

# New Practices to Prevent Knowledge Management Projects or Programs Failure in An Organization: A Systematic Literature Review

Alwi Mohd Yunus, Norizan Zakaria, Mohd Ridwan Kamarulzaman,  
Irwan Kamarudin Abd Kadir & E.R.K. Rafedzi\*

<sup>1,2</sup>*Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Puncak Perdana Campus, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia*

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## ABSTRACT

Knowledge management is a set of dynamic and continuing activities as well as practices grounded in individual and social structures. It is all about how companies organize, store, and share what they know. The primary objective of knowledge management is to ensure that accessible knowledge is employed to the benefit of the organization. This study is based on a systematic literature review as an evaluation as well as interpretation of 13 articles on knowledge management to prevent projects or program failure from EBSCO and ScienceDirect. This review identified five major latest practices related to knowledge management namely organizational learning, technology, acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, knowledge sharing, and knowledge organization. Future studies should be conducted on knowledge management in different types of organizations, which can then prompt more detailed research on organizational and technology-driven companies.

<sup>1\*</sup> Corresponding author. *E-mail address:* [ezza464@uitm.edu.my](mailto:ezza464@uitm.edu.my)

## INTRODUCTION

Knowledge management is a set of dynamic and continuing activities as well as practices grounded in individual and social structures. It is all about how companies organize, store, and share what they know. It helps them use their knowledge better, make smarter decisions, and come up with new ideas. It involves things like keeping a record of what people know, having tools for sharing information, and encouraging everyone to learn from each other. When done right, knowledge management helps businesses work more efficiently, learn faster, and stay ahead of the competition.

Academic interest in knowledge management is growing, particularly from 2000 to 2021, with various themes, productive authors, and widely cited documents emerging (Farooq, 2022). The study emphasized the evolution of the relationship between knowledge management and performance over time, illustrating how their interaction can assist companies in achieving a sustainable competitive advantage. For this reason, knowledge has a significant impact on productivity, the establishment of sustainable competitive

advantage, and the safeguarding of intangible assets (Gaviria-Marin et al., 2018; Lopes et al., 2017). Knowledge management, despite its growing popularity, remains a difficult concept due to the lack of a broadly acknowledged definition. Knowledge management is the distinctive feature of knowledge that enables an organization to gain a competitive advantage (Nonaka, 1999, as cited in Saadon, 2023). Another recent study defined knowledge management as the process of creating, disseminating, and utilizing knowledge within an organization to generate value from intellectual property and knowledge-based assets (Darow et al., 2020). This involves effectively and efficiently using knowledge over the long term to benefit the organization.

Priyadarshi (2022) described knowledge management as an explicit and systematic management of vital knowledge and its associated processes of creating, gathering, organizing, diffusion, use, and exploitation. For instance, knowledge management defines how knowledge is obtained, developed, formalized, and applied inside organizations (Shujahat et al., 2017). Thus, knowledge management is a process, even if the practices change from study to study. Conceptualizations of knowledge management practices concentrate on knowledge development and transmission with attention to tacit as well as explicit knowledge (Dalmarco et al., 2017). Practices have been conceptualized recently in numerous ways. Some studies identify the main components others include the procurement, assimilation, transformation, and utilization of knowledge management approaches as complete dimensions (Xie et al., 2018).

Raudeliuniene et al. (2018) found that the knowledge management process model consists of a choice of knowledge strategy, followed by knowledge acquisition, sharing, development, preservation, and application. To determine the importance of knowledge creation, transfer, and application, Al-Emran et al., (2018) recognized knowledge creation, transfer, as well as application as major knowledge management processes.

Knowledge management processes include knowledge creation, knowledge capture and storage, knowledge sharing, and knowledge application (Ahhabi et al., 2019). These processes were described as exploitative or explorative actions through other past studies. Knowledge exploration refers to activities that seek to create new knowledge, such as knowledge creation. Internal corporate initiatives for knowledge creation sometimes take the form of R&D activities that can lead to new knowledge. This may include the addition of new content to the organization's tacit but also explicit knowledge pools or the replacement of existing content (Donate & Pablo, 2015). It has been discovered that having the ability to generate knowledge is critical for innovative success in business (Costa & Monteiro, 2016). The exploitation of knowledge, on the other hand, refers to procedures like the transfer, storage, and application of knowledge and how these acts leverage existing knowledge stocks (Menaouer et al., 2015; Stankovic & Micic, 2018).

