacles**

Participants revealed that EWSC faced implementation challenges of dealing with change as most individuals worked in silos, dealing with change, the emergence of COVID -19, heterogeneity of the workplace, departments and views and the speed at which the information follows in and out of the respective departments are zoomed into the implementation challenges.

Aligned to this finding, Kim, and Yun (2015), state that due to the fluidity of knowledge, organizations often face challenges in implementing strategies meant to ensure that it is embraced by all stakeholders. According to Kessel, Kratzer, and Schultz, (2012), the topic on KM and sharing is ever changing and so are the strategies or means to

implement it, and there several stakeholders involved which makes complex to comprehend and let alone implement effective strategies. It is important to note that knowledge permits users to define, shape, and learn to solve a task (Nonaka and Von Krogh, 2009). These dimensions portray KM as a one that is complex particularly when implementation selected strategies for organisational strategic growth.

### **Subtheme 19 – emergence of COVID-19**

Participants revealed that the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic towards the end of the year 2019 hindered EWSC to implement some of its intended KM sharing strategies. During the COVID -19 era, organisations literally stopped functioning but this was not possible for EWSC as the organisation supplies a basic commodity - water that is needed 24/7 regardless of whatever challenges the organisation might face at any given time.

*“While we face challenges in implementing organisational strategies, this time around things become worse due to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. We can no longer hold meetings to cascade critical information to the masses, and we no longer have a full staff complement data capture all the information we need now and for the future knowledge reservoir...” (Participant 1)*

*“we rely on technology usage to compute our statistics for our knowledge data base, however this function is undermined by load shading as other companies are not working in full operation due to COVID-19 pandemic, so I can tell you that it’s hard for us as an organization to function due to this pandemic...” (Participant 6)*

*“And obviously COVID-19 is one of the key challenges that were faced in the culture change management process...” (Participant 9)*

According to the OECD (2020), The COVID-19 crisis compelled organisations around the world to operate in a context of radical uncertainty, and faced with difficult trade-offs given the health, economic and social challenge and the need to meet organisational accomplishments. On the foot of 2020, the novel coronavirus was into declared a global pandemic by the United Nations. Almost every country was placed under lockdown including Eswatini where the organisation under study is located.

## **Subtheme 20 – Workplace heterogeneity**

Participants revealed that implementation of KM sharing strategies was largely hindered by what is referred to as workplace heterogeneity which entails the differences that exist among managers and employees in terms of what they believe in, their values and the differences in skills and experiences. Harnessing the differences towards a common purpose is a huge task for managers at EWSC. For example, the following verbatim statements provide testimony to this finding.

*“We're working in silos, hence we so different, as we producing the data in silos thus information is sitting everywhere and not centralized, it's not accessible to everyone, and even the information that would help is not openly accessible...” (Participant 4)*

*“... we don't even know what we know, and type of information we have and the people who would want to use it hence we don't have knowledge of critical information to share but we just keep providing people with information whether it's relevant to them or not, they probably want to hear a few things, but we flood them with information they do not consider to be key...” (Participant 15)*

The finding under this section is clear as it shows that the differences that exist amongst those who deal with KM and sharing does hinder the implementation of KM strategies. In other words, lack of commonality on who they are, what they should do and what they do as leaders is a hindrance to the implementation of KM and sharing strategies. According Sin *et al.* (2010), the difference in what one knows, which is derived from experiences and embodies beliefs and values does affect the extent to which knowledge can be managed and implemented. The differences amongst individuals or group in terms of experience and expertise, is also another hindrance to accelerating the implementation of strategy.

### **4.3.14 Given the “we are blue”, cultural transition EWSC is currently undergoing, Interview question 14 – Explain how this initiative benefited the company in terms of KM and sharing?**

The final interview questions sought to understand how EWSC benefited in terms of KM and sharing in light of the “we are blue”, cultural transition EWSC is currently undergoing. The interview narratives under the theme revealed a culture of openness, employee freedom, integration of knowledge and information systems, and improved

budget grounded in the building organisational changes as the main theme. What follows is a discussion of the themes.

