

**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AT THE AFRICAN ECONOMIC
RESEARCH CONSORTIUM – NAIROBI SECRETARIAT**

BY

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
SCIENCE IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES, DEPARTMENT OF
LIBRARY, RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION STUDIES,
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION SCIENCES**

**MOI UNIVERSITY
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2018

DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

This Masters thesis is dedicated my Mom and Dad, Vilma Kinyili and Mr. Masila Kinyili for their strong believe in value for education.

ABSTRACT

The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) is deficient in appropriate management strategies for knowledge resources to steer the organization into the next generation of knowledge frontier. AERC has been managing knowledge albeit undistinguished based on technical systems that disregard the information resource base and the people who create knowledge. The aim of the study was to investigate knowledge management practices at the African Economic Research Consortium with a view to recommend a number of strategies to implement, to improve knowledge management at AERC. The objectives of the study were: to identify knowledge resources that exist at AERC; to examine methods used to capture, store and retrieve knowledge at AERC; to examine the policies governing knowledge management at AERC; to establish the existence of knowledge sharing culture at AERC; to establish the challenges faced in managing knowledge at AERC and to recommend suitable strategies for knowledge management at AERC. The study population was made up of 42 respondents. Census method was used since the population was small therefore entire population was studied. The study applied the Henczel model as it holds that some organizations are embarking on knowledge management programs without an understanding of why their knowledge assets are important. The study used mixed research design. Interview schedules, questionnaires and observation check list were the main tools used in data collection. Qualitative data was analysed thematically while quantitative data was analysed statistically. The study found out that AERC managed a wide category of knowledge resources which were both explicit and tacit in nature. The study found that the following systems were used in managing knowledge at AERC: Computer Systems, Human Resource Information Systems, Management Information Systems, Library Information systems, Finance Information systems among others. In addition, the study established that the knowledge management function at AERC was governed by a number of policy measures that guided knowledge capturing, storing and sharing. These included performance appraisal policy, staff induction policy, staff training and development policy, coaching and mentoring policy. However, cultural differences, inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of awareness on knowledge management among others were among some of the challenges identified that inhibit management of knowledge at AERC. The study concluded that for successful management of knowledge in the organization, there is need for policy framework to be in place. The study has recommended a number of strategies that could be implemented to improve knowledge management at AERC. These included promotion of continuous learning at the secretariat through sponsorship, exhibitions, creation of incubation centers and enhancement of mentorship programs. AERC could also consider adopting and implementing open access policies on knowledge management to enhance its knowledge and information sharing as well as awareness on knowledge management practices, formulation of knowledge management strategy, embracing open access policy, infrastructural investment in ICT, increased funding of knowledge management initiatives in the organization among others.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My acknowledgement to God Almighty – Great is thy faithfulness, for the dreams, health and strength to carry on. The dedication and tireless efforts of my supervisors: Mr. Duncan Amothand Dr. Alice Wafula Kwake are very much appreciated. My wife Ndinda, and children Vilma Mercedes, Claire Mabel and Rufus Quartoze who bore the loneliness during long periods of my absence deserve it all. My colleagues at AERC and classmates for their ever-present encouragement to go on even when it seemed difficult, be all blessed.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AERC	African Economic Research Consortium
CMAAE	Collaborative Masters in Applied Agricultural Economics
CMAF	Collaborative Masters Program
CPP	Collaborative PhD Program
JFE	Joint Facility for Electives
KM	Knowledge Management
MSC	Master of Science

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

Today's economy is dubbed knowledge economy, where participants sell knowledge focused on research, innovation and other form of knowledge creation (Islam, 2006). Nonaka (1994) further asserts that in an economy where the only certainty is uncertainty, the one sure source of lasting competitive advantage is to have improved knowledge management. Knowledge is defined as a fluid mix of framed experiences, values, contextual information and expert insights that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information (Chen & Hsiang, 2007).

Moreno-Luzon (2003) defines Knowledge management as a group of managerial policies and decisions that aim to generate processes of individual, group and organizational learning in order to create knowledge that serves the organization's objectives. Typically, Knowledge management is concerned with identification, acquisition, distribution and maintenance of essential knowledge and it involves mainly people, technology, processes and cultures (Berg & Popescu, 2005). The critical importance of knowledge was also affirmed by Savvas and Bassiliades (2009) who asserts that knowledge is now considered to be a major driving force for organizational change. Today, the key global pressure on management practices is knowledge identification, creation, innovation, dissemination and development of talent.

The ground rules of economic competition have shifted in important ways in recent years because of the impetus of globalization, proliferation of information technology, the

availability of information and the changing nature of organizational forms. Despite the recognition that knowledge is of central importance to organizations in the contemporary knowledge society, many information units are being closed or downsized and organizations are encouraging information users to acquire, control and manage their own resources that support knowledge creation and development. Controlling the acquisition of, and access to information is becoming increasingly difficult as vendors bypass the information professionals and market directly to the end-user, (Assudani, 2005 in Blackler et al., 1993; Badaracco, 1991). Compounding this problem is the availability of information in a multitude of formats and the exponential growth in the number of products available, (Henczel, 2000).

Kimble (2005) informs us that knowledge in an organization is the collection of expertise, experience and information that individuals and workgroups use during the execution of their tasks. It is produced and stored by individual minds, or implicitly encoded and documented in organizational processes, services and systems. Knowledge management approach views knowledge as the key asset of an organization and systematically develops activities to manage it efficiently. The main objectives of knowledge management are to promote knowledge growth, knowledge communication and knowledge preservation (Steels, 1993). It is argued that knowledge management should be appropriately supported by enterprise information infrastructures (Davenport & Prusak, 2000). Knowledge is used in organizations to solve problems, to direct actions and to make decisions, together with any lessons learnt, are lost in the 'noise' of a turbulent business environment (Vasconcelos et al, 2003). In addition, knowledge may be geographically distributed and stored in a variety of different representations, such as

tacit knowledge in people's minds and structured information in databases. To be successful, a knowledge management initiative must address both the 'hard' knowledge in databases and the soft knowledge in people's minds (Hildreth & Kimble, 2000).

Capacity building according to Ogiogio (2005) is a process by which skills, institutions and knowledge are built, utilized, retained and nurtured with a view to providing an entity with the means of responding to a development challenge. He further asserts that knowledge enters this definition as a distinct component because it allows for the combination of skills, experiences, insights, expert intuition, and actionable recommendations from research among others. This enables an entity to continuously innovate and apply best-practice solutions to emerging and evolving challenges.

1.1.1 Background to the Study

AERC was established in 1988 as a public, not-for-profit organization devoted to advanced policy research and training in economics. Its principal objective is to enhance the capacity of locally based researchers to conduct policy-relevant economic inquiry, promote the retention of such capacity and encourage its application in the policy context.

Africa has come a long way since 1988 when AERC started, and so has AERC. Back then, severe shortages of economists to teach at universities in sub-Saharan Africa, coupled with lack of capacity in African governments to carry out badly needed economic research and policy analysis, were the rule rather than the exception across the continent. The University system on the continent had deteriorated right along macroeconomic indicators for many African countries.

Policy prescriptions imposed from outside had little basis in African reality. And at any rate, the research base was not there so no one could know, really, what the African reality was. In that milieu, the African Economic Research Consortium –AERC- was established as a public not-for-profit organization devoted to the advancement of economic policy research to contribute to growth and poverty reduction in the region. The institution is also charged with the responsibility of building the capacity of local economic researchers, academics and policy practitioners to address the problems in ways that make sense for Africa, and promise a brighter future for all Africans. The situation has changed considerably over the years which are part of a testimony to AERC's intensive capacity building efforts spanning two decades. Since AERC started, thousands of African economists have passed through its programmes. Many have taken their places in leading policy-making positions in university faculties and in a wide range of other institutions where they can apply the skills and knowledge imparted by their participation in AERC activities.

Supported by donor governments, private foundations and African and international organizations, the consortium works in two principle ways: research and postgraduate training. The flexible approach the research programme uses to improve the technical skills of local researchers provides for regional determination of research priorities and strengthens national institutions concerned with economic policy research. The programme also fosters closer ties between researchers and policy makers. The training programme supports both masters and doctoral level studies in economics and helps improve the capacities of departments of economics in public universities across the

continent. A comprehensive communications and outreach strategy encourages the application of AERC products to economic policy making.

The AERC organizational structure allows for network ownership of AERC's activities by the network of local researchers, an independent determination of the research agenda and a programme of activities that is responsive to the professional and policy needs in the region as it ensures accountability to funders. The Board of Directors, appointed or elected by members of the consortium, is responsible for setting board policy, providing support for a multi-year program of activities, approving annual work programmes and budgets. The Programme committee composed of leading researchers and policy makers from the region plus international resource-persons contributes to multi-year strategic plans, sets the research agenda, oversees the research and training programmes, advises on scientific matters and reviews and approves grants for research and training. Academic Boards for masters and PhD programmes, oversee the implementation of their respective programmes. For example, the boards review curriculum, approve lecturers and examination results. The boards are made up of the heads of departments of the various participating universities as well as other elected members.

Importantly, the research programme is where AERC started. With its emphasis on quality and policy relevance, the research agenda and programme of activities are intended to position African economic research firmly in the global context. Quality is achieved through a dynamic support system that features peer review and technical and literature backup. Collaborative projects team up with African researchers and their counterparts elsewhere for research on a mutually agreed topic, which may often expand

or sharpen those covered in the thematic research areas. The modality helps sustain interest in African research outside the region and generates a critical mass of policy-relevant literature for African academic and policy communities.

Postgraduate training responds to the need for high quality economic researchers, policy professionals and academics in sub-Saharan Africa. At MA, MSC and PhD levels, the AERC training programme supports individual studies in economics and enhances the capacities of departments of economics and those of agricultural economics in local public universities. Collaboration is the foundation of the training approach. The collaborative Master's programme (CMAP) for Anglophone Africa (except Nigeria), Collaborative Master's programme in Agricultural and Applied Economics (CMAAE) and collaborative PhD programme (CPP) feature joint enforcement of standards through annual evaluation and assessment by external examiners, a common curriculum and its development, a Joint Facility for teaching Electives, and joint development of teaching materials. The idea is to deliver economics programmes in Africa that meet international standards, that are relevant to African needs and that can eventually be sustained from local resources. All these activities are coordinated from the central heartbeat – the AERC secretariat, located in Nairobi – Kenya.

Knowledge management at the African Economic Research Consortium is a critical aspect that should be seen to improve performance and quality of service through continuous improvement and innovations. Knowledge-based capacity building seeks to establish a knowledge management culture to make an organization a learning organization driven by continuous improvement. It seeks to share as knowledge: skills,

experiences, reflections, memoirs, insights, development lessons, technical advice, research findings, case studies, best practices, conceptual frameworks, methodologies, strategies, techniques, tools, instruments, actionable recommendations from workshops, publications, among others.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been an emerging recognition that sound information management practices form a solid foundation on which successful knowledge management is based. Good information management is seen as the essential prerequisite to knowledge management. However, AERC has been managing knowledge albeit undistinguished based on technical systems that disregard the information resource base and the people who create knowledge. The organization has information systems such as intranets, financial information systems, human resource information systems, interactive customer care systems, project management systems, management information systems and so on. The coordination of these systems is either poor or inadequate or still, the knowledge management structures are inadequate. There are no known policy documents to guide knowledge management at AERC and as observed the organization has disaggregated policies touching on various activities that involve knowledge management aspects. Staff who have served for several years and accumulated a wealth of knowledge in their areas of expertise and about the organization continue to retire or change jobs and move away with this vital knowledge untapped in form of experience. This is common as it has been witnessed in the least three years where five senior staff changed jobs and moved to other organizations. Highly paid workers spend much of their time looking for knowledge which may be held by colleagues who are unwilling to share or the knowledge could be

buried in piles of documents and data files as witnessed in offices beaming with sagging file cabinets as well as files spread on the office floor. In the course of executing their duties, staff repeat costly errors due to disregard of previous experiences owing to weak or lack of strong partnerships among departments. There are delays and suboptimal service quality resulting from insufficient flow and sharing of knowledge. This is witnessed as departments work in silos and tend to hoard knowledge and information within their departments.

Business units at AERC are structured in such a way that they operate independently of one another, but work towards a common goal yet they rely on similar knowledge structures and resources. Lack of proper knowledge flow has resulted into some units operating without the resources they need because they do not know where to find them, while others engage in overkill and purchase anything that looks like it might be relevant. Consequently, there are significant gaps, inconsistencies and duplications in knowledge resources as well as lack of knowledge capture and sharing within the organization. Despite the conglomeration of information and knowledge sources at AERC which form the knowledge base, access and sharing has not been effective and efficient enough to give the organization competitive advantage in the market. For instance, the organization intranet that hold knowledge generated by the organization is not accessible to all staff. Enormous challenges surround knowledge management at AERC without a clear audit of people skills, structures, policies, knowledge capture, access/retrieval and sharing, required to manage knowledge in the organization.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate knowledge management practices at the African Economic Research Consortium with a view to recommend a number of strategies to implement, to improve knowledge management at AERC.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- i. To identify knowledge resources that exist at African Economic Research Consortium
- ii. To examine methods used to capture, store and retrieve knowledge at AERC
- iii. To examine the policies governing knowledge management at African Economic Research Consortium.
- iv. To establish the existence of knowledge sharing culture at AERC
- v. To establish the challenges faced in managing knowledge at AERC
- vi. To recommend suitable strategies for knowledge management at AERC

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What are the knowledge resources that exist at African Economic Research Consortium?
- ii. What methods are used to capture, store and retrieve knowledge at AERC?
- iii. What are the policies governing knowledge management at African Economic Research Consortium?
- iv. How is the knowledge sharing culture at AERC?
- v. What are the challenges faced in managing knowledge at AERC?

- vi. What are suitable strategies that can be used for knowledge management at AERC?

1.6 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that knowledge management is a new practice that many organizations including AERC have not fully understood and embraced to gain competitive advantage. It also believed that AERC being an organization funded by development partners, did not have proper knowledge management structures and that it was ill-equipped to handle knowledge management.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Donor funding for projects among capacity building organizations and AERC has come with stringent measures for accountability, donor reporting and proper record keeping. As a result, donor funds have become very competitive and thus AERC has to adopt knowledge management measures to gain a competitive edge. The organization has recently invested in seminars and workshops on culture change and transformation with topics in communications, information-sharing and minimizing duplication of efforts dominating the sessions. This is seen as a good platform to launch knowledge management awareness and utilization to improve performance and continue innovating for competitive advantage.