Knowledge transfer refers to procedures that facilitate the movement of information from one location, person, or ownership to another (Hamdoun et al., 2018). It describes the impact of one unit's experience on another inside an organization. As a study to develop knowledge storage and processes and systems management, Alegre et al. (2013) defined knowledge storage. These are frequently information technology-based systems that facilitate and improve the storing and retrieval of operational knowledge. Formalized scientific knowledge, optimization algorithms, written reports, documented protocols, and methods for tacit knowledge collected through persons and networks of people are examples of these forms of knowledge (Donate & Pablo, 2015). According to Hamdoun et al. (2018) and Mardani et al. (2018), knowing how to use knowledge is a critical necessity for the development of new items, and it has also been shown to help at the start of invention as well as efficiency.

The main aim of the application of knowledge is to integrate knowledge from external but also internal sources to enhance organizational objectives. Cross-industry innovation projects can be improved by

integrating external knowledge through a model that involves the acquisition, assimilation, transformation, conveyance, convergence, and bi-directional learning (Lyng & Brun 2020). This approach facilitates the optimization of knowledge applications and fosters innovation and growth within organizations. This is a crucial part of knowledge management, as the primary objective of knowledge management is to ensure that accessible knowledge is employed to the benefit of the organization.

### **Knowledge Management Projects or Programs Failure**

Knowledge Management projects or programs represent a critical component in the strategic alignment and operational efficiency of modern organizations. Knowledge management positively impacts project success, with explicit knowledge enhancing efficiency and impacting teams, while tacit knowledge has a greater impact on business (Souza et al. (2021). Despite their importance, a significant number of these initiatives either fail to meet their objectives or completely falter. Nor et al. (2020) indicate that Malaysian organizations commonly encounter two primary obstacles in implementing Knowledge Management, first is challenges related to processes and infrastructure, and second is cultural issues. Organizational culture consistently appears as the primary barrier to KM adoption across numerous organizations. Drawing from these insights, it is crucial for managers to not only address these challenges but also to consider the broader impact of KM initiatives on soft human aspects, including employee satisfaction and well-being.

Moreover, a study by Favoretto and Carvalho (2021). Through experts' acquisition and project documentation, knowledge management positively impacts project performance, particularly in terms of GP efficiency and product/service success. The study highlights that organizations acknowledge the significance of knowledge management; however, they encounter numerous obstacles when attempting to put it into practice. On the other hand, Akhavan and Pezeshkan (2014) conducted a qualitative meta-analysis of 10 different cases from prior literature and discovered 27 Critical Failure Factors (CFF). Most of the CFFs occur in the sharing stage of KM implementation. In many cases, there was more emphasis on technological issues than human and behavioral issues. The authors map these failure reasons throughout the stages of implementing KM and suggest a framework that highlights how these failure reasons impact each stage of the KM process namely infrastructure and preparation, identification, collecting, organizing, storage, sharing, and evaluation. The framework proposed in the paper indicates that many potential reasons for failure could appear in the early planning stage. Forming a KM team with members lacking the necessary understanding of KM systems or adequate knowledge about the organization can cause KM projects to fail right from the start.

### **METHODOLOGY**

A systematic literature review is an evaluation as well as interpretation of all current research that is relevant to a certain research question, an area of knowledge, or a phenomenon of interest (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). In general, the SLR is divided into three phases which are planning, conducting the review, and formatting the report, as illustrated in Figure 1. The review protocol also includes the formulation of search strategy research questions, selection of studies, the synthesis of data, and reporting.