#### **4.3.14.1 Main theme 14 - Building organisational changes**

Participants revealed in the context of cultural transition, that EWSC could benefit by way of building organisational changes going forward. In other words, the cultural transition initiative would benefit EWSC in terms of KM and sharing. The following verbatim statements support the finding:

*“This approach has actually benefited the organization because it has given employees a platform to think, to share insights, which is the same as sharing knowledge. I'd say this being run as an informal forum, in the sense that this approach allows one to be creative in thinking even though this has to end up aligned to the themes...” (Participant 8)*

*“The approach as also put the organisation into situation where we learn from each other, which information and knowledge is sharing. And it's an initiative that can actually help to create a positive culture of knowledge management and sharing, not just on the within the blue concept or approach. But generally, on work that is done across all departments, it would actually create a spirit and a culture of employees to easily share knowledge and information....” (Participant 14)*

The findings confirm that the cultural transition was a positive move towards the building of organisational changes as it improved organisational cohesion. According to Sin *et al.* (2010), organizational change is a function of the changing cultural environment. It is important to note that while EWSC could be focused on achieving its strategic goals, the environment in which it operates calls for the organisation to make some organisational changes be it in a small way while or overhaul. In all this, the organization's culture which is defined by the values, traditions, and behaviours that EWSC workforce share, play a critical role of ensuring organisational cohesion and performance (Sin *et al.* (2010). A value is a basic belief about what is right or wrong; or in other words, about what should be done or not done (Brown and Harvey 2012). Values are important because they guide and channel the organisation's behaviour, and managing people and shaping their behaviour therefore depends on shaping the values they use as behaviour guides (Brown, and Harvey 2012).

### **Subtheme 21 – A culture of openness**

Aligned to organisational changes, participants revealed that the cultural shift has enabled a culture of openness amongst employees. Employees which include top managers and employees have become more open on issues which were viewed as confidential or secret. According to Brown, and Harvey (2012), openness among the workforce brings positive changes to the organisation as employees share their feelings, and views which could have been sources of demotivation. Below are some verbatim statements aligned to the finding.

*“It has created that openness at EWSC through ensuring that everyone’s voice is recognised and heard. The employees now feel closer to the leadership and free to communicate and share their ideas...” (Participant 7)*

*“The idea of hosting mass meetings where all employees regardless of their rank, have the opportunity to express a grievance, compliment and ideas freely. What makes this a huge benefit is when these issues are followed up and reported on periodically...” (Participant 5)*

The finding on this question shows that EWSC employees have become more open following the gradual cultural transition, a positive supported by various researchers. For instance, Pauleen (2017) state that organization must not remain steadfast to a culture that undermines the organizational vision, mission and goals. Thus, if a culture is anti-productive, there is need for leaders to transform that kind of culture. In this study, EWSC thrives to be a KM sharing driven organisation towards effective service delivery translated to the supply of water in and around the communities of the capital city of Mbabane, Eswatini. In this study, a culture of KM and sharing draws from the organizational behaviour as knowledge markets thus compelling the EWSC to create market spaces where the trading of information and knowledge can take place.

### **Subtheme 22 - integration of knowledge and information systems**

As part of the building of organisational changes as a result of the cultural shift, participants revealed that a sense of integration of knowledge and information systems emerged. It is important to note that knowledge which is not integrated to the organisation systems ceases to be effective. It should be part and parcel of the overall organisation’s formations system.

*“We need to enhance our information management system, integrating knowledge with information systems. It should include improving our information management systems, so that they are able to give you reports that are value adding a request and they're actually able to give you what is required within the shortest period of time...”*

**(Participant 1)**

*“I think the culture still needs to be enhanced to an information sharing and management culture by ensuring that there is ongoing transparent communication from the highest level to the lowest level within the organization. And basically, it also speaks to cultivating or creating a culture where employees are not scared...”*

**(Participant 10)**

The finding shows the need for EWSC to integrate its KM and the organisation's information system. The integration can only be successful if there is a cultural shift to one that dispel employee suppression of freedom while promoting KM sharing practices capable of improving organisational performance. It is important to note that EWSC is currently under performing and viewed negatively by the communities for its failure to supply adequate water in and around the urban areas of Mbabane with fingers pointed at top leadership. Underpinning the organisation's performance is the manner in which knowledge is managed and shared as a critical resource that triggers organisational performance.