Importantly, the study had a theoretical significance. For instance, it contributed to knowledge by highlighting key knowledge management concepts and linking knowledge management to institutional capacity building for maximum benefit out of investment in

knowledge management ventures. Above all, this study added to a body of knowledge on knowledge management especially in third world countries such as Kenya.

On the other hand, in terms of practical significance, it served to create awareness within the organization as a first step to incorporating knowledge management into the mainstream organizational strategy. It added to the realization and subsequent management of the most valuable assets AERC can boast of; knowledge resources for continuity and competitive advantage. In addition, the study helped to inform AERC in managing knowledge resources by creating awareness and paving the way for an information audit, which informs an organization about its knowledge management needs.

Additionally, the study has policy relevance as it suggested by way of recommending knowledge management best practices at AERC and to other capacity building organizations. Based on the recommendations, if the recommendations of the study can be adopted, it will be of significance in the policy framework and will help in management of knowledge at AERC.

1.8 Scope and Limitation

The entire AERC network has members scattered all over Sub-Saharan Africa and who are difficult to reach. The study therefore was limited to the AERC Secretariat in Nairobi. However, to address this limitation, the study drew its respondents across the all departments in the organization as well as from the resource persons team which helped to understand knowledge management issues across AERC. The study was also limited by local literature on knowledge management. To overcome this limitation, the researcher used a lot of electronic information materials that were available online which gave an in-depth understanding of knowledge management.

1.9 Definitions of Terms

Data: Discrete and objective facts, measurements, or observations that can be analyzed to generate information.

Explicit knowledge: Knowledge that can be codified in formal, systematic language and shared in discussion or writing. Examples include a telephone directory, an instruction manual, or a report of research findings.

Information: Data that have been categorized, analyzed, summarized, and placed in context in a form that has structure and meaning.

Information Management: The management of an organization's information resources to improve performance. Information management underpins knowledge management, as people derive knowledge from information.

Information technology: A term encompassing the physical elements of computing—including servers, networks, and desktop computing—that enable digital information to be identified, created, stored, shared, and used.

Knowledge: A combination of data and information, to which is added expert opinion, skills, and experience, resulting in a valuable asset that aids decision making. In organizational terms, knowledge is generally thought of as being know-how, applied information, information with judgment, or the capacity for effective action. Knowledge may be tacit, explicit, individual, and/or collective. It is intrinsically linked to people.

Knowledge assets: The parts of an organization's intangible assets that relate specifically to knowledge such as know-how, good practices, and intellectual property. Knowledge assets (or products and services) are categorized as human (people, teams, networks, and communities), structural (the codified knowledge that can be found in business

processes), and technological (the technologies that support knowledge sharing such as databases and intranets).

Knowledge audit: Systematic identification and analysis of an organization's knowledge needs, resources, flows, gaps, uses, and users. A knowledge audit usually includes a review of people-based knowledge, capability, and skills as well as information. It also examines critically an organization's values, vision, culture, and skills from the perspective of its knowledge needs.

Knowledge base: An organized structure that facilitates the storage of data, information, and knowledge to be retrieved in support of a knowledge management process.

Knowledge flows: The ways in which knowledge moves around, and into and out of, an organization.

Knowledge harvesting: A set of methods and techniques for making tacit knowledge more explicit so that it can be shared more easily.

Knowledge management: The explicit and systematic management of processes enabling vital individual and collective knowledge resources to be identified, created, stored, shared, and used for benefit. Its practical expression is the fusion of information management and organizational learning.

Knowledge management tools: The methods and techniques that are used to support or deliver practical knowledge management. These can be either information technology systems, e.g., databases, intranets, extranets, and portals; methodologies; or human networks, e.g., communities of practice.

Knowledge management strategy: A detailed plan that outlines how an organization intends to implement knowledge management principles and practices to achieve organizational objectives.

Knowledge manager: A role with operational and developmental responsibility for implementing and reinforcing knowledge management principles and practices. Often acts as central owner of taxonomies and content standards and knowledge processes. Works to promote access to information, intelligence support, expertise, and good practices.

Knowledge worker: A staff member whose role relies on his or her ability to find, synthesize, communicate, and apply knowledge.

Learning organization: An organization skilled at identifying, creating, storing, sharing, and using knowledge, and then modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge.

Mentoring: A one-to-one learning relationship in which a senior staff member of an organization is assigned to support the development of a newer or more junior staff member by sharing his or her knowledge and wisdom.

Organizational culture: The specific collection of values and norms shared by individuals and groups in an organization that controls the way they interact with one another and with people outside the organization.

Tacit knowledge: The personalized knowledge that people carry in their heads. Tacit knowledge is more difficult to formalize and communicate than explicit knowledge. It can be shared through discussion, storytelling, and personal interactions. There are two dimensions to tacit knowledge:

- (i) a technical dimension, which encompasses the kind of informal personal skills or crafts often referred to as know-how; and
- (ii) a cognitive dimension, which consists of beliefs, ideals, values, schemata, and mental models that are ingrained in individuals and often taken for granted.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by reviewing literature on knowledge management structures for organizations which helps to explain their distinguishing characteristics and show how these have impacted on institutions gaining competitive advantage. The chapter further reviews literature tackling various issues on knowledge management. The theoretical and practical aspects of knowledge management for institutional capacity building are of particular significance and literatures on these aspects were reviewed. This helped to gain an understanding of methodologies and findings from earlier studies to help determine experiences that could be drawn from those studies which could be useful to this study. Literature review was categorized under these sub-headings: The concept of knowledge management; knowledge management infrastructure; knowledge management life-cycle; principles of knowledge management; knowledge management tools and techniques; challenges of knowledge management; global best practices on knowledge management; and finally the theoretical framework on which this study was based.

2.2 The Concept of Knowledge Management

Knowledge management is a concept that was coined in 1995 and was formally recorded as a discipline, yet defining this elusive term has remained a nightmare to researchers and philosophers as reflected in the myriad of definitions put forward (Henczel, 2000). Today there are many attempts to define what knowledge management is and/or is not.

According to Davenport (2005), knowledge management is related to information management, but is not the same thing. Davenport noted that this because knowledge and information are not identical. Information is atomic and static but knowledge is associative, rich, multilayered, multi-faceted, contextual, accessible and dynamic. Knowledge management is concerned with identification, acquisition, distribution and maintenance of essential knowledge and it involves mainly people, technology, processes and cultures (Berg & Popescu, 2005).

From this definition, knowledge management would therefore be termed the explicit and systematic management of vital knowledge and its associated processes of creation, organization, storage, access and retrieval, dissemination, sharing, use and exploitation in pursuit of business objectives. It seeks to improve performance by enhancing organizational capacity to learn, innovate and gain competitive advantage.

The role of knowledge as a source for economic and social growth is not new, but why knowledge management now? Vasconcelos (2007), in (Marshall, 1890, quoted in Quintas, 2002) asserts that capital consists in a great part of knowledge and organization. Knowledge is our most powerful engine of production. In today's information-driven economy, organizations uncover most opportunities and ultimately derive most value from intellectual rather than physical assets. Sivan (2001) argues that more and more organizations are waking up to the need for knowledge management and as a result, the knowledge management market, with its assorted consultants, experts, technologies, and applications is rapidly expanding. In fact knowledge management has been practiced for ages but modern knowledge management is more than merely document organization,

decision-supporting systems, artificial intelligence, re-engineering core processes and so on. It is based on an awareness of the inherent nature both good and bad. Mcharazo (2007) argues that the application of knowledge will be the main instrument for communities, companies, and nations in Africa, to compete in today's knowledge driven world.

Petruzelli (2008) confirms that scholars, policy makers and managers are paying increasing attention to the role played by knowledge as an element to sustain firms' and regions' innovation and competitiveness. In particular, at the level of firms, the strategic management literature has recognized the importance of knowledge as a fundamental factor in creating economic value and competitive advantage for firms. A Firm's internal knowledge resulting from research and development activities, from processes of learning by doing and using, and from formal and informal interaction among individuals within the organization – is not the only kind of knowledge managed by a firm (Jennex, 2011). In fact, firms can acquire new knowledge from the external environment by activating processes of external learning, such as learning by imitation and learning by interaction, mainly based on the notion of knowledge spillovers between economic actors. An effective knowledge management program should help an organization foster innovation by encouraging the free flow of ideas, improve customer service by streamlining response time, boost revenues by getting products and services to the market faster, enhance employee retention rates by recognizing the value of employees' knowledge and rewarding them for it as well as streamline operations and reduce costs by eliminating redundant or unnecessary processes. To achieve these, a knowledge management program must have the following critical success factors:

Knowledge leadership - a compelling vision actively promoted by senior management

Clear business benefits – tracking success and developing new measures

Systematic processes– including knowledge mapping and information resource management

A Knowledge sharing culture – teams that work across boundaries

Continuous learning – through pilots and learning networks

An Effective information and communication infrastructure – these include groupware and other collaborative technologies, such as an intranet.

2.3 Principles of Knowledge Management

There are a number of principles that are associated with Knowledge Management. Principally, Knowledge Management is a discipline. There is a tendency by many people to think that knowledge management is a technology or software solution, but it is much more than that; knowledge management is a discipline (Shammari, 2013). Obviously, one has to have a good software or system to capture knowledge, but that's not the whole equation. Underestimating what it takes just to capture the knowledge correctly is a big risk, as is underestimating the integration task into an already complex environment. There are some providers of pre-packaged knowledge out there, but while they can be useful to the help desk, they are not relevant to customer service centers which have business-specific content needs. In either case, one must ensure that they have adequate resources to create and maintain the content they promise. Creating content is not a one-time project. Overtime, the content must be updated and supplemented as new products or services are supported. Empowering agents to add new content as resolutions are discovered as key to maintaining a robust system.

To be successful, the project must have several champions within the organization. These are individuals that believe in the project, enthusiastically advocate for it and have the clout to make things happen. Projects that lack a champion generally are also at serious risk. Losing a champion can spell disaster for a project. This is a real problem for knowledge management projects, due to their continuous duration. If the project champion transfers, retires or leaves the organization, the project often loses its momentum and it may falter as someone else takes it over. A dual sponsorship is the most ideal situation; one at the operational level and one at the executive level. So if an operations manager decides the company really needs knowledge management, that manager should find somebody on the executive staff that will agree to support the vision.

Buy-in is needed at all levels, and this may require cultural change. The people that are going to use the tools have to be part of the design unless there is a plan on strong-arming them. Sometimes there is fear that knowledge management will be used to replace people. If staff thinks that, that is what is being achieved, then there is need to address that head-on. The project leader should be able to convince the team that the current head count reduction is not the goal. Therefore there is need to look for and plan the motivation for each party. Failing to see how knowledge management is going to fit into the rest of the organization is a mistake. One must invest time and energy to understand the culture, identify motivations and ensure change happens where needed.

If employees are not already sharing information, there will be a need for change management because people are asked to do their jobs differently. The change

management plan specifies how knowledge management will gain acceptance within the organization

Knowledge management is a strategic endeavor, not just a project. With knowledge management, one is never really done; it is initiated, built and maintained unlike a project which has a timeline.

Knowledge management requires a careful implementation so that success can be monitored in phases. It is therefore advisable to pick an area that needs improvement or has limited resources, and then build a robust knowledge base for that subject matter. This experience taking the shape of subsystems can then be used to learn about implementing knowledge in the organization so that the many subsystems combine to make a robust knowledge management system within the organization. It is much better to be comprehensive for a narrow topic than fail to get enough depth. Sometimes an enterprise initiative is needed right away, and it can be done successfully, but it can involve a larger resource commitment to do a full-scale project all at once. Today's systems should enable agents to contribute new knowledge during their natural workflow. This is critical to ensure that solutions that are not currently in the system can be quickly added once the resolution has been determined. It's also important to remember that regular and timely maintenance of the knowledge base is key to success. A mechanism should be built to identify gaps in content and a process for filling those gaps. If people repeatedly fail to find what they are looking for, they will stop using the system.

Certain types of knowledge such as company processes or technical procedures are well suited to quickly harvesting into a knowledge base. By populating a knowledge base with this type of information and making it available to employees and customers, an organization can shorten or even avoid many calls. Organizations can also use a knowledge management system to access existing unstructured sources of information that may already exist on a corporate network, intranet or help desk system. It's important to note that experienced agents can certainly benefit from access to both structured knowledge and unstructured information because they are more likely to be able to pinpoint a solution within an unstructured document. However, level one agent or end users accessing the knowledge base through self-service, may not find these sources of unstructured information helpful because they don't have the expertise to decipher the information quickly. In addition to sources of knowledge, the specific type of information is also important to consider. The craftsmanship or expertise that a true expertise has is much more difficult to capture. A master craftsman has a huge body of knowledge. They tend to 'chunk' their knowledge and can't tell you the steps

2.4 Knowledge Management Life-Cycle

Most organizations recognize that they must be able to manage knowledge effectively – it's a strategic imperative (Jenne, 2012). Just how they should go about that ability is the challenge and AERC is no exception. As in most other areas of management advice, there is no shortage of useful frameworks, models and checklists to choose from. Unfortunately, these solutions are generally undifferentiated; they are presented as applicable in any and all situations, and managers are left to make their own mistakes as they use one tool or another to ill effect. A More appropriate approach to this issue is to

realize that knowledge has a life cycle. The knowledge management life cycle revolves around capturing, organizing, refining and transferring knowledge. This is facilitated by a knowledge management system; an application that collects, stores and makes information available among individuals in an organization.