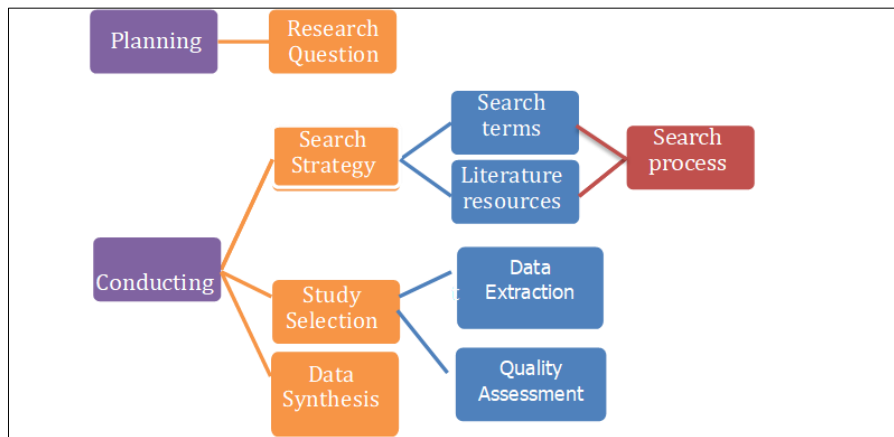


Figure 1: Review Protocol Stages

## Research Question

The development of research question for this study was created using PICO. The PICO tool helps authors figure out the right kind of research question to solicit peer review on. The following Table 1 is possible scope statements for structuring research questions.

Table 1: Scope for Structuring Research Questions

Criteria	Scope
P: Population	Any organizations
I: Interest	Knowledge management
C: Comparison	Latest practices used
O: Outcomes	Prevent knowledge management projects or program failure

Therefore, the following are the research questions developed for this study:

RQ1: What are the latest practices related to knowledge management?

RQ2: What are the most frequent practices in knowledge management used to prevent knowledge management projects or program failure in any organization?

## Search Strategy

The strategy for searching for primary research, including the keywords and resources to be searched in UiTM's E-resources digital library. Following is the link to UiTM's free online database for students to be used by the author to ease the process of this systematic literature review:

➤ <https://login.ezaccess.library.uitm.edu.my/menu>

Conducting the review falls under the second stage, which includes developing a search strategy, selecting studies, and synthesizing the data. Each search term, literature resource, and search process were all used in this study's search strategy.

### a) Search of Terms

The keywords were produced based on Okoli's (2015) research question, and the identification procedure relied on an online thesaurus, keywords used in previous studies, keywords provided by Scopus, and

keywords suggested by experts. The authors could enrich the existing keywords and develop a full search string that could be used on the two most important databases, ScienceDirect and EBSCO (Table 2).

Table 2: Scope of Structuring Research Questions

Database	Search String
ScienceDirect	Title – Knowledge Management Practice
EBSCO	TI Title – Knowledge management OR KM AND practices

The search term is determined by the derivation of the research question from the search question. It then determines which synonym is related to the search string. The following procedures were taken by the authors to create the search terms:

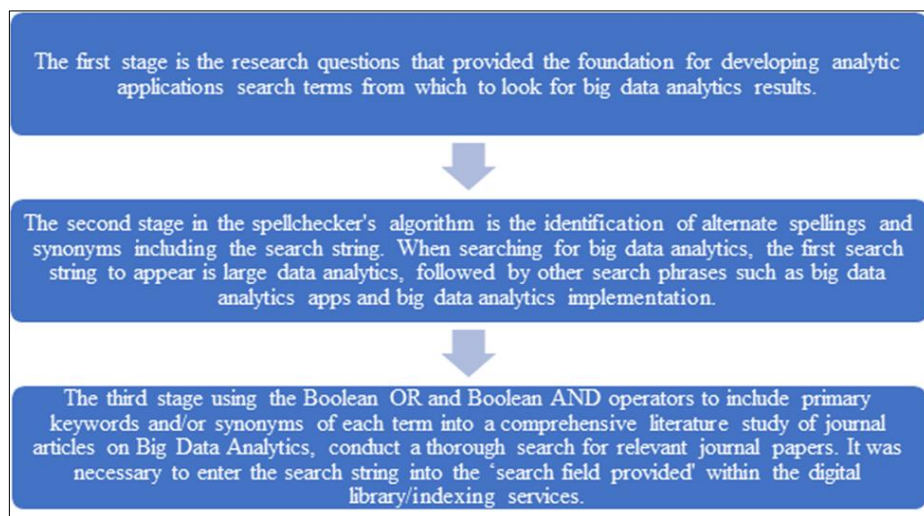


Figure 2: Search of Term Stages

#### b) Resources of Literature

It was undertaken from the 28th of June 2021 to the 30th of June 2021, to search the articles. Using the title and abstract information from two electronic database resources, including Science Direct and EBSCO, the review was able to extract data from the articles. A search of the following bibliographic databases was conducted to gain an understanding of the varied literature on the topic of knowledge management:

- I. <https://www-sciencedirect-com.ezaccess.library.uitm.edu.my/>
- II. <http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezaccess.library.uitm.edu.my/>

The combination of extensive coverage, high-quality peer-reviewed content, specialized search filters, relevance to the topic, accessibility, historical insights, and credible publisher partnerships makes EBSCO and ScienceDirect ideal choices for conducting a robust and convincing Systematic Literature Review for this study. Both databases offer the depth and breadth of resources necessary to ensure the quality of the articles retrieved and reviewed for this study. A comprehensive search of the literature was completed, and suitable articles were located inside the reference management tools for retrieval.