Integration of knowledge and the organisation's information system occurs provided the organizational culture aligns with the new perspective of KM readiness to collaborate and trust between employees. Integration of Knowledge, and information systems require human interaction, an exchange of ideas and openness (Yang *et al.* (2010). However, this can be difficult exercise in an environment where knowledge is viewed as the source of power or prestige (Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009). In situation such as this, the leadership of the organisation should promote values such as the establishment of collaborative goals and open communication (Nonaka and Von Krogh (2009). Often, it calls for the re-imagination the paradigms as relations amongst employees and the organisation become to one that promotes the development of dialogue, partnership and progressive cooperation(Yang *et al.* (2010).

### **Subtheme 23 – Improved budget**

As part of the cultural transition aligned to building organisational changes, participants revealed that EWSC needed improved budgets. Mindful of the knowledge creation process, there is definitely need for the participatory budget in the creation or construction of knowledge, and sharing. In participative budgets, lower-level managers should provide estimates on the budgets needed for the coordination and communication of ideas upward. The managers, due to their day-to-day involvement in departmental activities, they possess an intimate knowledge of the capabilities of their department and the requisite resource requirements (Magner, Welker, & Campbell, 2008). Budgetary participation in KM and sharing provides a framework within which managers arrive at sufficient budgets that would drive organisational goals (Poon, Pike, and Tjosvold, 2011). The budgetary participation process is also used to establish critical knowledge creation as with more involvement of employee participation in the process, employees would share their knowledge with each other in the planning phase (Heath, and Brown, 2017). Hence participatory budgetary process likely leads to increased level of KM and sharing. Budgetary participation also provides a framework within which budget preparers exchange information and ideas to make budgetary planning, coordination and control more efficient ultimately enhancing organisational performance (Poon et al., 2011). In the context of EWSC, the senior managers and the lower level managers working in the finance office should be part and parcel of the participatory budgetary process. These players in the budgetary process, have intimate knowledge on the kind of budget, the estimate amount EWSC requires and the timing of the budget. Thus, EWSC requires knowledge on how the sufficed budget is arrived at and how it should be implemented.

### **4.4 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the results aligned to the objectives of the study. In addition, the chapter discussed the results in an attempt to link the findings to the literature that was reviewed in chapter two. It was interesting to note that, the findings correlated with literature to a large extent. The next chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations derived from the findings from this chapter.

## **Chapter 5 - Conclusions and recommendations**

### **5. Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the findings with particular emphasis on KM and sharing efforts by EWSC that could lead to improved organisational performance. This final chapter provides the study conclusions, recommendations and areas for further research. Section 5.2 documents the main findings prior to concluding remarks in section 5.3. Section 5.4 documents the recommendations while implications of the study and scope for further researched documented in section 5.5. It is important to note that this chapter is derived from the study results arrived at in the previous chapters. In an effort to address the study focus, the study objectives as stated in chapter one anchored the findings and recommendations as the basis of argument. In doing so, the alignment of the conclusions to the objectives increased the validity and reliability of the study.

### **5.1 Summary of main findings**

Literature attest that generally, employees do not feel comfortable to share their knowledge as they think their knowledge is valuable and important to them only. Thus, hoarding knowledge and looking distrustfully upon knowledge from others are a natural individual tendency (Bock and Kim (2002). Contrary, the contemporary organisation views that knowledge should be shared for the good of the organisation (Kharabsheh *et al.* (2016). This is particularly true as knowledge is regarded as a critical organizational resource that provides a sustainable competitive advantage in a competitive and dynamic economy (Kharabsheh *et al.* (2016). Knowledge is a major source of economic growth and for the success of individual corporations (Bibi *et al.* (2021). Knowledge is seen as a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and in-sight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information which originates and applied in the minds of the knowers and is often embedded not only in organizational documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, process, practices and norms (Khan, Rahman, and Khan, 2015).

For a state-owned enterprise responsible for the management and supply of water in and around Eswatini peri-urban communities, KM and sharing is critical to ensure organisational performance. The rise of a knowledge society calls for organizations to redefine the way they compete, in order to meet the changing needs of their customers. Among the strategies and success pillars, KM and sharing could be leveraged upon as a means of ensuring a competitive advantage and a sustainable development for the society through leveraging the knowledge resource effectively and efficiently, (Zaim, 2006). An effective KM and sharing results into a clear direction of what employees strive to achieve. It helps crystalize how they will go about doing their duties and helps them identify who they are within the organization. This highlights the importance of such an initiative and its impact to the level of employee engagement as a result of a clear direction of what their organizational goals are and how they personally feed into those goals.