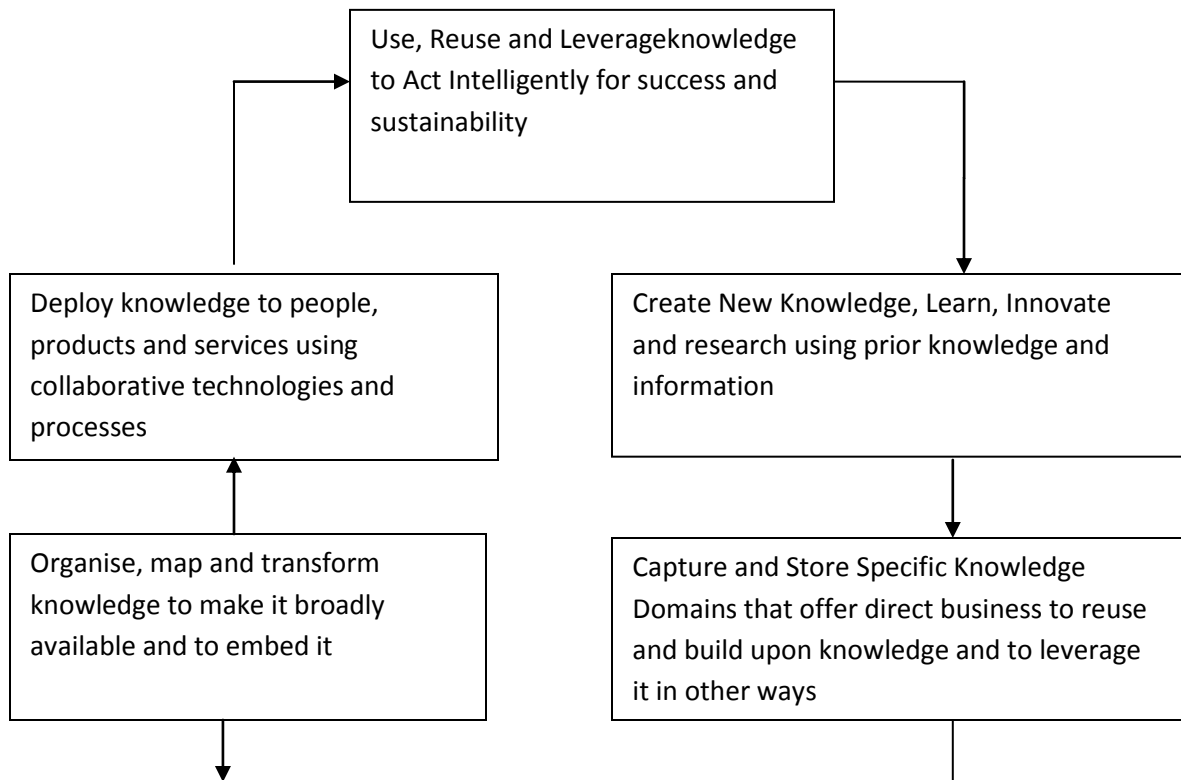


Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Knowledge Management Lifecycle.
Source: JKM (2001)

2.5 Pointers to Existence of Knowledge in an Organization

New Publications among the pointers to existence of knowledge in an organization present the most comprehensive and objective information on an organization activities. Other pointers to existence of knowledge in an organization include collaborative

meeting techniques, information systems, knowledge capture and organizational learning among others.

2.5.1 Collaborative Meeting Techniques

Brainstorming (Hewitt, 2005) is a process used by a group to generate a large number of ideas on a specific issue. Initially ideas are collected by a facilitator without any evaluation by the group. In the final stage, the suggested ideas will be evaluated. The fast-paced and non-judgmental nature of brainstorming can bring to light new, innovative and creative ideas. Chat or Talk shows are informal alternatives to panel discussions or keynote addresses. They encourage "participants to share experiences in an informal, fun environment."

Fishbowls involve a small group of people (usually 5-8) seated in circle, having a conversation in full view of a larger group of listeners. Fishbowl processes provide a creative way to include the "public" in a small group discussion. They can be used in a wide variety of settings, including workshops, conferences, organizational meetings and public assemblies. Fishbowls are useful for ventilating "hot topics" or sharing ideas or information from a variety of perspectives. When the people in the middle are public officials or other decision-makers, this technique can help bring transparency to the decision-making process and increase trust and understanding about complex issues. Sometimes the discussion is a "closed conversation" among a specific group. More often, one or more chairs are open to "visitors" (i.e., members of the audience) who want to ask questions or make comments. Although largely self-organizing once the discussion gets underway, the fishbowl process usually has a facilitator or moderator. The fishbowl is almost always part of a larger process of dialogue and deliberation. Group facilitation

aims to enable groups and organizations to work more effectively; to collaborate and achieve synergy. Facilitation aims at the well-being of all involved participants giving room to all voices in a group, establishing an atmosphere of listening to each other, and ensuring that decisions are backed and owned by all. The facilitator is a neutral party, who, by not taking sides, can advocate for fair, open and inclusive procedures to accomplish the group's work. Further dimensions of facilitation include determining a realistic operating rhythm for the meeting. Meetings are used for the purpose of discussing a predetermined subject or issue. These can be held face-to-face or virtually using Information and Communication Technologies (e.g. Conference Call, Skype, Phone, Blogs). While common in organizations already, meetings can be used to cultivate personal contact, communication and knowledge sharing.

Open Space is a method for convening groups around a specific question or task of importance and giving them responsibility for creating both their own agenda and experience. It is best used when at least a half to two full days are available. The facilitator explains the theme and focus of the group's work, encourages the participants to think about the topics they want to discuss, offers a few guidelines for the discussion groups and then stands back and lets the participants do the work.

The River of Life method can be used for reviewing projects and programmes and planning for the future. It focuses on drawing a river indicating key moments in a project's/programme's past and present as well as envisioning future goals. After completing the drawing, the group members can discuss important achievements, factors

that have aided or hindered the realization of goals as well as identifying future directions and development opportunities.

The teleconference clock is used to encourage participation on conference calls with more than four people. People are given a place on the clock, which is then used as a mechanism that everyone has a chance to speak.

The World café (ILO, 2006) is a system of exchange based on social café conversation whereby a group of people is able to explore a chosen topic. The aim is to tap directly into the social nature of much of our learning. The session can have any number of participants, anything from ten to a thousand, who split into small discussion groups, ideally around café-style tables. The participants are encouraged to both listen and talk, and not edit their thinking or to worry about saying the ‘correct’ thing. Participants swap tables, taking ideas to a new group, while a permanent host remains at each table. As the ideas move about the room, they bear fruit in unexpected ways and networks are both bolstered and established and knowledge is shared.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework gives a study the road map on to which it is mapped. It gives a model on which the study is based. There are several theoretical models that seek to explain how organizational knowledge is created, transferred and crystallized.

The study looked at various models before zeroing on the choice model for this study. In reviewing the main models a close look at Nonaka and Takeuchi model (1995) informs us that knowledge creation process is based on framework that contain two dimensions:

epistemological dimension that shows that only individuals create knowledge therefore organizational knowledge should be understood as a process that organizationally amplifies the knowledge created by individuals and crystallizes it. The ontological dimension relates to the interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge. These two dimensions constitute the base for defining the four knowledge creation processes of socialization, externalization, combination and internalization.

Tannembaum and Alliger (2000) see knowledge management from a more static perspective, defining different stages that are due to cover the development of knowledge but without raising an iterative cycle. They assert that there are four major aspects of knowledge management that collectively determine its effectiveness as knowledge sharing, knowledge accessibility, knowledge assimilation and knowledge application. In parallel, Rastogi (2000) affirms that for meeting the requirements of knowledge, which should be born from the organizational strategy, firms must plan and implement a set of operations as identification, mapping, capturing, acquiring, storing, sharing, applying and creating.

Probst, Raub and Romhardt (2002) model named the building blocks of knowledge management as involving eight components that form two cycles, one inner cycle composed by building blocks of identification, acquisition, development, distribution, utilization and preservation of knowledge; and other outer cycle which has two processes namely knowledge goals and knowledge management assessment.

McElroy (2002) defines another framework of knowledge management called the knowledge life cycle which divides knowledge creation process in two processes;

knowledge production and knowledge integration. Further still, Grant (2005), defined another model of knowledge management that doesn't focus on processes but depicts knowledge management in six steps as knowledge integration, knowledge sharing, knowledge replication, knowledge storage & organization, knowledge measurement and knowledge identification. All these models do not share the same meanings and they present different processes which must be interpreted according to the context of each author. This situation even generates confusion onto firms and slows the practical development of knowledge management projects and supposes a need for lexical standardization.

2.6.1 Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Diffusion of information theory was postulated by Everett Rogers who held that there are a number of factors that complicates knowledge transfer. These include the inability to recognize & articulate "compiled" or highly intuitive competencies - tacit knowledge idea (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995), geography or distance, limitations of ICTs, lack of a shared/super ordinate social identity, language, areas of expertise, motivational issues and lack of trust among others. The model presented a research-based framework for how and why individuals and social networks adopt new ideas, practices and products. In anthropology, the concept of diffusion also explores the spread of ideas among cultures.

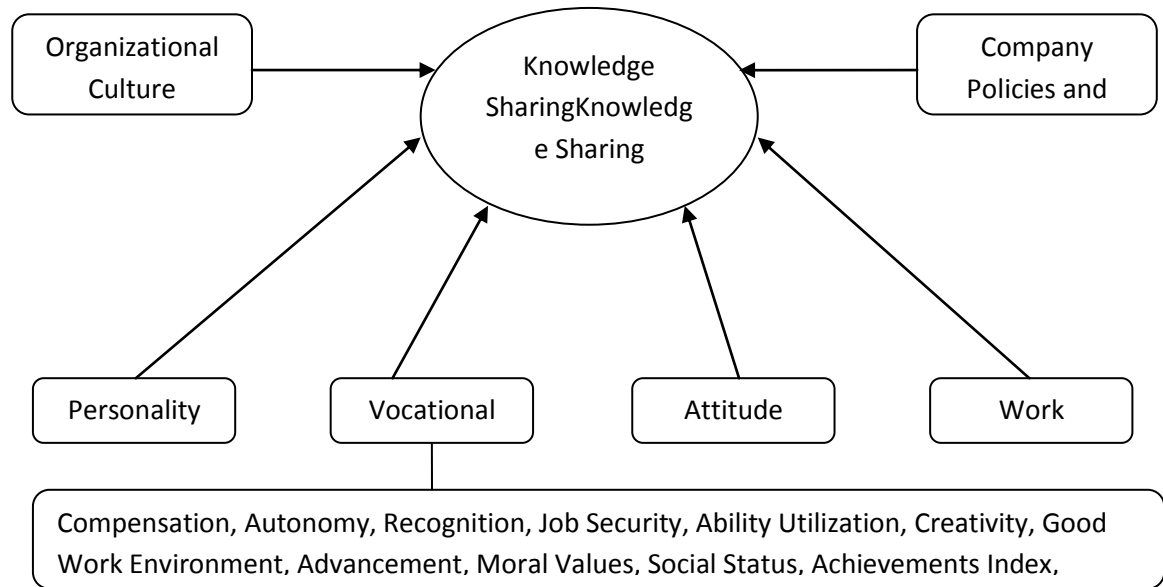


Figure 2: Diffusion Theory

2.6.2 Henczel Model (2000)

This research is informed by Henczel model, developed by Susan Henczel (2000) as a result of examining the methodologies used by librarians and consultants in Knowledge Management. Henczel's model (2000) claims that the first step in any knowledge management program is to identify where knowledge is being created, where it already exists and where it is needed to support decisions and actions. Of more importance is to identify knowledge capture, knowledge infrastructure, knowledge management policies, knowledge storage, access & sharing and challenges faced in managing knowledge an organization needs to be competitive to ensure that one is managing the knowledge an organization needs to manage to be successful. The advantage with this model is that the components can be tailored to suit the objectives of the organization and the resources available.

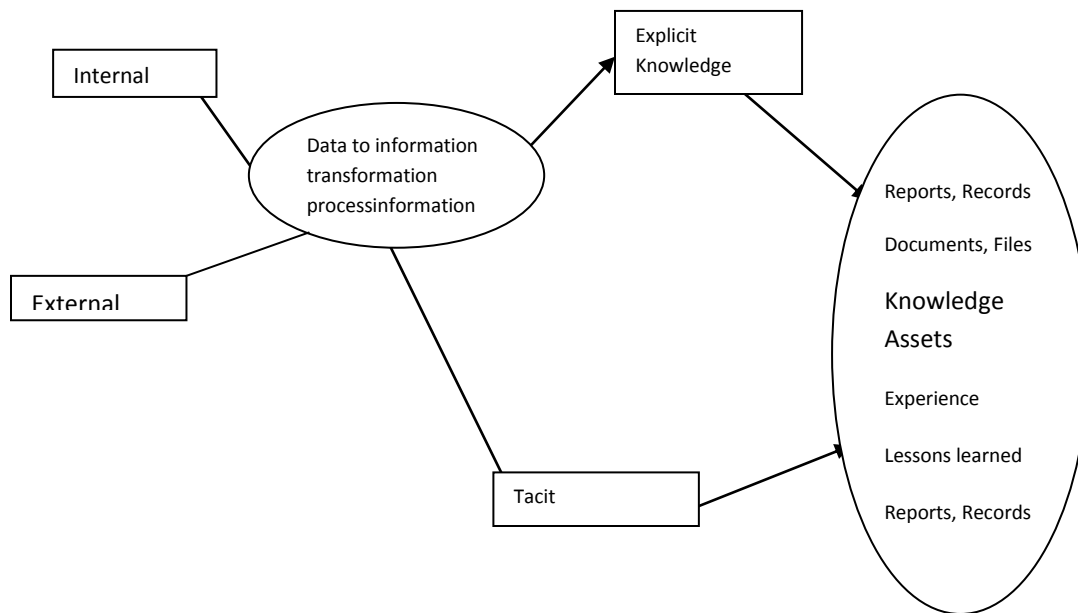


Figure 3: The Henczel Model (2000)

Henczel looks knowledge management from the pyramidal structure of data – information- knowledge. Data is used to enable and support the tasks and activities of an organization’s business units, sections or departments. The data can originate inside the organization or be acquired from external sources. As a task or activity is performed the data is transformed into information which is then filtered, further transformed, reused, stored or transferred. The process of creating information, the data to information transfer process, is a knowledge creating process that creates both explicit and tacit knowledge as employees carry out their routine duties. In gaining further understanding of this process, Henczel (2000) proposes a three-phase model with the first phase as that of needs analysis which establishes the information resources & services needed by staff to perform their duties. This forms the basis of information creation. The second phase and most comprehensive in activity is information audit which further looks at how

information resources are used. It looks at the objectives, critical success factors and tasks and activities of each group, business unit, department or section, and links them with the relevant organizational objective. It identifies the information that is required to support each task or activity. It is then possible to trace a specific resource from the task it supports to the organization objective and assign a level of strategic significance to it. This allows one to not only identify those resources and services that are supporting organizational objectives but also to rate them according to their strategic significance.