### c) Criteria of Inclusion and Exclusion

As proposed by Kitchenham and Charters (2007), the research question is used as the selection criterion. As it is almost difficult for the authors to examine all the previously published papers, Okoli (2015) recommended that the researchers establish a period during which they would be able to review the articles. Higgins and Green (2008), on the other hand, said that a limitation on timeline publishing should only be implemented if relevant studies would only have been published within a particular period. The inclusion criteria were that all articles must be relevant to knowledge management studies and published between January 2012 and June 2021 and that only articles written in the English language were allowed for evaluation. The review process was conducted by a panel of experts. For this study, the author excluded articles that were not relevant to the research questions, published out of the period, and written in a language other than English.

### Study Selection

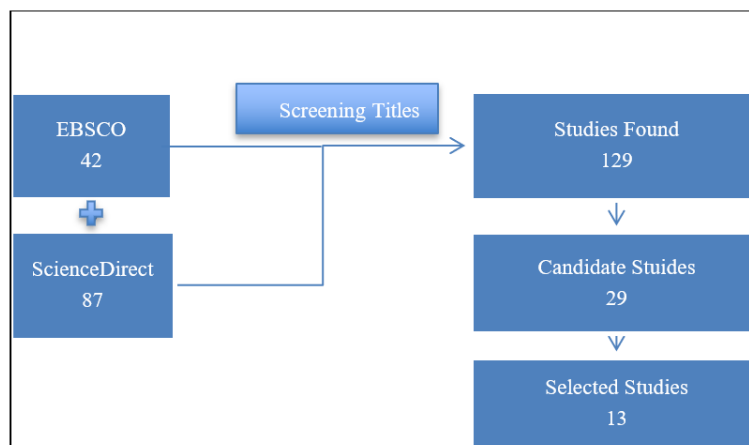


Figure 3: Study Selection Stages

As shown in the following figure, the study selection procedure was split into three phases. First, a search process was performed, followed by selection procedures based on the title, which resulted in a total of 129 suitable articles being evaluated for further consideration. Second, the screening process was done where all retrieved articles were assessed, and that process was finalized when the abstracts and summaries of the papers were reviewed. Duplicate and irrelevant articles were eliminated, leaving just 29 papers that were considered relevant. The third step is the eligibility process consists of implementing the quality assessment methods to the results of the previous stage. After applying the exclusion criteria and reviewing the comprehensive abstracts and full text, a total of 13 articles were selected for inclusion in the data synthesis of the proof phase of the study.

### a) Data Extraction

Using precise exclusion and inclusion criteria, the author tried to minimize the possibility of bias resulting from data gathering. Following Figure 2, the process of selecting studies was split into three phases. First and foremost, a digital search was performed, followed by screening, or selecting processes based on the title, which resulted in a total of 129 suitable articles being evaluated for further consideration. The abstracts and summary contents of the articles that had been chosen were reviewed. Only 29 relevant articles remained after duplicates and irrelevant papers were eliminated. By using the quality assessment methods, the filtering process was carried forward to the third step. After applying the exclusion criteria

including screening the comprehensive abstracts and full text, a total of 13 articles were selected for inclusion in the data synthesis of the proof phase of the study.

#### b) Quality Assessment

Regarding the checklists and processes for assessing the quality of individual research, the author develops quality checklists to evaluate individual studies. To ensure the quality of the whole article was of high quality, the remaining articles were submitted to one specialist for review and evaluation. To separate high, moderate, and low-quality content (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006, as cited in Ishak, 2022) proposed ranking the remaining articles into the three quality categories which are high, moderate, and poor. Only papers with a high or moderate overall quality should be examined, and the author requested that only articles with a high quality be reviewed and evaluated, which the expert agreed to do. As a result of this procedure, 13 articles were determined to be of high quality, and therefore all the other articles were considered suitable for review.