KM and sharing emphasizes on the organizational strategies which seek a synergistic blend of data, the information capacity of technologies, and the creative, and innovative ability of human beings to become a pivotal component and source of sustainable competitive advantage towards superior profitability of the contemporary organization (Jie *et al.*, 2011). As much as a public organization is not directly involved in a competition, in essence it is since there are other substitute products customers can switch to, hence public organizations should not assume that customers are stuck on an entity regardless of the type of service they receive. Public organizations are interminably faced with pressure of continuous improvement and innovation on their products, services and process for growth, goal achievement and responding to the expected changes of the society (Khorakian *et al.*, 2019). Meeting societal changes, understanding and being innovative on process can only be possible when there is knowledge of best practices, and employees feel it's their ethical duty to share knowledge. However, if employees think that they should not share or what they share is being ignored, they get discouraged and stop sharing (Pyon *et al.*, 2009). However if they feel that the information they share is acknowledged and leads to innovations by other colleagues, they get encouraged to share knowledge freely (Pyon *et al.*, 2009).

The dichotomy between knowledge as a preserve of employees as opposed to a knowledge sharing from an organisational perspective creates a compelling gap which this study seeks to close. In addition, numerous studies on KM and sharing focus on private sector enterprise at the expense of public enterprises, hence this study seeks to also close in a public sector enterprise.

In responding to the above research gaps and practical calls, this study strove to develop, draw conclusions and make recommendations. The study thus is informed by the following objective, designed to:

- To examine the nature of knowledge management and sharing at EWSC;
- To determine the challenges and opportunities for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC;
- To determine the systems used by EWSC for knowledge management and sharing;
- To determine the role of managers/leaders in knowledge management and sharing at EWSC;
- To identify the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC, and
- To recommend ways to improve knowledge management and sharing at EWSC.

Interviews were conducted with 17 purposively selected EWSC with data analysed using thematic analysis approached performed manually to come up with themes and subthemes forming the basis of the discussion of findings in chapter 4. The demographic profile of the participants showed a bias towards majority females (57%), while the age range was dominated by 40 – 49 range (47.1%) followed by the 30 – 39 range (23.48%) with those above 50 occupying reflecting 17.65%. The study results then presents primary findings based on study objectives.

## **5.2 Study findings**

### **5.2.1 To examine the nature of knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

The study revealed that EWSC employees appreciate KM sharing as they have a clear understanding of what knowledge entails. The finding sends a clear message that EWSC employees are aware of the importance of KM sharing. The study also found that the sharing of information generated by departments at EWSC, largely depends on the extent of the alignment of the organisation's KM reservoir with departments.

It also emerged that KM sharing is influenced by the PM system employed by the organisation. However, the problem is that PM and KM share have different goals and are thus not synchronised, defeating the purpose for which EWSC thrives to achieve.

### **5.2.2 To determine the systems used by EWSC for sharing knowledge**

The study revealed that the sharing of information by departments, is done through monthly reports using inter and intranet technologies as well as through reports and mass meetings. Both the reports and mass meetings ought to be aligned to the department's KM and sharing goals. Related to this, the study revealed that EWSC has a central information storage office linked to all the departments making it a lot easier to share knowledge and information from a single central point.

### **5.2.3 To determine the role of managers/leaders in knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

The study revealed that EWSC managers have a multidimensional or multifaceted role of promoting a conducive environment for KM and sharing. The finding implies that KM and sharing reside in the hands of managers as leaders of EWSC to promote KM sharing.

### **5.2.4 To identify the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

Aligned to this objective, the study revealed that EWSC's strategic drivers include the culture mix and operational matrix strategies as drivers for KM and information sharing. Thus, the cultural mix, and operational matrix of KM provokes the thought of

how EWSC could implement strategies to ensure that new knowledge gets created and embedded in their daily operations.

### **5.2.5 To determine the challenges and benefits for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

The study revealed mixed views on the challenges and benefits EWSC could face from the selected strategies provided the strategies have been carefully crafted, and if not, EWSC encounter challenges in implementing such strategies. While the benefits come in the form of improved organisational performance. The study revealed that the challenges could be in the form of implementation obstacles as some individuals work in silos when faced with change, the emergence of COVID -19, the heterogeneity of the workplace and departments, and the speed at which the information follows in and out of the respective departments all zoomed into the implementation challenges.