An information audit also enables one to map information flows within an organization and between an organization and its external environment. This is a significant feature of the process as it identifies the existing formal and informal communication channels that are used to transfer information as well as highlighting inefficiencies such as bottlenecks, gaps and duplications.

The third phase is the knowledge audit. A Knowledge audit has two main objectives, with the first being to identify the 'people' issues that impact on knowledge creation, transfer and sharing. These include the communication issue that enable or prevent knowledge transfer, and the cultural and political issues that impact on the success of knowledge management strategies. The second objective of a knowledge audit is to identify which knowledge can be captured, where it is needed and can be reused, and to determine the most efficient and effective methods to store, facilitate access to and transfer of the knowledge. It allows one to assign a level of strategic significance or importance to those knowledge assets using the organizational data already established. This measures that one not only knows what knowledge assets exist, but that they identify those that are

critical to the success of the organization. The Knowledge management strategy can then focus on knowledge assets at their various levels of criticality, rather than managing everything regardless of its significance.

Henczel (2000) believes that there is no generic model for developing a knowledge management strategy as each organization has unique needs that must be identified and understood. She is quick to point out that some organizations are embarking on knowledge management programs without an understanding of why their knowledge assets are important. Rather than being in a position to make informed decisions about what knowledge they need to manage, they attempt to manage everything, whether it is significant or not. They often consider information technology infrastructure to be the knowledge management system rather than merely an enabler, and think that all they need to do is buy an expensive computer system and it will all be done for them.

To develop a knowledge management strategy that incorporates the management of both tacit and explicit knowledge it is critical that the knowledge creation process is understood and that the understanding extends to the role of people involved in the process. The first step is to identify where knowledge exists and where it is needed to support decisions and actions. An understanding of the organization and how it works including its structure and culture, internal and external relationships, formal and informal communication networks is as critical as these are the characteristics that will determine the best way in which to manage knowledge in an organization.

2.7 Justification of the Henczel Model to the Study

This model highlights knowledge management as a continuum from data to information to knowledge. Data may be generated within or without the organization and this goes further to be synthesized to form the basis for quality information. Good information management is the prerequisite to good knowledge management. By identifying knowledge & information resources within the organization, tasks supported by each information & knowledge resource can be identified and be linked to organizational objectives it supports. The mapping of information & knowledge flows enables identification of gaps, duplication and flow inefficiencies and forms the basis for knowledge sharing platform. The model brings to fore knowledge creation processes, storage, access, dissemination, use and sharing of knowledge within an organization. It also identifies inconsistencies in knowledge management that pose challenges in managing knowledge. It is therefore the most suitable for the case study as a capacity building organization

2.8 Knowledge Capture and Organizational Learning

The main purpose of after-action reviews is to learn from an activity or project during its course or as soon as it is completed. Choosing to do it at either of these times decreases the chance that knowledge is lost. The goal is simply to sum up lessons learned, rather than to solve problems, criticize or create a formal report. These reviews have the added benefit of making all members feel included and valued (Shongwe, 2015). Briefings provide concise information about a specific issue, subject, study or situation and are usually accompanied by a short briefing note, which can efficiently update a person on an issue. Exit interviews have traditionally been conducted with employees

leaving an organization in order to gather feedback on why they are leaving or what areas of the job/organization they think requires improvement. This concept has evolved into a knowledge management tool, whereby it is used to capture the knowledge necessary for a successful job performance.

Experience capitalization is "the transition from experience to shareable knowledge" (Villevall and Delville, 2004), or a way to increase organizational effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability by collectively learning from previous experiences. Depending on the requirement, the following instruments can be used to record, present and consolidate experiences: brainstorming sessions, surveys, interviews, evaluations, SWOT analyses, case studies, document and portfolio analyses, cognitive mapping, scenario techniques, etc.

The experience capitalization usually consists of the following four stages: Identification of needs, detailed planning, implementation of results, change of practice. Good practices are successful examples, methods, or experiences in an organization which can be used as a model for future strategies.

Mentoring is an important part of succession planning and knowledge sharing. Mentors are people who have more experience and knowledge in a specific area or profession that they are willing to share with newer colleagues. The relationship can be informal but is frequently formalized. Mentors answer questions, give advice and feedback and can help with professional development.

Peer assist is a method of cooperation, based on dialogue and mutual respect, which seeks to share knowledge and understanding between people in similar fields but with different levels and types of experience. A meeting is called by a team (the 'hosts') when, for example, they are starting a new project. The hosts invite another group ('the peers') who have experience with a similar project. After outlining the project and its background, the hosts express their specific needs. Now both teams work together, using brainstorming and discussion, to identify possible solutions to the problem...Peer assist can be powerful as it provides a highly focused way to share knowledge. The host party is able to concentrate on a specific task and get quick results. Their peers also benefit, as any opportunity to talk and think about their experience is helpful. Everyone benefits from the chance to network and build relationships. Peer coaching is a method of professional development whereby colleagues agree to formally learn from each other. The role of the coach is to give constructive feedback and to give advice based on their own similar experiences.

Humans have exchanged stories for thousands of years. Even today, stories are part of our daily lives and not only provide entertainment, but also convey knowledge. Storytelling can be an excellent tool in the workplace. We can use stories to describe project experiences, activities in a formal or informal way, and can transmit tacit knowledge. Stories, as opposed to theories, are a simple and accessible way to communicate complex ideas, key messages and lessons learned in a way that engages people's minds, imaginations and emotions. They cannot replace analytical thought, however, and are often used in conjunction with or to complement, other tools.

2.9 Knowledge Management Policies and Processes

Business organizations in recent decades have found themselves in an ever-changing environment that requires them to undergo profound changes. These changes have been brought about by the development of social, economic, and political systems that are increasingly unstable. Businesses have had to radically modify their planning styles or strategies, as greater unpredictability has made it increasingly difficult to simulate and prepare for future scenarios. In this new context, companies must make efforts to become more and more competitive. Currently, one of the main resources for establishing a competitive advantage is knowledge. In many businesses KM is limited to the employment of technical tools based on the use of communication and information technology. However, in order for this process to be effective, the people participating in the process must be motivated and committed. Herein lies the challenge for human resource departments. Afiouni (2007) is in agreement that knowledge management should move towards a more human facet. Greater attention should be paid to the link between knowledge management and the practices of human resources in order to achieve effective knowledge management in the business organization, Oltra (2005). Little wonder therefore, that most knowledge management policies leans towards human resources management policies. Researchers and experts in management agree that human resources involve intangible elements that contribute to key differences among business organizations. These elements bring forth the knowledge, abilities, and skills that, when combined with other tangible and intangible elements, create sustainable competitive advantage. The knowledge of each individual is the building block upon which organizations can innovate in order to create new products, processes or services

so that they become more effective or efficient, Nonaka, Toyama and Nagata (2000). In light of the fact that knowledge comes from individuals, organizations should put in place human resource policies that provide individuals with the necessary tools that will allow them to interact amongst each other and engagement with technologies, techniques and processes, Grant (1996). Any organization that undertakes new processes needs a strong culture that leads employees to adopt the behavior and attitude that the company requires. An organization's culture plays a fundamental role in the creation, sharing, and use of knowledge.

The Encyclopedia of knowledge management (2007), outlines several knowledge management processes as: creation, discovery, gathering, calibration, modeling, integration, dissemination, reuse, sharing and synthesis. Knowledge management will affect all staff and their ways of working if it is to be successful, and requires a major phase of cultural change. Organizations need to make clear links between knowledge management, and how it will affect people in leadership for managers to make it work. The following organization business processes show a selection of initiatives in place to meet knowledge management expectations (Rathod, 2008):

Core competency framework:- This is competencies across the workforce. Knowledge management is being integrated into the framework and will feature across all elements of the framework.

Performance development review/appraisal: -Staff are required to demonstrate the effective use of knowledge resources available to them in meeting their objectives and how they might use resources to meet future objectives.

Job Descriptions: - Objectives in the responsibilities and requirements include finding, using, creating, managing and sharing knowledge appropriately, using resources available.

Inductions and Staff leaving: - New staff are introduced to the organization, knowledge management strategy, processes, resources and individual staff responsibilities. All staffs are made aware of the resources available and who to contact if training is required. Prior to staff leaving, a knowledge exchange is carried out to retain the organization's knowledge.

Service planning: - Service planning processes now features a requirement to include plans of knowledge management work and the costs involved.

Training: - Staff should be made aware and an emphasis made that knowledge management is everyone's responsibility and fits into everything we do.

Information Management: - This is knowledge captured as lessons learned from projects needs to be accessible across the organization through its intranet system. Areas to pay attention to are project databases, consultant's lists, document storage protocols and lists of staff skills.

Meeting the challenge of new business requirements based on citizen expectations, rather than on the traditional internal dynamics of hierarchy, is one of the biggest challenges facing most organizations today. Knowledge Management seeks to provide solutions to this challenge through its focus on fostering knowledge discovery, creation, sharing and innovation. A governance structure comprising Policy and Standards can help to provide

an effective support infrastructure for Knowledge Management activity, and can be used by an organization to help formulate and guide their approach to Knowledge Management. Therefore, the purpose of any Knowledge Management Policy is to ensure that the knowledge assets under the organization's control are managed consistently and effectively throughout their life-cycle.

The Objective of any Knowledge Management policy should be to:

- i) Provide guidance, without being prescriptive
- ii) Facilitate the adoption of key Knowledge Management practices for the effective creation, sharing, re-use and stewardship of knowledge
- iii) Provide support to Knowledge Management practitioners and Knowledge Management stakeholders
- iv) Ensure that knowledge is managed as an organizational asset

Staff Awareness on Knowledge Management and how it affects Business. The twenty first century is the era of knowledge economy, in which most organizations possess knowledge that enables them to improve their performance. Knowledge infrastructural capability and knowledge process capability are drivers of organizational effectiveness. Lee and Choi (2005) examined the correlation between knowledge management processes and organizational creativity and concluded that knowledge management processes are significant predictors for organizational creativity. Since knowledge is not easily measured or audited, organizations have to manage knowledge effectively in order to take full advantage of the skills and experience inherent in their systems and structures as well as the tacit knowledge belonging to the employees of the organization. But why

do we need knowledge management? Knowledge management is based on the idea that an organization's most valuable resource is the knowledge of its people. This focus is driven by the accelerated rate of change in today's organizations and in society as a whole, De Brun (2005). Knowledge management recognizes that today nearly all jobs involve knowledge work and so all staff are knowledge workers to some degree or another, meaning that their job depends more on their knowledge than their manual skills. This means that creating, sharing and using knowledge are among the most important activities of nearly every person in every organization. Every employee should therefore be made aware of the following concepts:

- ◆ Knowledge capture – policies and processes for identifying and capturing explicit and tacit knowledge
- ◆ Knowledge transfer – Policies and processes for transferring knowledge among and between its various sources and forms.
- ◆ Knowledge retention - Policies and processes for retaining organizational knowledge, especially during periods of organizational change.
- ◆ Content management – policies and processes for efficiently managing the organizational knowledge base.
- ◆ Knowledge capital – Policies and processes for measuring and developing an organization's human and social capital.
- ◆ Enabling communities – Policies and processes for promoting and supporting knowledge-based community working across and between departments.

- ◆ Supporting a knowledge culture – Policies and processes to create the necessary cultural changes to embed the knowledge management ethos into working practices.
- ◆ Knowledge partnerships – Policies and processes for promoting and supporting knowledge partnerships between an organization and key partners.
- ◆ Supporting key business activities – Policies and processes to support key business activities in an organization such as project management, delivery monitoring etc.
- ◆ Knowledge benchmarking - Policies and processes for benchmarking current knowledge management capabilities and practices against international best practice and for improving performance.

2.10 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is one of the key factors influencing Knowledge Management, in particular in respect of knowledge sharing (Bolisani, 2014). A critical step for bringing about behavioral change is to overcome the ‘knowledge is power’ paradigm by nurturing a knowledge-sharing culture. Knowledge is not shared naturally by individuals unless certain organizational resistance to information sharing applicable to the Organization as a whole (staff and management) is overcome. The distinction between management and staff is important here, since, management commitment is a precondition for Knowledge Management and the implementation of a Knowledge Management strategy usually follows a top-down approach. In order to bring forth a cultural or behavioral change, management should lead the way, encourage, provide incentives, recognize and reward knowledge-sharing initiatives among staff.

2.11 Challenges of Knowledge Management

There are nevertheless many barriers to effective knowledge management as outlined by the Swiss inter-cooperation Agency (2007). These include distance, cultural differences and language; the time consuming nature of regular activities coupled with the human tendency to focus on immediate tasks; and a reticence for some individuals to share knowledge. People may not wish to share knowledge for many reasons such as shyness; not realizing the value of one's knowledge to someone else; unwillingness to speak about or admit mistakes; interpersonal frictions; a mistaken perception that one can gain influence and power by keeping knowledge to oneself, etc. Furthermore, all organizations whatever their structure, always have certain particular bottlenecks in knowledge exchange. For all these reasons, systematic sharing of knowledge within an organization cannot be expected to occur automatically; it must be promoted through due recognition and encouragement, and by identifying and addressing bottlenecks in knowledge exchange. Each of the challenges implies management decisions about collaboration, co-development, and coordination of people and services.

2.11.1 Collaboration Challenge

Knowledge sharing has recently been proposed as a distinguishing feature of knowledge management – but one that happens in different ways in different organizations. There has been a strong assumption that since libraries are arenas where sharing happens, they are the appropriate staff to manage local sharing initiatives – in the form of intranets. One of the challenges of knowledge management is to understand how the trust and intimacy that sustain communities are established, and to explore ways to steepen the intimacy curve in temporary organizations such as project teams.

2.11.2 Infrastructural and Technological Problems

Knowledge management confronts developing countries with a variety of challenges and barriers, this include, high cost of availability of ICTs and connectivity and poor telecommunication infrastructure. This makes the actual use of any information and knowledge related materials such as journals, repositories, and implementation of software more difficult Sun (2010). It was observed by KazemiandAllahyari (2010) that although developing countries have made significant gains in access to mobile technology and infrastructure for information and communication technology (ICT) in the last few years, they are still struggling to achieve wide access to high speed broadband services. At the same time, price drops for such technologies are not benefitting the world's poorest. This creates a digital divide between the developing and developed world.