Table 3: Quality Assessment

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	2012 - 2021	< 2012
Document Type	Article journal (empirical data)	Article review, chapters in book, book series, book, conference proceeding
Language	English	Non-English
Regions	Global	None

#### Data Synthesis

Extracting information and applying it to the research questions is the process of data synthesis. The 13 articles that were chosen for further consideration were evaluated in terms of the formulation of research questions during the planning stage. According to the data extraction process, the major trends, and components of every factor of knowledge management practice usage were identified, and these were then categorized. All components were collected and categorized according to their most regular features to get a better understanding of the entire picture of the use of knowledge management practices. Resulting of the application of the exclusion criteria and screening of the comprehensive abstracts and full text, 13 articles were selected for the data synthesis of evidence and sorted by article ID as per the following Table 4.

Table 4: List of Selected Studies

No.	Id	Title of Article	Year	Author
1	E1	From Science to Policy and Practice: A Critical Assessment of Knowledge Management before, during, and after Environmental Public Health Disasters.	2019	Mélissa Gagnéux, Marc Lafontaine and Angela Eykelbosh
2	E2	Knowledge management practices in healthcare settings: a systematic review.	2015	Ioanna Karamitri, Michael A. Talias and Thalia Bellali

3	E3	Recommended practices for computerized clinical decision support and knowledge management in community settings: a qualitative study.	2012	Joan S Ash1, Dean F Sittig, Kenneth P Guappone, Richard H Dykstra, Joshua Richardson, Adam Wright, James Carpenter, Carmit McMullen, Michael Shapiro, Arwen Bunce
4	S1	The mediating effect of strategic human resource practices on knowledge management and firm performance	2015	Antonio Aragón Sánchez, Gregorio Sánchez Marín, Arleen Mueses Morales
5	S2	Knowledge Management Practices in Indian Manufacturing MSMEs: Challenges and Opportunities	2014	Anup Chawana, Hari Vasudevan
6	S3	Global Innovation and Knowledge Management Practice in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Turkey and the Balkans.	2014	Sudi Apak, Erhan Atay
7	S4	Application reality of knowledge management processes practice in learning resources centers: a case study of learning resources centers in Makkah al-Mukarramah schools in Saudi Arabia	2014	Ahmed Anashri Alnashri
8	S5	Knowledge management practices in universities: The role of communities of practice	2020	De-Graft Johnson Dei, Thomas Bingle van der Walt
9	S6	Dealing with Knowledge Management-Practices in Different Product-Service Systems.	2019	Yan Xin, Ville Ojanen, Jane Huiskonon
10	S7	The use of knowledge management practices by Brazilian startup companies	2017	Gustavo Dalmarco, Alisson Eduardo Maehler, Marcelo Trevisan, Janaina Montesi Salgueiro
11	S8	The Role of Virtual Communities of Practice in Knowledge Management Using Web 2.0	2015	Hanan Ali Kabbas Al-ghamdia, Azzah Ali Kabbas Al-ghamdi
12	S9	An empirical study of the relationship between knowledge management practices and strategy formulation capabilities	2016	Bozkurt Kağan Aktürk, Mustafa Kurt
13	S10	Best practices to increase progress in knowledge management	2012	Monica Butnariua, Ioan Milosan



The 13 articles in this compilation were gathered for about one decade. The distribution of years and the number of journals chosen are shown in the following Table 5. The year 2014 is the year that most of the chosen articles were published, with three articles published in 2014.

Table 5: Year of Publication

Year	Article	Year	Article
2012	2	2017	1
2013	0	2018	0
2014	3	2019	2
2015	2	2020	1
2016	1	2021	0

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The following section included a report on the outcomes of the discussion evaluation of the systematic literature review results based on the 13 articles that were collected. The results will be discussed based on the research questions.

*RQ1: What are the latest practices related to knowledge management?*

The author has identified five major points regarding the usability of knowledge management practices.