### **5.2.6 Enhancing knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

The study revealed that EWSC could build organisational changes which may perhaps benefit the organisation as building blocks to organisational changes going forward. The organisational changes could include creating a culture of openness, promoting employee freedom, integrating of knowledge and information systems, as well as improving budget allocation in pursuance of KM and sharing practices.

## **5.3 Study conclusions**

Drawing from the above findings, the study concludes that:

### **5.3.1 To examine the nature of knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

- EWSC, enjoys a good standing as its managers as strategic leaders are aware of what KM, and sharing entails, a positive development for a knowledge driven public organization;
- Knowledge is generated by various EWSC departments, making such departments critical players in the KM and sharing process;
- KM, and sharing is to an extent influenced by the PM system employed by the organization and yet PM and KM have goals that are not synchronised,

defeating the purpose for which EWSC thrives to achieve. Thus, PM and KM are counterproductive;

### **5.3.2 To determine the systems used by EWSC for sharing knowledge**

- EWSC utilizes monthly reports and mass meetings enhanced by technology as systems for sharing knowledge;
- EWSC does have a central information storage office linked to all departments however, linking the departments to KM and sharing is not synchronized;

### **5.3.3 To determine the role of managers/leaders in knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

- Managers as strategic leaders are critical role players in the management and sharing of knowledge, however not all of them have the requisite skills to lead the process.

### **5.3.4 To identify the strategic drivers for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

- Organizational culture and the operational matrix are critical strategic drivers of KM and information sharing, however EWSC has not well-placed KM and sharing at a strategic level for employees to feel accountable to embrace and advance this notion.

### **5.3.5 To determine the challenges and benefits for knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

- The success of KM and sharing practices depends on the implementation challenges. In this regard, EWSC encountered challenges in implementing the strategies;
- EWSC's KM and sharing strategies have been hindered by the COVID -19 pandemic, the heterogeneity of the workplace and departments, as well as the speed at which the information follows hindered the implementation of EWSC strategies;

### **5.3.6 Enhancing knowledge management and sharing at EWSC**

- EWSC could benefit by building organizational changes such as creating a culture of openness, promoting employee freedom, integrating KM and information and improving budget allocation as organizational building blocks.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

While EWSC boasts of managers who appreciate what KM and sharing is all about, it faces a myriad of challenges that includes a culture that is not supportive of the systems, uncondusive culture and operational matrix, an unsynchronised PM and KM and so are the various departments and the KM system.

The study recommends the development of a fresh organisational KM and sharing policy statement in the form of a strategy that would re-define or re-chart a new KM and sharing trajectory for EWSC. The main thrust of the strategy should start by synchronizing the PM and KM and sharing drawing from the finding that the implementation of PM by EWSC is counter to yet another legitimate process of KM, and sharing.

The study also recommends that the strategy shift should also re-view the link the central information storage point to the KM and sharing system, considering that despite having central information platform, the platform is not linked to the advantage of the various departments. In other words, the information is not easily accessible to departments due to stiff organisational policy, rules and regulations which limit the sharing of information. An example is, it is not easy for the operations department to access information about budgets for departments that are outside their periphery, as some information is considered confidential. So, all such issues require review, and re-thinking in order to have a well synchronised system at the click of a button, without physically asking for the information.

Whilst EWSC managers showed great appreciation of the impact of KM and sharing as an enhancing factor on their decision-making process, findings do point out that not all departments document learnings thus there is a risk that some decisions lack the foundational data to be leveraged on when taking these. Therefore, the study recommends for EWSC management to streamline their decision-making process to be highly dependent and backed by data as this would improve the value of KM and sharing within the organization thus improve the quality and performance of the organization at large.

The findings pointed out to a gap in IT systems and information integration, as such, there are various systems within EWSC which are not coherent and synchronised well to allow for a free flow of information. Thus, the study recommends that EWSC investigates systems integration from a view of enhanced knowledge accessibility through centralizing information electronically and ensuring that the information is stored in a format that is useful to whosoever may need it for decision making.

The study recommends for vigorous investment on harnessing strategic leaders and mitigating workplace heterogeneity as finding showed a heavy reliance of information cascading on the hierarchical structure of EWSC, thus making it critical that there be goal congruency at top level, oneness and that messages being cascaded to subordinates be of the same tone so not to share different information and hence division within the organization's departments.