Adequate funding to build, upgrade and maintain ICT infrastructure is a problem in many developing countries. For example, because of the poor ICT infrastructure in academic and research institutions in developing countries like Kenya, it is difficult to sustain the development of institutional repositories. Upgrading ICT facilities require enough financial support.

2.11.3 Inadquate Awareness of Current Trends in Information Management

There is a lack of awareness and misconception of the existence and benefits of current trends in information management field (Turro &Zhaoh, 2015). For instance, at the University of West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad only 23% staff were aware of open access journals and 8% were aware of digital archives and repositories. There is empirical

evidence that knowledge management practices such as open access of institutional repositories is very low among the major stakeholders including lecturers, researchers, librarian and students in Nigeria (Christian, 2008). Effective advocacy and promotion is critical for the successful implementation of the Knowledge management practices. Especially, academics accustomed to the well-established routines of publication in academic journals of known prestige, with effective systems of peer review and dissemination, see little benefit in alternative methods of managing knowledge of the same material (Cullen, 2009).

2.12 Global Best Practices on Knowledge Management

All best-practice organizations see knowledge sharing as a practical way to solve business problems. They emphasize that databases, knowledge systems, and knowledge initiatives need to have a clear business purpose. There are several ways to tie knowledge sharing to business purpose as outlined by McDermott (2001).

- i) Make sharing knowledge directly part of the business strategy. People, knowledge and the world's knowledge is the link between an organization and its clients.
- ii) Piggyback sharing knowledge on to another key business initiative.
- iii) Sharing knowledge routinely as the 'way we work'. This way knowledge is simply part of how the company solves specific business problems, such as reducing time to market or developing innovative software solutions.

Reward and recognition is another way to make the importance of sharing knowledge visible. It highlights the things an organization feels are important and demonstrates that the time and energy people spend sharing knowledge count in their performance and career.

Building on existing networks is another way organizations enhance knowledge sharing. Most organizations are lace with informal human networks that people use to find who knows what, get help and advice, learn how to use specialized tools, etc. While some of these networks are purely social, many form around sharing and knowledge people need to do their job. Through these informal networks, individuals get appreciation from their peers and oftentimes form strong personal relationships. Rather than building new networks for sharing knowledge, organizations built on already existing networks.

Behavior makes invisible values visible. Linking invisible values and visible elements of knowledge management is the behavior of peers and managers. In best-practice organizations, well-respected members of the organization model knowledge sharing. People frequently seek information and insights outside their immediate workgroup or team and that their brightest people are generally their highest contributors.

2.12.1 Regular Knowledge Audits

A knowledge audit is conducted to identify an organization's knowledge assets, how they are produced and by whom. If an information audit has already been conducted (an information audit enables one to map information flows within an organization and between an organization and its external environment. This is a significant feature of the process as it identifies the existing formal and informal communication channels that are

used to transfer information as well as highlighting inefficiencies such as bottlenecks, gaps and duplications). Knowledge audit also allows one to assign a level of strategic significance or importance to those knowledge assets using the organizational data already established. This ensures that you not only know what knowledge assets exist, but that you identify those that are critical to the success of the organization. The knowledge management strategy can then focus on the knowledge assets at their various levels of criticality, rather than managing everything regardless of its significance.

2.12.2 Knowledge Management Strategy

Knowledge Strategy has many dimensions and encompasses the full spectrum of generating, collecting, capturing, storing, codifying, transferring and communicating knowledge (ILO, 2009). To develop a knowledge management strategy that incorporates the management of both tacit and explicit knowledge it is critical that the knowledge creation process is understood and that the understanding extends to the role of the people involved in the process. The first step is to identify where knowledge exists and where it is needed to support decisions and actions. An understanding of the organization and how it works, including its structure and culture, internal and external relationships, formal and informal communication networks is critical as these are the characteristics that will determine the best way in which to manage knowledge in that particular organization.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology. The chapter covers research design, population, data collection methods, research procedures, data analysis methods and the chapter summary. The validity and reliability tests are also discussed.

3.2 Research Methodology

Research methodology is a technique for collecting data. Case study method was the most suitable for this research as Bryman (2001) says that it enables the researcher to better understand social phenomena. The study used the African Economic Research Consortium as a case study. The African Economic research Consortium was chosen as it was seen to generate a lot of research knowledge through its research activities in economic policy throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Despite case study method being time-consuming, and thus expensive to conduct, and producing massive quantities of data, it was still the most suitable for this study as Bryman (2001) points out; it allowed the distinguishing characteristics of the case under investigation to act as springboard for theoretical reflections.

3.3 Research Design

Ng'ang'a (2003), describes research design as the plan, the structure of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance. Kerlinger (1973) confirms this by informing us that research designs are invented to enable answering the research questions as validly, objectively, accurately and as economically

as possible. It sets up a framework for adequate tests of relations among variables. Research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data. Based on these definitions, the researcher applied a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research designs because the topic of investigation requires in-depth explanation (Creswell, 2009) and expected to generate some statistical data as well. Bryman (2008), defines qualitative research as a research strategy that usually emphasize words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. On the other hand, Konar (2009) points that quantitative research is an approach that collects numerical data that can be analyzed using statistical methods.

3.3.1 Study Population

Study population, according to Konar (2009) is a group of subjects that share similar attributes that need to be studied. However, in order to achieve the study objectives and to answer research questions, it was necessary to obtain data from staff that were responsible for creating/capturing, storing, retrieving and sharing knowledge/information as well as those who influence knowledge management in one way or another. All thirty-seven AERC staff were included in the study. An expert panel comprising five resource persons were also included in the study. Hence, the study population was made up of 42 respondents.

Table 3.1: Showing Composition of Study Population

Category	Designation	Number
1	Senior Management Team(SMT) – Executive director; Directors of: Research, Training, Finance	4
2	Managers of: Collaborative research, thematic research, communications, training(CPP & CMAP), Training (CMAAE), Finance, Information Technology, Resource mobilization, Human resources	9
3	Program Administrators in: Research(2), Communication(3), Training(4), Human resources(1), Finance(1), Executive office(1),	11
4	Program assistants and support staff: research(1), communications(2), Training(3), Human resources(4), finance(2), executive office(1)	13
5.	Resource persons	5
	Total	42

Source: Author

As illustrated in the table, there are four categories of staff that comprised population of study:

Category 1 – Senior management team comprised the executive director, director of research, director of training and director of finance & resources. This category was responsible for policy formulation and key decision making in the organization.

Category 2 - Managers comprised manager- Thematic Research, manager-Collaborative Research, Manager- Communications, manager-Information Technology, manager-Training (CMAP & CPP), manager- Training (CMAAE), manager- Finance, manager-Human Resources, manager-Resource Mobilization. This category was involved in implementing key policy decisions and was seen as the most active key informants.

Category 3 – Program administrators who comprised of administrator research (1), administrator /editor communications (3), administrator human resources (1), administrator training(4), administrator executive office(1), administrator/accountant finance. This category worked hand in hand with the managers and was seen as the most active category in creating knowledge.

Category 4 – Program assistants comprised program assistant research (1), program assistant training(3), Librarian & publications assistant (2), program assistant executive office(1), program assistant human resources(1), program assistant finance(2), support staff (3).This category was also involved in active creation and capture of knowledge but they assisted administrators in activities related to creation, capture, storage and retrieval of information/knowledge within the organization.

The fifth category consisted of AERC resource persons responsible for regulating quality of research papers were chosen. Since the study population consisted of only 42 respondents, the whole population was studied.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

As earlier stated, this study employed both quantitative and qualitative research approach which was preferred given the kind of data that was to be collected. The study therefore utilized interviewschedules and questionnaires as the main data collection tools. Data was collected using personal interviews which were semi-structuredfrom AERC senior management and management level staff. This category needed further probing to get in-depth information and has the advantage of observing behavior of respondents as they respond to questions while questionnaires were distributed to the rest of staff and

required data on operational basis which could easily be captured quantitatively. Observation of knowledge management practices was done using observation checklist. Observation method was adopted since the researcher belonged to the AERC family thus some knowledge management aspects and issues were personally witnessed. This data was used to proof, or disproof data collected from either interviews or questionnaires.

3.4.1 Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher sought permission to conduct research from the ministry of Education Science and Technology under the directorate of National commission for Science, Technology and Innovation where a research permit was obtained. The intention to conduct this study was communicated to the institution where the study was carried out by way of an introduction letter from the head of department, Library and Information studies of the School of Information Sciences, Moi University, to the Executive Director of the African Economic Research Consortium. This letter was circulated to heads of departments, informing them on the purpose of the study and to seek their assistance in booking for interviews and availing relevant documents for the study. Appointments were made with respective respondents and questionnaires distributed.

3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Qualitative research data collected was analyzed by grouping themes together, interpreting them and making inferences while quantitative data was analysed statistically by use of tables and charts. Data analysis took into consideration the objectives and research questions of the study in evaluating the usefulness of information in answering research questions. Interpreting data stated what the results revealed, their meaning, and

significance in relation to the problem under study. An attempt was made to avoid biasness and subjectivity in interpretation of data as much as humanely possible.

3.6 Ethical Issues

The respondents in this study were human beings. As such, there were a number of ethical issues that were observed in the course of the study. A cardinal rule that guided the study was voluntary participation of the respondents. The study population were notified through email services and they were required to consent before they were included in the final study population. Those who had freely accepted to be involved in the study were thus included in the study sample after their acknowledgment. Moreover, given the fact that information and knowledge are critical aspects, privacy was paramount in the course of the study. As such, confidentiality of information that was collected was observed and privacy of respondents was guaranteed.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability of the data collection instruments were undertaken through pre-testing of the interview schedules and questionnaires before the actual data collection exercise. The researcher pre-tested data collection tools and ascertained their accuracy before the main data collection exercise began. Pretesting ensured that data collection tools did not have ambiguity. Objectivity was maintained at all stage of the study in order to get accurate and reliable data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covered data presentation, analysis and its interpretation that was collected from the senior management team, managers, program administrators, program assistants and resource persons. This data was collected using interview schedules, questionnaires and observation checklist that were meant for the respondents and for the aspects under investigation.

4.2 Background Information

Data was collected from 38 respondents giving a response rate of 90.5 percent. Four respondents among junior staff were unavailable for the data collection exercise. According to Creswell (2009), a response rate of over 75 percent is good enough to obtain objective results in any study. Hence, the response rate for this study was good enough to help attain its aim and objectives.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Categories	Sample	Percentage
Senior Management Team	3	7.2
Managers	7	16.7
Program administrators	10	23.8
Program assistants	13	31
Resource Persons	5	12
Total	38	100

Importantly, it was imperative for the study to understand the bio data of its respondents. This was important as it helped to determine if the information collected was from credible sources. In view of this, the study sought to establish the age bracket of its respondents. As indicated in table 4.2, it was determined that 5.3percent of the respondents were between 18 to 30 years, 18.4 percent were 31to 40 years, 34.2 percent were 41to 50 years while 42.1 percent were over 50 years. This indicated that the majority of the respondents were old enough to provide reliable information for the study since they were above 40 years.

Table 4.2: Age Bracket

Age Bracket		
Age in Years	Frequency	Percent
18-30 Years	2	5.3
31-40 Years	7	18.4
41-50 Years	13	34.2
Over 50 Years	16	42.1
Total	38	100

Additionally, the study sought to determine areas of specialization of its respondents. This was important as it helped to determine if the respondents appreciated and understood information and knowledge management issues. The results were as illustrated in table 4.3. As indicated in the table, the respondents' specialization could be broadly categorized into two categories of information professionals and researchers who

were mainly economists. Based on these categories, 31.6percent were information professionals while 68.4 percent were researchers. Hence, it was concluded that that the study was comprised of specialized groups that generated and managed information and knowledge, thusbeing in a better position to divulge useful information for the study.

Table 4.3: Areas of Specialization

Area of specialization	Frequency	Percentage
Information Professionals	12	31.6
Researchers (economics)	26	68.4
Total	38	100

Also, it was important to determine the academic qualifications of the people responsible for knowledge management at the AERC. Hence, the study sought to find out academic qualifications of both information professionals and researchers at the AERC. As indicated in table 4.4, it was established that the highest academic qualification for the 2.6percent of the officers had only certificates in their various area of specialization. On the other hand, 5.3percent had diplomas while 15.8percent had degrees in their areas of specialty. However, 34.2percent of the respondents had masters' qualifications while 42.1 had doctorates. This implied that AERC had a large percentage of their officers with higher professional training in their areas of specialization thus capable of giving reliable information on the concepts under study.

Table 4.4: Highest Formal Education

Highest Formal Education		
Academic level	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	1	2.6
Diploma	2	5.2
Degree	6	15.8
Masters	13	34.2
PHD	16	42.1
Total	38	100

An interview with the HR manager had this to say

“AERC recruitment policy only allows officers with at least a degree in areas of specialization and even so, staff are encouraged to enhance their education qualifications to masters and above to be competent enough to deal with researchers of the consortium most of whom have advanced degrees” –C. Tole

This resonates well with the high number of AERC staff with masters and above which represents 69.0 percent of the total population.

Importantly, it was significant for the study to establish work experience of its respondents to help establish if they had enough experience to provide reliable information for the study. As indicated in table 4.4, it was determined that 26.3 percent had over 15 years working experience, while 47.4percent of the respondents had 10 to 15 years working experience. On the other hand, only 15.8percent and 10.5 percent had a

working experience of five to ten and zero to five years respectively. This indicated that the majority of respondents had worked long enough to be able to provide reliable information on knowledge management concepts.

Table 4.4: Work Experience

Work Experience		
No. of Years of Experience	Frequency	Percent
0-5 Years	4	10.5
5-10 Years	6	15.8
10-15 Years	18	47.4
Over 15 Years	10	26.3
Total	38	100

4.3 Knowledge Resources Managed at African Economic Research Consortium

As part of the study's objectives, it was important for the study to determine the knowledge resources managed at AERC. Thus, when the question was asked about whether respondents had heard of knowledge Management efforts of the African Economic Research Consortium, the findings were as illustrated in table 4.5. From the results, it was determined that there exist efforts of managing knowledge at AERC since 94.7 percent affirmed to the statement while only 5.3 percent noted that such efforts did not exist in the organization. This implied that at least AERC had instituted some strategies and mechanisms for knowledge management, which were well known to the majority of its stakeholders. In addition, from the observation made by the researcher, it was evident that there were different types of knowledge managed by AERC. Such

knowledge were in published forms and in digital formats. In observing how such knowledge were stored, the researcher found out that knowledge in published forms were managed in the organisation resource centers while electronic knowledge were managed through computer information systems and an intranet.