Table 6: List of Practices

No	Id	Knowledge Management Practices				
		Organizational Learning	Technology	knowledge acquisition, knowledge dissemination, and responsiveness to knowledge	Knowledge Sharing. (Explicit and Tacit)	Knowledge Organizations
1	E1	✓	✓			✓
2	E2	✓	✓			
3	E3	✓	✓			
4	S1				✓	✓
5	S2				✓	
6	S3		✓		✓	
7	S4		✓	✓	✓	
8	S5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	S6				✓	
10	S7		✓			✓
11	S8		✓	✓	✓	✓
12	S9			✓		✓
13	S10		✓		✓	

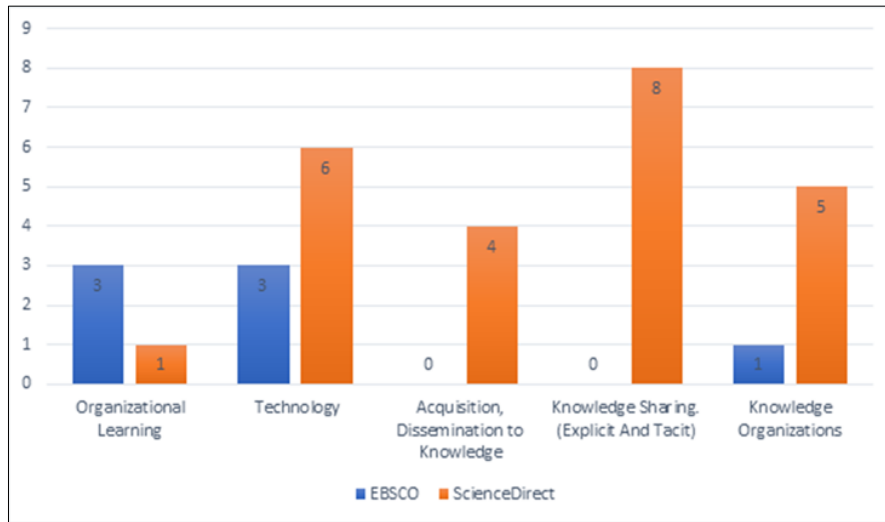


Figure 4: Information Sources of Practices

According to the graph above, it shows 3 articles from EBSCO and 1 article from ScienceDirect for organizational learning. Organizational learning can somehow be characterized as a learning process that occurs at the group and organizational levels through social interactions. Organizational learning is a diverse field involving various disciplines, focusing on developing, retaining, and transferring knowledge within an organization (Chuah & Law, 2019). This also leads to an improved level of organizational knowledge, which can generate new organizational changes. Organizational learning creates the necessary circumstances for strategic renewal at the organizational level, which finds a balance between continuity and change. A study by Saifi (2019) stated that the five learning organization disciplines include personal mastery, mental models, team learning, shared vision, and systems thinking influence knowledge management processes, providing practical guidance for practitioners. It is the result of organizational learning when people can identify, interpret, and organize knowledge exploitation as well as exploration in a way that decreases the tension between them. If the process involves the entire organization, not just a few groups or individuals, and the organization runs as an open system, organizational renewal can become strategic.

In addition, organizational learning plays a significant role in various knowledge management processes within Middle Eastern audit and consulting firms, yet it does not substantially influence the creation of new knowledge (Kordab et al., 2020). This implies that while organizational learning supports the acquisition, storage, sharing, and application of existing knowledge, it does not necessarily lead to the generation of new, novel insights or innovations to the same extent. This distinction is crucial as it suggests that while firms may be effective at leveraging existing knowledge, there may be barriers to creating groundbreaking new ideas or methodologies.

In another context, the relationship between knowledge management practices and organizational learning in universities signifies a foundational element for improving organizational efficiency in core academic activities such as teaching, learning, research, and supervision (Al-Sulami et al., 2023). This correlation suggests that when universities effectively manage knowledge, they simultaneously enhance their learning capabilities, which in turn, positively impacts their fundamental operations.

For the technology, based on the graph, 3 articles from EBSCO were found and 6 articles from ScienceDirect. Information technology effectively manages knowledge models, allowing organizations to maintain a competitive edge and collaborate in a globalized world (Petriashvili & Gogilidze, 2021). It allows new knowledge to be discovered, improving organizational processes, and maintaining a

competitive edge. Ajibade et al. (2019) highlighted that effective knowledge sharing through IT integration and communication strategies is crucial for small and medium enterprises to compete in a highly competitive knowledge economy while Anduvare and Holmner (2020) recommend multimedia, social media, and media sharing, and brainstorming technologies to enhance collaborative and distributed learning in academic institutions. In the context of library services, integrating knowledge management with information technologies can significantly improve their services and address potential challenges in key areas of library services (Ebisi & Arua, 2019).