The study also recommends that knowledge management and sharing initiatives be more evident within the organizations' daily operations, for employees to have a buy in and assurance that indeed EWSC embraces the notion of KM and sharing. The findings revealed that employees have dissonance with the supporting activities they would expect to be in place to advance the culture of KM and sharing. Budgeting for KM activities, having KPI's on KM and sharing and allowing time for informal and formal KM and sharing activities would expand the culture of KM and sharing.

The findings have lambasted an uncondusive organisational culture towards KM marred by lack of openness, rigidity and lack of freedom of expression to the extent of hindering the creation of knowledge management and sharing process. Thus, the

study recommends for a paradigm cultural shift that begins with ensuring that future appointments include strategic leaders mandated with the responsibility to create and maintain a KM and sharing driven or oriented culture as this is lacking. Without the right culture, no organisation would boast of achieving its obligations.

The study's findings pointed to a gap in how lack of documenting learned experiences, especially in the operations department negatively impedes improved operations. It transpired that vast knowledge gathered through experience is not documented for future use, yet this would help improve operations turnaround times in future. Therefore, the study recommends that EWSC sets up systems, processes and procedures that inculcates the documentation of learnings and experiences and these be stored and made accessible to others for purposes of improving turnaround times.

While the beauty is that managers as strategy leaders appreciate the criticality of KM and sharing, reckoning how fundamental the appreciation of KM and sharing is, the study recommends that an organisation such as EWSC must regularly undergo some staff training to remind and catch-up with critical organisational renewal practices that may disappear unnoticed and catch the organisation unaware. The bottom line is that the study recommends that EWSC should put in place some monitoring mechanism to check on the level of its preparedness.

### **5.5 Limitations of the Study and Areas for Further Studies**

First, the study only focused on EWSC, meaning that this study findings may have limited applicability with respect to transferability to other SoEs in Eswatini. In addition, because the study was qualitative in nature, it may not be generalizable to other SoEs, hence it is crucial that a quantitative study on other SoEs be conducted. Thus, the study has these constraints which might need to be minimised through other similar empirical studies tapping into other perspective on KM and sharing.

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## APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



18 March 2021

Mr Vusane Qiniso Simelane (218077854)  
Grad School of Bus & Leadership  
Westville Campus

Dear Mr Simelane,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00002378/2021

Project title: An analysis of strategic knowledge management and sharing: a case of eswatini water services corporation.

Degree: Masters

### Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 02 February 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 18 March 2022.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

#### Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 Email: [hssrec@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssrec@ukzn.ac.za) Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

## APPENDIX B: INITIAL INTERVIEW GUIDE



### INTERVIEW GUIDE

(Proposed Interview Time: 60 minutes)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Capacity: \_\_\_\_\_

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### EXPLORING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND SHARING: A CASE OF ESWATINI WATER SERVICES

##### Understanding of knowledge management and sharing

What is your understanding of knowledge management and sharing? Kindly elaborate?

Does the company embrace the notion of KM?

-Please elaborate on the departmental strategies/initiatives adopted by the company

##### Departmental alignment to knowledge management and sharing

How is key information generated by departments shared/ accessed by the other departments within the company? - Please elaborate.

##### Knowledge based decision making

What is the significance of KM and sharing in your role as a manager? How you think KM/sharing enhances decision making among managers

### **Instilling the culture of knowledge management at EWSC**

Does the company's PM systems promote KM/ sharing in the company? Is the system fully utilised to serve the purposes of KM and sharing? If no, what could be the hindrance to that?

### **Application or usage of gathered knowledge**

What steps does the company take to implement survey findings on services offered by the company? -(Please elaborate).

### **Information sharing**

How are management decisions cascaded to departments in the company?

Does the company have information storage systems? - If yes, please elaborate on the types of systems and how information is safeguarded and used by company stakeholders (employees, customers, shareholders)

### **Influencing of leaders on knowledge management at EWSC**

In your capacity as a strategic leader, what role do you play in promoting a conducive environment for KM and sharing?

-Please elaborate on environmental improvements that can promote KM and sharing in the organization.

### **Strategic Drivers of knowledge management and information sharing**

What strategies or frameworks does the company use in inculcating a culture of knowledge management and sharing – please elaborate on each.