The manager in charge of ICT ascertained that

“All information systems as well as organization knowledge created within the organization is stored on AERC Intranet. However due to the sensitive nature of some financial information such as grants and donor funding, the intranet is not open to everyone and one has to obtain authorization through password to gain access” – Juffali Kenzi

Table 4.5: Presence of Knowledge Management Efforts at AERC

Presence of Knowledge Management efforts at AERC			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	YES	36	94.7
	NO	2	5.3
	Total	38	100

Additionally, the study sought to find out if the African Economic Research Consortium as an organization recognized knowledge as part of its asset base. As such, when this question was posed to the respondents, all respondents affirmed that in AERC recognized and valued knowledge as part of its key asset base.

AERC core principles of research and training form the basis on which knowledge is generated as alluded to by the Director of research

“The research department generates a lot of knowledge from the rigorous research process, research proposals, research papers and working papers. Of course, we can’t fail to mention resource persons that regulate research because the organization banks on their expertise to regulate quality of research to ensure informed policy decisions across sub-Saharan Africa” – A. Ajakaiye

With such affirmation from the respondents, the study sought to determine the kind of knowledge that was managed by AERC and how it was stored. From the responses received, it was established that knowledge managed at AERC were both explicit and tacit in nature. It was determined that explicit knowledge actually existed at AERC within the departments which were portrayed in the form of:

❖ Organizational publications

AERC’s Communications department was entrusted with the publishing of a number of publications emanating from AERC’s various Divisions. Among them are: Research papers emanating from thematic research; Special papers, reports and papers from senior policy seminar, AERC Newsletter, AERC Annual report, Research News, AERC Brochure, ED’s Letter, full-length monographs emanating from collaborative research, journals (Journal of African Economies, African Journal of Agricultural economists, African journal of economies) among others. It was noted in the interviews that most of these organizational publications and other knowledge materials are managed in AERC

library. However, AERC had a bulk task of managing these resources in print format and plans were underway to disseminate widely as confirmed by Communications manager.

“Our knowledge and information resources are largely in print and although we keep pdf formats of the documents we are yet to digitize our collections to enhance wide dissemination and world-wide availability of research information. We are working closely with the library unit and the ICT to find a digitization solution for online content and we are optimistic to achieve this soon”. – Charles Owino

❖ Intranet

From the information captured from majority of respondents in their interviews, it was determined that AERC had intranet which was the organization’s central depository of information. All information required for both operational, administrative, procedural, as well as important policy documents were stored on the AERC intranet. It was home to all various information systems used in AERC.

❖ Information Systems

Some respondents especially from the ICT department noted that there existed a number of information systems at AERC which included Management Information system, Financial Information system, Human Resource Information system, Library Information system, World Food Programme Data portal, Publications pipeline and so on which are used in the management of knowledge in the organization. Knowledge managed by such platforms is explicit in nature.

Tacit Knowledge

Highly Trained and Qualified Staff

On the other hand, it was determined both from the interviews, questionnaires and observation that other organizational knowledge is managed in form of people skills, expertise and experiences. For instance, it was noted that AERC attracts a highly trained and skilled pool of staff at both managerial and operational levels. As a basic requirement, the organization does not engage staff below bachelor's degree for program assistants and administrative secretaries' positions and above. As a result the organization boasts of a number of professors, doctorate degree holders and master's degree holders. All employees are engaged with several years of experience which is brought into AERC. This is compounded by their extended stay with AERC, with the majority of staff having worked for over five years. A select few have worked for AERC for over ten years. The experiences, knowledge and skills of the AERC workforce is tacit knowledge that is managed in people.

Experienced Long-Serving Members of staff

The investigation through interviews, questionnaires and observation revealed that AERC has some long-serving members of staff who joined the organization since its inception. The Executive Director is one such a resource who joined the organization in 1989 as a manager under the training department. In addition, twenty eight members of staff representing 73.68 percent of the entire staff have worked for AERC for over ten years. In this category were key staffs such as the Executive Director, Director of Finance, Director of Research, Manager Communications, Accounts staff, training administrator, Information resources administrator among others. This cadre of staff represents a wealth

of knowledge on and about AERC. This resonates well with information provided by the executive Director who had this to say

“I joined AERC as a training manager and I have grown with the organization to rise to the position of an Executive Director, today marks twenty-four years of dedicated service and I can tell there is no other organization within sub-Saharan Africa that is changing lives of Africans like AERC. Our policy research program is unique as it involves policy makers charged with critical economic decisions in their home countries” – Prof. William Lyakurwa

AERC Resource Persons

AERC maintains a pool of research team which is a think-tank constituted among its rich network of members and expertise in their areas of specialization. This think-tank popularly known as resource persons constitutes senior expertise in economics and are selected from all over the world. A strong team of five experts are tasked with steering research and the surgery of research papers presented as research proposals as well as PhD dissertation proposal papers. Such resource team is a knowledge base that is tacit in nature that has been nurtured for a long period of time.

Notably, it was significant for the study to determine if members of staff understood knowledge management and its implications on organizational processes. When this question was posed to the respondents, it was determined that indeed all of them appreciated the impact of knowledge management to the organizational processes. The statement by one of the resource persons emphasizes the importance of anchoring knowledge in the organization programmes.

“We benchmark with world renowned institutions in our research programmes to ensure economic policy in sub-Saharan Africa receives the best. Economic policies were dictated from the West before AERC was constituted and this only meant that policies were irrelevant to African context. This is exactly the gap that AERC came in to bridge”–Simon Kimenyi

Some of the processes that were mentioned to be heavily dependent on knowledge management included strategic planning processes, human resource management and development, innovation and research; and financial management. Thus, it was deduced that these processes were the reason as to why knowledge management was given emphasis at AERC.

4.4 Methods used to Capture, Store and Retrieve Knowledge at AERC

The study sought to determine the methods used to capture, store and retrieve knowledge at AERC as part of its specific objectives. As such, a number of questions were posed to the respondents during the interview, on the questionnaire and a number of aspects observed using the observation checklist. Hence, the study sought to determine if there were any knowledge management systems at AERC.

It was determined that there existed systems for knowledge management at AERC since all respondents 38 affirmed that indeed there some knowledge management systems available at AERC. In addition, the study went ahead to probe on the types of facilities and systems that were used to capture and store knowledge management at AERC. As such, a number of systems and facilities were provided which included Exit Interviews; Activity Reporting; Workshop Evaluation forms; planned handovers; Networked

computer systems; Internet and Filing Systems, Archives. It was revealed that AERC conducted exit interviews on every employee leaving the organization. The purpose of this was to provide feedback on why the employee was leaving the organization, what they liked or did not like about the organization and what areas in the organization they felt needed improvement. On Activity Reporting, it revealed that the AERC's core activities included workshops, conferences, seminars and small meetings.

The researcher observed and confirmed that indeed knowledge capture was active at AERC as was observed in human resource files bearing copies of exit interviews, staff handover notes, workshop evaluation forms, organized conferences and workshops were also observed.

These activities generated important information that was harnessed and processed to yield crucial knowledge. Every staff that attended any of these activities was required to produce a report of the proceedings to the management. Workshop Evaluation forms on the other hand were provided at the end of every workshop. Staffs coordinating the workshop were required to issue workshop evaluation forms to all the participants. Data gathered from the evaluation forms were analyzed and reported to the management on what worked, what didn't work and lessons learnt with recommendations on how to improve the process.

Planned handovers as a capture tool was a standard practice at AERC. It was observed that before a staff leaves the organization, he/she gave a three months advance notice to allow the organization to look for a replacement in good time. The incoming staff was given an orientation with accompanying handover notes by the outgoing staff to ensure a

smooth transition. This ensured that there was no breakdown of knowledge management processes.

Importantly, computer systems were also used in capturing knowledge at AERC. For instance, it was pointed out that networked computer systems were usually used in capturing knowledge. These included Human Resource Information Systems, Management Information Systems, Library Information systems, Finance Information systems. All these systems formed a core part of AERC knowledge base. Also, linked databases were applied in knowledge capturing, some respondents noted that AERC had a number of linked databases for information and knowledge storage. Some of the databases included library database, data portal for World Food Programme project, donor funding and grant management, staff management database and AERC research alumni.

Additionally, the study sought to establish if facilities that were used to capture and store knowledge were sufficient. Hence, when the question was posed to the respondents during the interviews, and from the questionnaires, the majority of respondents indicated that this knowledge capturing and storage facilities were sufficient as 68.4% agreed to this while minorities were of the dissenting opinion as 31.6% indicated that they were not sufficient. This was deduced that although there were substantial facilities put in place for capturing and storing knowledge, there was still some room for improvement in order to cater for the needs and requirement of knowledge management at AERC. This is illustrated by Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Sufficiency of Knowledge Management Capturing and Storage

Sufficiency of Knowledge Management Capturing and Storage			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	YES	26	68.4
	NO	12	31.6
	Total	38	100

To be able to understand how knowledge is shared at AERC, the study sought to understand how Knowledge Management Systems are coordinated among departments in the organization. When this question was posed to the respondents on the questionnaire and during interviews contacted and as observed by the researcher, it was revealed that knowledge management systems were controlled in through managing access controls. Only authorized users were allowed to access the systems using access control mechanisms. This was done to ensure that knowledge managed in such platforms was not compromised by unauthorized users. This was confirmed by director of finance as she was categorical on the security of the financial system

“You see finance is a sensitive area and the financial system keeps confidential information such as grants that we wouldn’t want anyone to leak out. It is one of the strategic risks and so it is guarded closely. In fact it is only me and the finance manager who have express access, the rest must get authorization passwords from the two of us” – Grace Amurle

In addition, it was revealed that any general knowledge which was supposed to be accessed by majority of internal stakeholders of AERC was put on the intranet for easier access.

As a way of understanding the ways of improving knowledge capturing, storage and retrieval at AERC, the study posed a question to its respondents to suggest other systems that could be acquired to improve knowledge management at AERC. With respect to this, respondents noted that knowledge blocks, knowledge networks, peer-assist and knowledge café could be adopted by AERC to improve knowledge capturing, storage and retrieval in 21.1%, 34.2%, 15.8% and 28.9% respectively. This is illustrated in table 4.7. Thus, it was deduced that with implementation of these mechanisms, knowledge capturing, storage and retrieval efforts at AERC will be highly improved.

Table 4.7: Improving Knowledge Capturing, Storage and Retrieval

Improving knowledge capturing, storage and retrieval		
Mechanism	Frequency	Percent
Knowledge Blocks	8	21.1
Knowledge Networks	13	34.2
Peer assists	6	15.8
Knowledge Café	11	28.9
Total	38	100

4.5 Policies Governing Knowledge Management at AERC

As part of investigating knowledge management practices at the African Economic Research Consortium with a view to recommend suitable strategies for improving knowledge management, it was important for the study to determine policies governing knowledge management at AERC. Respondents answered to this question on the questionnaire and the same questions were posed to respondents in interviews contacted in order to understand these policies. To start with, the study sought to understand policy measures on capturing, storing and sharing expertise knowledge, information and experience among staff and stakeholders at AERC. As indicated in table 4.8, it was pointed out in the interviews that AERC has a number of policy measures on capturing, storing and sharing this knowledge. For instance, 7.9% noted that the performance appraisal policy was put in place as a way of capturing, storing and sharing the knowledge, 28.9% mentioned staff induction policy, 39.5% mentioned staff training and development while 23.7% noted coaching and mentoring as a policy measure for capturing, storing and sharing knowledge at AERC. Hence, it can be deduced that AERC had instituted a number of policy measures that guided capturing, storage and sharing of knowledge among its stakeholders. The Human resources manager had this to say

“From your vivid explanation of what exactly entails knowledge management policies, I can say we have individual policies that touch on various aspects that feed into knowledge management as a whole. Although these are not stated as specific to knowledge management, you could actually say they form part of knowledge management policies” – Catherine Tole

As observed, AERC maintains disaggregated policies on knowledge management activities within the organization although none of these policies was specific to knowledge management. It was revealed that performance appraisal policy measure was instituted by AERC as a way of gauging staff performance and identifying any gaps that may exist in staff performance. AERC carried out performance appraisal periodically using the balanced scorecard. Performance appraisal report was shared between the appraised staff and their supervisor who later shared it with management. Identified gaps in knowledge, resources, interpersonal relations or other issues were discussed and a way forward sought on how to bridge the gaps.

On the other hand, new staff inductions were carried out on every new staff joining the organization. This involved a well-coordinated induction into the organizations structure, vision, mission, objectives, operations, activities, policies, procedures, so that they grasped a clear understanding of the entire organization. This induction took a minimum of two weeks, but continued in an *ad hoc* manner. Also, AERC had a training policy. AERC regularly conducted training for its staff to keep abreast with contemporary issues affecting each individual staff career path. This training was either individual based or group based, depending on the identified needs.

Table 4.8: Policy Measures on Capturing and Sharing Expertise Knowledge, Information and Experience

Policy measures on capturing and sharing expertise knowledge, information and experience		
Policy measures	Frequency	Percent
Performance Appraisal	3	7.9
Staff induction	11	28.9
Staff training and development	15	39.5
Coaching and mentorship	9	23.7
Total	38	100

In addition, the study sought to understand policies that govern business continuity especially when an employee left AERC. As illustrated in table 4.9, it was pointed out by 57.9% of the respondents in their interview that AERC conducted exit interviews to employees leaving the organization. These interviews were designed to elicit knowledge from the exiting employee on his or her experiences, knowledge and skills and how the organization can address its weakness and build on its strengths. On the other hand, 42.1% noted that coaching and mentorship policies were put in place by AERC. The policy stipulated that an employee wishing to exit shall provide a notice on the same to enable AERC identify his or her replacement who would be coached and mentored by the person leaving the organization. In addition, based on the observation made by the researcher, it was established that once an existing employee provided a resignation notice or one was due for retirement, the suitable person was identified who will then be coached and mentored by the exiting employee in order to pass on knowledge. It can thus

be deduced that AERC had policy measures in place to guarantee business continuity when employees exit.