For the practice of knowledge acquisition, knowledge dissemination, and responsiveness to knowledge, it shows 0 articles from EBSCO while 4 articles from ScienceDirect. All four KM processes, knowledge creation, knowledge capture and storage, knowledge sharing, and knowledge application and use have a positive and significant impact on operational, quality, and innovation performance in the public sector (Ahhabi et al., 2019). Zarine & Saqib (2020) argue that knowledge application & dissemination are the most impactful knowledge management components for improving operational performance in Oman organizations. On the contrary, a study by Koliby et al. (2022) revealed that knowledge acquisition significantly impacts the sustainable performance of manufacturing SMEs, with knowledge application partially mediating this impact. These findings collectively emphasize various aspects of KM, with some focusing on specific sectors or regions to conclude the most impactful KM processes.

It shows 0 articles from EBSCO but 8 articles from ScienceDirect have been found for knowledge-sharing practice. Leon and Tanasescu (2020) conducted a bibliometric study on knowledge-sharing research from 2008-2019. It concentrated in 16 countries, with the main research polls being the United States, UK, and China, and gaps in supply chain management, crisis management, corporate venturing, and human resource management. Knowledge-sharing strategies enhance innovation in all stages of product development by implementing a two-way knowledge transfer loop with distributed stakeholders (Mathrani & Edwards, 2020). People who are willing to share their knowledge with others can be found among the organization's employees. These individuals are referred to as knowledge brokers. Simply put, for effective knowledge transfer to take place, they must include the crucial human element of engagement, communication, mentoring, skills training, and knowledge sharing. On the other hand, a community of practice is one of many groups that succeed in knowledge management and knowledge sharing to be specific (Nxumalo & Mnkandla, 2019). The study also claims that knowledge sharing has the potential to improve organizational performance.

It can be seen from the above graph that knowledge organization practice has been found in only one article from EBSCO and 5 articles from ScienceDirect. Knowledge organization is the process of organizing knowledge into a structure for standardizing and normalizing the vocabulary of concepts and relations (Qin, 2020). The concept of knowledge organizations, which is led by a single individual who is also responsible for its management, consists of the creation and implementation of strategies for the construction, incorporation, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge in organizations. Hjørland (2021) defined knowledge organization as a field concerned with indexing, classification, and representing documents for information retrieval, browsing, and related processes, whether performed by humans or computers. For instance, knowledge organizations have been structured in a variety of ways. This practice of knowledge management enables the organization of knowledge inside the company (tacit and explicit), standardization of routines, and problems processes in the production and marketing of products (Dalmarco et al., 2017).

*RQ2: What are the most frequent practices in knowledge management used to prevent knowledge management projects or programs from failing in any organization?*

The data obtained from the above table is evaluated and categorized according to the practices, with the papers categorized according to the number of papers. Following that, the authors will address

the three most often raised practices in the article. Figure 5 shows the sequence in which the practices were addressed, as well as the number of articles that were discussed.



Figure 5: Graph of Latest Practices Used

According to the graph above, technology is the most frequently used practice in any organization, with 9 out of 13 articles including technology as a practice in their knowledge management practices studies, indicating that technology is the most frequently used practice in any organization. With 8 out of 13 articles, it demonstrates knowledge sharing (both explicitly and tacitly) in the second place. Following knowledge organization in third place, with 6 out of the 13 articles mentioning the use of knowledge sharing in knowledge management practices, appears to come in fourth place. Acquisition of Knowledge, Dissemination of Knowledge, and Organizational Learning came in last place with the same result: both received a total of 4 articles out of a total of 13.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The result above shows that technology has been the most frequently used practice during the previous decade, as can be seen in the graph above. With the advancement of technology, new technologies have become considerably more important in our lives than they were in past decades. To put it in other words, knowledge management strategies and emerging technologies are essential for organizations to remain relevant in the modern world, as they enable communities to make informed decisions and benefit from emerging opportunities (Tiwari, 2022). The same applies to any organization where technology is the most frequently employed practice in knowledge management, and it has been demonstrated in this study that any organization requires significant technology in this modern era.

A greater number of interviews should be conducted in the future to examine disparities between companies founded in a single new business, differences between different business incubators, as well as differences between organizations in the same industrial sector. Moreover, the relation between the practice

of knowledge management and the development of startups (or not) could be examined from one stage to the next, leading to deeper research into the organization and technology-based organizations.

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