### **Challenges and benefits of Knowledge management and information sharing.**

How do you think the company would benefit from a KM and sharing strategy? -  
Elaborate

What are the obstacles or challenges encountered by the company/departments in implementing KM and sharing strategies?

## **Building on organisational changes to accelerate knowledge management and information sharing**

Given the “we are blue”, cultural transition EWSC is currently undergoing, transparency being one of the areas of improvement and hinging on information –

- How has this Initiative benefited the company in terms of KM and sharing?
- What change initiatives should be implemented to promote knowledge sharing in the company?

## **Knowledge management and information sharing improvements at EWSC**

- What improvements would you recommend for enhancing KM and sharing in the company?
- What impact do you think they would have on the processes

## **APPENDIX C: LETTER OF CONSENT**

### **TITLE OF STUDY**

**An analysis of strategic Knowledge Management and Sharing: A case of Eswatini Water Services Corporation**

### **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

Simelane Vusane

Graduate School of Business Leadership, UKZN, Westville campus

P.O Box 6762 Manzini

██████████

Vusanismln6@gmail.com

### **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

To investigate the nature of knowledge management and sharing in the company and provide pertinent recommendations on identified bottlenecks.

### **STUDY PROCEDURES**

The process to be used in collecting data shall be an in-depth interview which is expected to last for about 40 minutes. Please be aware that an audio taping procedure shall be used through a cellphone which shall record the conversation for purposes of data analysis.

### **BENEFITS**

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained from this study may go a long in being of invaluable worth for the organization under study in the sense it might help encourage the adoption of some of the recommendations mostly likely to be made at the end of the study.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

For the purposes of this research study, your comments will not be anonymous. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality including the following:

- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.

Participant data will be kept confidential except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report specific incidents. These incidents include, but may not be limited to, incidents of abuse and suicide risk.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects as the result of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the Primary Investigator, please contact the UKZN Graduate School of leadership, Westville campus.

## **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

---

## **CONSENT**

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D: GATE KEEPER'S LETTER**

**ESWATINI WATER SERVICES CORPORATION**

Telephone: (+268) 2416-9000  
Facsimile: (+268) 2416-3616/20  
Telegraphic Address: S.W.S.C.  
Email: headoffice@swsc.co.sz  
Website: www.swsc.co.sz



P.O. Box 20  
Mbabane  
Eswatini

PHYSICAL ADDRESS  
Emtfonjeni Building  
CRN MR 103  
Cultural Village Drive  
Ezulwini

YOUR REF: .....

OUR REF: **TR02/00**

**27 September 2019**

**The Ethics Committee**

**University of KwaZulu Natal**

**Graduate School of Business Leadership**

**Durban**

**4000**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH / GATE KEEPER'S LETTER – VUSANE SIMELANE**

This letter serves to confirm that Vusane Simelane, student number 218077854 has been granted the permission to use information from Eswatini Water Services Corporation when conducting his research in fulfilment of the requirement by your institution.

We kindly request that the information on the Corporation be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Yours Faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Managing Director.

**J. MASHWAMA**  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR**

# APPENDIX E: TURNITIN REPORT

## Turnitin Originality Report

Processed on: 08-Feb-2022 8:19 PM CAT  
 ID: 1757855375  
 Word Count: 30327  
 Submitted: 1

Similarity Index	Similarity by Source
5%	Internet Sources: 4% Publications: 2% Student Papers: 3%

An analysis of strategic knowledge management and sharing: A case of EWSC By Vusane Simelane

2% match (student papers from 15-Feb-2021) <a href="#">Submitted to Mancosa on 2021-02-15</a>
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< 1% match (publications) <a href="#">Engineering Asset Management, 2006.</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 18-Oct-2021) <a href="https://www.jemi.edu.pl/vol-13-issue-3-2017/the-role-of-organizational-culture-in-knowledge-management-in-small-companies#top">https://www.jemi.edu.pl/vol-13-issue-3-2017/the-role-of-organizational-culture-in-knowledge-management-in-small-companies#top</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 28-Feb-2007) <a href="http://www.bsoasia.com/Volume%20%20Number%201%20March%202004.pdf">http://www.bsoasia.com/Volume%20%20Number%201%20March%202004.pdf</a>
< 1% match ( )