Table 4.9: Policy Measures on Business Continuity when Employee Exit

Policy measures on business continuity		
Policy measures	Frequency	Percent
Exist Interviews	22	57.9
Coaching and mentorship	16	42.1
Total	38	100

Importantly, the study sought to determine if there were general policies governing knowledge management at AERC. As illustrated in table 4.10, it was revealed from the questionnaire, interviews and observation made that there existed numerous policies that were existing at AERC that contributed to knowledge management at AERC. From the information divulged from the interviews there existed a publication policy, financial information system policy, human management policy, library and information access policy, research guidelines policy and information communication policy at 7.9%, 15.8%, 10.5%, 13.2%, 28.9% and 23.7% respectively. On publications, the policy pointed out that AERC published both in print and electronic media on wide range of economics literature. These include: research papers, special papers, abstracts, executive summaries, newsletters and brochures, working papers, reports or proceedings and teaching materials. The policy stipulated that the array of published material were distributed in electronic and print formats to a wide readership within Africa and outside the continent.

On the other hand, the Financial Information system Policy included grant management policy. This guided AERC activities, including budgetary allocations, grant management and reporting. Human resource Management Policy on its part covered wide range of aspects including HIV, gender, disability among others. It was also pointed that AERC had a comprehensive policy on Information Technology use and management. Importantly, research at AERC was pointed out that it was guided by policies and procedures as set out by the programme committee and the research department.

Table 4.10: General Policies Governing Knowledge Management at AERC

General policies governing knowledge management at AERC		
Policy type	Frequency	Percent
Publication policy	3	7.9
Financial Information system Policy	6	15.8
Human resource Management Policy	4	10.5
Library and Information Access Policy	5	13.2
Research Guidelines policy	11	28.9
Information Communications Technology Policy	9	23.7
Total	38	100

4.6 Existence of Knowledge Sharing Culture at AERC

According to Mudambi and Navarra (2004), knowledge management prospers in an environment where there is a culture of sharing experiences and knowledge acquired. With regard to this and as part of the specific objective of the study, the study sought to establish if there was a knowledge sharing culture at AERC. Hence, as part of

understanding this, the study posed a question to respondents if mentorship or nurturing were being undertaken at AERC and if they were, the forms in which they were undertaken. With respect to this, it was revealed that mentorship was undertaken as all 38 respondents either pointed out that mentorship or nurturing were being undertaken at AERC. On specific types of mentoring or nurturing that were being undertaken at AERC, as illustrated by table 4.11, it was determined that on-job training, coaching, rotational programs were undertaken at 21.1%, 28.9% and 50.0%. It was deduced that mentorship or nurturing strategies were depended on human resource development strategies which also contributed towards knowledge sharing culture at AERC.

Table 4.11: Types of Mentorship/Nurturing undertaken at AERC

Types of Mentorship/Nurturing undertaken at AERC		
Category	Frequency	Percent
Coaching	8	21.1
On-Job Training	11	28.9
Job rotational programs	19	50.0
Total	38	100

Again, as postulated by Mudambi and Navarra (2004), knowledge management culture is advanced through teamwork and participation in processes by stakeholders. It was observed that AERC held staff seminars quarterly which combined with team building activities meant to bind the team and enhance cooperation among staff and departments. Regarding this, the study sought to determine if the management style at AERC was

characterized by teamwork, consensus and participation and if it was so, how this was implemented. As such, as illustrated in table 4.1, 55.3% of the respondents pointed out that the management style was characterized by teamwork, consensus and participation while 44.4% noted that teamwork, consensus and participation was not part of the management style at AERC. As such, it was deduced that although management exhibited some level of teamwork, consensus on issues and participation, this was not inclusive as some segment of the stakeholders felt left out in these processes. However, those who pointed out that management style was characterized by teamwork, consensus and participation revealed that such was implemented through staff meetings where employees were allowed to share any concern with the management. Others noted that teamwork was promoted through teambuilding events that are occasionally organized to bring stakeholders together. This was also backed by the observation made by the researcher where it was noted that there existed staff meetings that were conducted on biannually and team building events. All these events were organized so that stakeholders can share their experiences, knowledge and any other concern about their own well-being and that of AERC as an organization.

Table 4.12: Management Style at AERC was Characterized By Teamwork, Consensus and Participation

Management style at AERC was characterized by teamwork, consensus and participation			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	YES	21	55.3
	NO	17	44.7
	Total	38	100

As part of knowledge sharing culture the study sought to establish if creativity and innovation were promoted at AERC and if so, how this was done. When this question was posed to the respondents, it was agreeable to all that AERC promoted creativity and innovation as all 38 respondents agreed to this. In addition, it was pointed out by all the respondents that AERC sponsored any creative and innovative idea that was advanced. It was thus deduced that although AERC supported innovation and creativity, it has sponsored initiatives and had no other strategies that were put in place apart from sponsorship. Questionnaire responses revealed reservations by some staff to share knowledge for fear of reprisals by sharing what would be sensitive knowledge, others felt uninterested to share knowledge with colleagues from other departments because they felt powerful holding knowledge not held by colleagues. Yet others felt staff at AERC work in silos and felt left out of inclusion in any of the groupings.

4.7 Challenges Facing Knowledge Management at AERC

Importantly, the study sought to determine the challenges facing knowledge management at AERC. Thus, the study sought to understand the challenges inhibiting the sharing of experiences, information and knowledge at AERC. With respect to this a number of challenges were provided by the respondents through questionnaires and in interviews contacted. The challenges as illustrated in table 4.13 included: Lack of knowledge management awareness. This was pointed out by 2.6% of the respondents through questionnaires and interviews who expressed that lack of awareness on the existence of knowledge at AERC despite some of them working on knowledge resources. They expressed ignorance until the researcher explained the concept of knowledge management to them. It was thus observed by the researcher that lack of knowledge management awareness contributed to dismal management of knowledge at AERC.

In addition, 5.3% of the respondents pointed out disconnect in information and knowledge sharing owing to various cultural differences among staff existed at AERC since its staff was drawn from different cultural background. In addition, based on the observation made by the researcher, it was determined that cultural differences were a bigger hinderance in sharing of knowledge at AERC.

Also, it was noted by 15.8% of the respondents that there were difficulties in accessing knowledge more so knowledge held by other departments. Individual staff kept the knowledge in their custody to themselves and were not willing to share. In addition, 18.4% of the respondents pointed out that the intranet which was supposed to be a central repository of AERC knowledge was apparently not easily accessible. Information

overload to some respondents was a hindrance as they revealed that valuable information was buried in piles of documents and data. This fact was observed by the researcher as some offices had files spread on the floor and file cabinets that were full. From the observation made by the researcher, it was noted that the library was overflowing with print information materials stored in every available space, some of whose information value could not be immediately established. Departments were virtually keeping everything because they were not sure which documents were to be preserved.

Again, 28.9% of the respondents noted that reluctance of individuals to share knowledge and information was a big hindrance in knowledge sharing. They cited differences in staff treatment and some have the view that the organization has cartels favored by top management. This tends to put off some staff from voluntarily sharing knowledge. On the other hand, 15.8% of the respondents revealed that fear of reprisals were also a hindrance to knowledge sharing. Trust is a particularly important issue since staffs need to feel secure that they are not jeopardizing themselves by engaging in knowledge sharing. It was pointed that some people were afraid of reprisals based on the nature of knowledge being shared. Lastly, 13.2% percent revealed that interpersonal frictions that were unresolved were a big challenge in sharing knowledge.

Table 4.13: Challenges Facing Knowledge Sharing

Challenges to information sharing		
challenges	Frequency	Percent
Lack of knowledge management awareness	1	2.6
cultural differences among staff	2	5.3
difficulties in accessing knowledge	6	15.8
Information overload	7	18.4
Interpersonal frictions	5	13.2
Fear of reprisals	6	15.8
reluctance of individuals to share knowledge	11	28.9
Total	38	100

In addition, the study sought to establish the challenges inhibiting knowledge management at AERC. From the questionnaires and interviews conducted and as illustrated in table 4.14, it was determined that there are several factors which hinders knowledge management at AERC. Human resources challenges were pointed by 18.4% of those interviewed that it was a challenge facing knowledge management at AERC. On the other hand, infrastructural problem was mentioned by 28.9%, information explosion by 21.1% while 31.6% of respondents revealed that economic problems were a hindrance to knowledge management. It was thus deduced that there existed a number of challenges that hampered successful management of knowledge at AERC.

Table 4.14: Challenges Facing Knowledge Management at AERC

Challenges facing knowledge management at AERC		
Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Human Resource challenges	7	18.4
Infrastructural Problems	11	28.9
Information Explosion	8	21.1
Economic problems	12	31.6
Total	38	100

4.8 Knowledge Management Best Practices at AERC

Importantly, the study sought to determine the best methods that can be used to promote continuous learning at AERC. As illustrated in table 4.15, data collected revealed that there existed a number of methods that can be applied to promote continuous learning at AERC. As indicated from the table, sponsorship was mentioned by 15.8%, exhibitions by 31.6%, creation of incubation centers by 23.7% and mentorship by 28.9%. Thus, it was deduced that knowledge management approaches can be improved through adopting the above stated continuous learning methods.

Table 4.15: Methods that can be used to Promote Continuous Learning at AERC

Methods that can be used to promote continuous learning at AERC		
Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Sponsorships	6	15.8
Exhibitions	12	31.6
Creation of Incubation centers	9	23.7
Mentorship/coaching	11	28.9
Total	38	100

The study also sought to establish the best policies that can be adopted to promote knowledge management at AERC. When this question was posed to the study respondents in the interviews conducted and as indicated in table 4.2, it was revealed that AERC could adopt and implement open access policies and knowledge/information dissemination policies which were mentioned by 31.6% and 68.4% respectively by the respondents. It was deduced that adoption and implementation of these policies will enhance knowledge sharing among stakeholder of AERC.

Table 4.16: Best Policies that can be Adopted to Promote Knowledge Management at AERC

Best policies that can be adopted to promote knowledge management at AERC		
Policies	Frequency	Percent
Open access policies	12	31.6
knowledge/information dissemination policy	26	68.4
Total	38	100

Lastly, it was imperative to determine measures that could be implemented to address knowledge management problems at AERC. When this question was posed to respondents as indicated in table 4.17, it was determined that there are a number of mechanisms that can be implemented to address challenges facing knowledge management at AERC. As such, open access policy was determined to be a practice that can be adopted at 23.7%, adoption of freedom of information at 18.4%, promotion of reading culture at 10.5%, increased funding of knowledge management initiatives at 21.1% and improvement of ICT infrastructure at 26.3%. It was thus deduced that implementation of such measures will help address problems associated with knowledge management at AERC.

Table 4.17: Measures to Address Knowledge Management Problems at AERC

Measures to address knowledge management problems at AERC		
	Frequency	Percent
Open access policy	9	23.7
Adoption of Freedom of Information	7	18.4
Promotion of reading culture	4	10.5
Increased funding of knowledge management	8	21.1
ICT infrastructure improvement	10	26.3
Total	38	100

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a summary of the findings presented in chapter four. The summary is presented based on the objectives of the study. The chapter also presents conclusion and recommendations of the study. The aim of the study was to investigate knowledge management practices at the African Economic Research Consortium with a view to recommend a number of strategies to implement to improve knowledge management at AERC. Therefore, the chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations that, if adopted and implemented by AERC, will help to improve knowledge management at AERC.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The findings are summarized based on the six specific objectives of the study.

5.2.1 Knowledge Resources Managed at African Economic Research Consortium

- On knowledge resources management at AERC, it was established that knowledge managed at AERC were both explicit and tacit in nature.
- It was determined that explicit knowledge existed in the form of: organizational publications; intranet and information systems.
- On tacit knowledge resources managed, it was determined to be in the form of highly trained and qualified staff, experienced long-serving members of staff and AERC Resource Persons.

5.2.2 Methods used to Capture, Store and Retrieve Knowledge at AERC

On the methods used to capture, store and retrieve knowledge at AERC, the study determined that:

- There existed systems for knowledge management at AERC since all 100% of the respondents affirmed that indeed there were some knowledge management systems available at AERC.
- Such systems included Computer Systems, Human Resource Information Systems, Management Information Systems, Library Information systems, Finance Information systems. All these systems formed a core part of AERC knowledge base.
- Other systems such as Exit Interviews; Activity Reporting; Workshop Evaluation forms; planned handovers; Networked computer systems; Internet and Filing Systems, Archives were revealed to be in place that helped in capturing and storing knowledge at AERC.
- Although there were substantial facilities put in place for capturing and storing knowledge, there was still some room for improvement in order to cater for the needs and requirement of knowledge management at AERC.
- However, it was noted that knowledge blocks, knowledge networks, peer-assist and knowledge café could be adopted by AERC to improve knowledge capturing, storage and retrieval.

5.2.3 Policies Governing Knowledge Management at AERC

On policies governing knowledge management at AERC, the study established that:

- AERC had a number of policy measures on capturing, storing and sharing this knowledge which included performance appraisal policy, staff induction policy, staff training and development policy, coaching and mentoring policy.
- AERC conducted exit interviews to employees leaving the organization which were designed to elicit knowledge from the exiting employee on his or her experiences, knowledge and skills and how the organization can address its weakness and build on its strengths.
- Coaching and mentorship policies were put in place by AERC.
- On general policies governing knowledge management at AERC, it was revealed that there existed publication policy, financial information system policy, human management policy, library and information access policy, research guidelines policy and information communication policy

5.2.4 Existence of Knowledge Sharing Culture at AERC

On existence of knowledge management culture at AERC:

- It was revealed that mentorship was undertaken as all 38 respondents either pointed out that mentorship or nurturing were being undertaken at AERC.
- It was determined that on-job training, coaching, rotational programs was undertaken

- It was established that although management exhibited some level of teamwork, consensus on issues and participation, this was not inclusive as some segment of the stakeholders felt left out in these processes.

5.2.5 Challenges Facing Managing Knowledge at AERC

On the challenges facing managing knowledge at AERC, the study established that there existed a number of challenges which included:

- Lack of knowledge management awareness.
- Disconnect in information and knowledge sharing owing to various cultural differences among staff also existed at AERC since its staff was drawn from different cultural background.
- Difficulties in accessing knowledge more so for the knowledge held by other departments.
- It was revealed that intranet which was supposed to be a central repository of AERC knowledge was apparently not easily accessible.
- Information overload to some respondents was a hindrance as they revealed that valuable information was buried in piles of documents and data.
- It was noted that the reluctance of individuals to share knowledge and information was a big hindrance in knowledge sharing.
- The fear of reprisals was also pointed as a hindrance to knowledge sharing. It was pointed that some people were afraid of reprisals based on the nature of knowledge being shared.
- Human resources challenges, infrastructural problem, information explosion and economic problems were all cited as a hindrance to knowledge management.

5.2.6 Knowledge Management Best Practices at AERC

On suitable mechanisms for knowledge management at AERC, several findings were revealed. It was revealed that:

- There existed a number of methods that can be applied to promote continuous learning at AERC which included sponsorship, exhibitions, creation of incubation centers and mentorship.
- AERC can adopt and implement open access policies and knowledge/information dissemination policies.
- There were a number of mechanisms that can be implemented to address challenges facing knowledge management at AERC which included:
 - Open access policy;
 - Promotion of reading culture;
 - Increased funding of knowledge management initiatives and
 - Improvement of ICT infrastructure in knowledge management at AERC.

5.3 Conclusion

AERC as a research institution managed a wide category of knowledge which were both explicit and tacit in nature. Its explicit knowledge existed in the form of: organizational publications; intranet and information systems. On the other hand, the types of tacit knowledge managed were determined to be in the form of highly trained and qualified staff, experienced long-serving members of staff and AERC Resource Persons.

In managing this knowledge, there existed systems that were used to capture and store knowledge which included Computer Systems, Human Resource Information Systems, Management Information Systems, Library Information systems, Finance Information

systems among others. All these systems formed a core part of AERC knowledge base. Importantly, knowledge management at AERC was governed by a number of policy measures that guided knowledge capturing, storing and sharing. These included performance appraisal policy, staff induction policy, staff training and development policy, coaching and mentoring policy. Other positive aspects of knowledge management at AERC was that there existed some knowledge management culture that was exhibited in form of mentorship or nurturing, on-job training, coaching, rotational programs among others.

Nonetheless, there were also a number of challenges which were inhibiting management of knowledge at AERC. Such challenges included lack of knowledge management awareness, disconnect in information and knowledge sharing owing to various cultural differences among staff since its staff was drawn from different cultural background, information overload as valuable information was buried in piles of documents and data, reluctance of individuals to share knowledge and information were among factors that limited knowledge management and its sharing at AERC.

Significantly, despite these challenges, there existed a number of strategies that can be implemented to improve knowledge management at AERC. These include promotion of continuous learning through sponsorship, exhibitions, creation of incubation centers and enhancement of mentorship programs. AERC can also consider adopting and implementing open access policies on knowledge.

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that knowledge in an organization such as AERC can be managed through variety of systems and mechanisms. For explicit format of knowledge, there is need of systems to be adopted that can aid in their management. Such systems may include other information management systems that are used in other business functional processes such as financial computer systems, human resource information systems, library management systems, records management systems among others.

On the tacit formats of knowledge, it can be concluded that there are a number of mechanisms that can be employed in harvesting and managing such knowledge. Some of the mechanisms include mentoring and coaching which ensures that inherent knowledge is passed from one person to another. Nonetheless, managing of intangible knowledge is more challenging than the explicit one as its management and transfer from one person to another is based on the goodwill of the owner.

The study concludes that for successful management of knowledge in an organization, there is need for policy and legal framework to be in place.

5.4 Recommendations

The study revealed a number of challenges that hindered knowledge management at AERC. For the knowledge management practices to be improved, AERC needs to institute strategies that are aligned in addressing these problems. Hence, the study recommends the following to enhance knowledge management at AERC:

AERC should take a bold step in initiating strong knowledge management practices; The human resource department should start first by educating and creating awareness among staff on knowledge management practices. Top in priority among staff should be knowledge sharing initiatives. The awareness among staff will ensure that they appreciate the need to harness and manage knowledge for both personal and organizational development. Without proper staff awareness, knowledge management initiative might be continuously resisted. However, with sufficient awareness, such initiatives can easily be embraced by different stakeholders.

Senior management of AERC should initiate Knowledge management strategy which must identify key areas of organizational processes. The framework should identify specific instruments needed to improve learning and knowledge sharing and should be aligned to organization strategic objective .Moreover, the strategy should identify cultural and behavioral changes needed for implementation and the incentives and training that must be put in place to bring these changes about. Also, the strategy should have strategic components that seek to strengthen knowledge-sharing and learning processes; equip AERC with a more supportive knowledge-sharing and learning infrastructure; foster partnerships for broader knowledge sharing and learning; and promoting a supportive knowledge-sharing and learning culture.

The principle of freedom promotes access of information by the public. Adoption and implementation of open access policy will promote access to information and knowledge at AERC. For AERC to promote dissemination of research information and knowledge, open access policy should be adopted and implementation to foster accessibility of its

information and knowledge in its databases. Such policy will ensure that any material published by the organization are published on the free to access platform such as an organizational digital repository in order to be accessed without restrictions.

AERC management should consider increased investment in ICT infrastructure which will help improve availability and accessibility of information and knowledge in computer systems. Poor ICT infrastructure was identified as a major challenge in knowledge management at AERC. Hence, it is important to increase investment of this infrastructure so as to improve availability of this knowledge on the online platform.

Resource mobilization manager should consider enhanced funding of knowledge management initiatives to help provide the necessary resources required for knowledge management. Knowledge management initiatives suffer from underfunding of its activities. Thus, efforts should be made to ensure that such initiatives access enough resources to facilitate management of knowledge at AERC.

AERC as a research institution should be in the forefront in nurturing innovation activities. This can be effected through introduction and supporting innovation centers or incubation centers that helps to nature and nurture ideas into products. This critical in knowledge management as it helps to ensure that newer knowledge is generated and preserved for posterity. In addition, incubation centers will assure continues creativity that is vital in generation of new knowledge.

AERC management should constitute organizational knowledge management committees. Such committees should draw their membership across the organization to comprise representatives from all departments and all cultural background. As earlier noted by the findings of the study that there was resistance to knowledge management associated to cultural differences amongst staff of the AERC, such committees will help in addressing such challenges as their members will act as goodwill ambassadors of knowledge management amongst people of the same cultural heritage.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

The study established that there was inadequate knowledge management awareness among different stakeholders at AERC. In addition, disconnect in information and knowledge sharing owing to various cultural differences among staff also existed. Thus, the study recommends further research on “Information sharing among AERC staff”. This will help to understand information sharing behavior of the AERC staff and some of the strategies that can be instituted in order to harness knowledge in an organizational setting comprising of people from different cultural background.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear respondent,

The researcher, Mr. Benjamin Masila is an Mphil student at Moi University, School of Information Science. The researcher is carrying out a research on “Knowledge Management Practices at the African Economic Research Consortium – Nairobi secretariat” as part of requirements for the attainment of Master of Philosophy degree in Information Science at Moi University.

The study seeks to investigate knowledge management practices at AERC with a view to recommend knowledge management best practices for business improvement, continuity, and innovation. The study is targeting both creators, custodians of knowledge, users and knowledge dissemination channels at AERC.

You have been selected as a respondent to this study as a key informant on issues pertaining knowledge management at AERC. You are kindly requested to volunteer any information that will help realize the objectives of this research. All information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be used for the purposes of this study.

Yours Sincerely,

Benjamin Masila

IS/MPHIL/084/010

APPENDIX II: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

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Ref: No.

Date:

24th March, 2014

NACOSTI/P/14/8717/1108

Benjamin Nguma Masila
Moi University
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ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Knowledge management for institutional capacity building at the African Economic Research Consortium – Nairobi Secretariat*," I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for a period ending **31st December, 2014**.

You are advised to report to the **Executive Director, African Economic Research Consortium, the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUT, PhD, HSC.
FOR: SECRETARY/CEO

Copy to:

The Executive Director
African Economic Research Consortium

APPENDIX IV: PERMISSION TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA AT AERC

The Executive Director,
African Economic Research Consortium
POB 62882 – 00200
Nairobi Kenya

19thNovember, 2012

Dear Sir,

RE: PERMISSION TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA AT AERC

The researcher is a fully registered student for a Masters class in Information Sciences at Moi University and has completed the required course work. As a requirement for the attainment of the degree, he is carrying out research on “Knowledge Management Practices at AERC, Nairobi Secretariat”. This research aims to identify knowledge Management practices at AERC, inform and educate staff and stakeholders on the critical role of knowledge management for organizational innovation, performance management, business continuity, continuous learning and competitive advantage. The data collected will be used strictly for the purpose of research and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

By this letter, kindly accord permission to carry out the research at AERC.

Yours sincerely,

Benjamin Masila

ENCL.

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE

A. Bio-data

1. What is your age bracket?.....
2. What is your area of specialization?.....
3. What is your highest level of education?.....
4. How long have you worked for
AERC?.....

B. Knowledge resources that exist at African Economic Research Consortium

1. Have you heard of knowledge Management at African Economic Research Consortium

Yes [] No []

2. Does African Economic Research Consortium recognize knowledge as part of its asset base?

Yes [] No [] No Idea []

3. If Yes , What Knowledge resources are managed by African Economic Research Consortium?

Explicit Knowledge [] Tacit Knowledge []

4. How is knowledge stored at African Economic Research Consortium?
5. Do you as a member of staff understand knowledge management and its implications on organizational processes? If Yes, give reasons.

C. Methods used to Capture, Store and Retrieve Knowledge at AERC

1. Are there any knowledge management systems at AERC?
2. What are some of these facilities used to capture and store knowledge at AERC?
3. Are these facilities sufficient in management of this knowledge?
4. Briefly describe how Knowledge Management Systems are coordinated among departments

5. Suggest other systems that could be acquired to improve KM at AERC?

D. Policies Governing Knowledge Management at AERC

1. What are the policies governing knowledge capturing, storage and sharing among staff and stakeholders at AERC?
2. What are the policies that govern business continuity when an employee leaves the organization?
3. What are the general policies governing knowledge management at AERC?

E. Existence of Knowledge Sharing Culture at AERC

1. Is mentorship, nurturing, coaching undertaken at AERC?
 - 1a. If yes, in what form does the mentorship, coaching and nurturing undertaken?
2. Does management style at AERC characterize teamwork, consensus and participation?
 - 2a. If yes, how is this implemented?
3. Does AERC promote creativity and innovation? If Yes, how?

F. Challenges faced in Managing Knowledge at AERC

1. What are the challenges inhibiting the sharing of experiences, information and knowledge at AERC?
2. What are the challenges inhibiting knowledge management at AERC?

G. Suitable Strategies that can be used for Knowledge Management At AERC

1. What are best methods that can be used to promote continuous learning at AERC?
2. What are the best policies that can be adopted to promote knowledge management at AERC?
3. What measures can be implemented to address knowledge management problems at AERC?

APPENDIX VI: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

A. Knowledge resources that exist at African Economic Research Consortium

1. Observe various Knowledge resources managed at AERC
2. How knowledge is stored at African Economic Research Consortium

B. Methods used to Capture, Store and Retrieve Knowledge at AERC

1. Observe knowledge management systems at AERC
2. Observe facilities used to store knowledge at AERC

C. Policies Governing Knowledge Management at AERC

1. Observe how AERC ensure business continuity when an employee leaves the organization
2. Observe presence of policies governing knowledge management at AERC

D. Existence of Knowledge Sharing Culture at AERC

1. Observe whether mentorship, facilitation or nurturing are undertaken at AERC
2. Observe whether management style at AERC is characterized by teamwork, consensus and participation and how it is implemented
3. Observe whether creativity and innovation are promoted at AERC and how?

E. Challenges faced in Managing Knowledge at AERC

1. Observe challenges inhibiting the sharing of experiences, information and knowledge at AERC

APPENDIX VII: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

The researcher, Mr. Benjamin Masila is a Masters student at Moi University, School of Information sciences. He is undertaking research on “Knowledge Management practices at the African Economic Research Consortium – Nairobi Secretariat” as part of the requirement for the award of the degree.

You are requested to fill in this questionnaire with as much details as available to help the researcher complete this task. Data collected through this questionnaire will only be used for research and ultimate confidentiality will be observed. This questionnaire does not capture personal details.

A. Bio-data

1. What is your age bracket? [18 – 30] [31 – 40] [41 – 50] [Over 50]

2. State your area of specialization?

Economics Information Research Other.....

3. What is your highest level of education

Diploma Undergraduate Masters PhD Other.....

4. How long have you worked for AERC? [0-5] [5-10] [10-15] Over 15[

B. Knowledge resources that exist at African Economic Research Consortium

1. Have you heard of knowledge Management at African Economic Research Consortium Yes [] No []

2. Does African Economic Research Consortium recognize knowledge as part of its asset base?

Yes [] No [] No Idea[]

3. If Yes, What Knowledge resources are managed by African Economic Research Consortium?

Explicit Knowledge [] Tacit Knowledge []

4. How is knowledge stored at African Economic Research Consortium?

.....

5. Do you as a member of staff understand knowledge management and its implications on organizational processes? If Yes, give reasons.

.....

.....

C. Methods used to Capture, Store and Retrieve Knowledge at AERC

1. Are there any knowledge management systems at AERC? State them

.....

2. What are some of these facilities used to capture and store knowledge at AERC?

.....

2a. Are these facilities sufficient in management of this knowledge?

.....

3. Briefly describe how Knowledge Management Systems are coordinated among departments

.....

4. Suggest other systems that could be acquired to improve Knowledge Management at AERC?.....

D. Policies Governing Knowledge Management at AERC

1. State any policies available governing knowledge capturing, storage and sharing among staff and stakeholders at AERC?

.....

2. State the various HR policies that govern business continuity at AERC

.....

3. Are there general policies governing knowledge management at AERC? Kindly statethem.....

E. Existence of Knowledge Sharing Culture at AERC

1. Do you share knowledge with colleagues? Yes [] No[]

1a. If yes state various sharing mechanisms.....

.....

2. What characterizes management style at AERC?

Teamwork Consensus Participation Not sure

3. Is creativity and innovation promoted at AERC? Yes No

F. Challenges faced in Managing Knowledge at AERC

1. What are the challenges inhibiting the sharing of experiences, information and knowledge at AERC?.....
.....

2. What are the challenges inhibiting knowledge management at AERC?
.....

G. Suitable Strategies that can be used for Knowledge Management At AERC

1. State some of the best methods that can be used to promote continuous learning at AERC.....

2. What are the best policies that can be adopted to promote knowledge management at AERC?.....
.....

3. Suggest measures that can be implemented to address knowledge management problems at AERC?.....
.....