

**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY OF THE MINISTRY OF
GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD WELFARE (MGECW), NAMIBIA**

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF

MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

BY

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APRIL 2016

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Abstract

This study, titled “A Study of Knowledge Management Practices: A Case Study of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), Namibia”, offered a unique organisational environment in which organisational KM practices were explored. The study focused on exploring organisational Knowledge Management (KM) in the MGECW through an investigation of KM practices. The case study used a mixed method approach through a concurrent triangulation strategy/design. The qualitative approach was used in interviewing senior managers. This approach offered an in-depth understanding on organisational KM in Namibia. The quantitative approach used questionnaires; which were administered to middle management and looked at the key dimensions of organisational KM practices in the MGECW. The organisation and qualitative respondents were selected using purposive sampling methods. However, quantitative respondents were selected using simple random sampling using the current employee register for a sampling frame. Quantitative data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 to generate descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were analysed manually using content analysis.

The study revealed that OK in the MGECW hinges on tacit/implicit OK and explicit OK and respondents had a comprehensive understanding of OK and KM. However, the management of OK was found to be informally practiced without KM structures in place. It was found that there were no structural procedures to encourage employees to share their OK. Organisational KD and KT practices showed a strong preference for the use of fax machines, telephones and face-to-face meetings as forms of dispensing and transferring organisational knowledge in the Ministry. Some barriers of organisational KM in the MGECW included lack of skills in ICT and technical ICT support; poor infrastructure; lack of motivation and reward system; negative attitude of employees towards organisational KM practices; poor record management; lack of time; and lack of funds for training and equipment. The researcher proposes a framework to improve and implement formal organisational KM practices in the MGECW.

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Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge individuals whose assistance made this study possible.

Firstly, I thank my main supervisor Prof Cathrine Tambudzai Nengomasha, for her support and advice which have been essential for writing this thesis. I wish to also acknowledge and offer sincere gratitude to the co-supervisor, Dr Catherine Beukes-Amiss, for her contribution. My appreciation also goes to Prof Jairos Kangira and Prof Kingo Mchombu for making up time for guidance in all aspect of this thesis.

Secondly, I would like to thank Saddick “Same Coffee” Chombo for being SPSS survival guide. I owe thanks to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare for granting me permission to conduct the study. I also acknowledge research participants for their valuable time.

Special thanks go to my mother and late grannie “Ndaluka” who gave me the opportunity to study for all those years and for having so much trust and faith in me. My uncle who taught me the art of perseverance, needs special mention. Thank you for showing me what one can achieve as long as one does not give up.

Finally, but importantly, I thank my wife “Njahi” for always supporting me, during the good and bad times. To my three little-ones - “Neo, Kay and Maria” - thank you so very kindly for your patience.

Declaration of original work

I, Mishake Mitchell Mubuyaeta, hereby declare that the thesis titled: “Knowledge Management Practices: A Case Study of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare” is my own authentic piece of original independent research work. Any assistance or all sources of information that I have received has been appropriately acknowledged or referenced in the thesis. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Information Science at the University of Namibia in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Information and Communication Studies. This thesis has not, or in whole, part been submitted or presented before at the University of Namibia or any academic Institution(s) of Higher Learning for examination.



[Signature] Date

16. 03. 2016

Dedication

To “the little-one Maria Kantu ka Mulimu” and My Wife Njahi, my late father, Mr Andrew Mubuyaeta, late grannie Ndaluka, to you all this thesis is dedicated.

Abbreviations and acronyms

APQC	–	American Productivity and Quality Centre
CDS	-	Cognitive Design Solution
COP	-	Community of Practice
EOK	-	Explicit Organisational Knowledge
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization
GRN	-	Government of the Republic of Namibia
ICT	-	Information Communication and Technology
HIS	-	Healthcare Improvement Scotland
KBS	-	Knowledge Based Society
KBE	-	Knowledge Based Economy
KM	-	Knowledge Management
KMP	-	Knowledge Management Practice
MGECW	-	Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare
NamCourier	-	Namibia Postal Limited Courier Services
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organisation
OK	-	Organisational Knowledge
OKA	-	Organisational Knowledge Acquisition
OKC	-	Organisational Knowledge Capture
OKD	-	Organisational Knowledge Dissemination
OKS	-	Organisational Knowledge Sharing
OC	-	Organisational Culture
OL	-	Organisational Learning
OKT	-	Organisational knowledge Transfer
OPM	-	Office of the Prime Minister
PS	-	Permanent Secretary
SECI	-	Socialisation Externalisation Internalisation Combination
TL	-	Transformational leadership

TOK	-	Tacit Organisation Knowledge
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Science
UNDP	-	United nation Developmental Programme
USA	-	United States of America

CHAPTER: 1

Introduction

1.1 Orientation of the study

In a knowledge-based society (KBS) organisational knowledge (OK) is a key resource for organisational success. Organisational KM encompasses the collective practices or systems of leveraging OK or human intellects to induce innovation. After Namibia's independence in 1990, the country initiated diverse innovative developmental programmes and policies on becoming a KBS. One of the objectives of the developmental programmes is transforming Namibia into a KBS, by leveraging OK and technology for the benefits of the people (Office of the President, 2004). Mchombu (2010, p. 20) states: "Namibia has become a pioneering country by incorporating clauses of KM in Vision 2030". Through the case study of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), within Namibia, the study makes a small contribution to better the understanding of organisational KM practice in the public sector and it can be replicated to other Ministries to advance organisational KM.

In 1990, acknowledging the consequence of Namibia's historical colonial inheritance, subsequent to social neglect of a majority of Namibian women, the Women's Desk was set up in the Office of the President as department. Its mandate was to advocate and lobby for policy and law reforms to enhance equal women's participation in developmental agenda. The Republic of Namibia (1998) in Article 95(a), states that:

...the State shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting, inter alia, policies aimed at the following: enactment of legislation to ensure equality of opportunity for women, to enable them to participate fully in all spheres of Namibian society".

In 1995, the Department participated in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action's conference, hence the recommendation led to the establishment of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Child Welfare in 2000. In 2005, the Ministry was renamed the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare. The Ministry is responsible for coordination and monitoring the implementation of gender equality programmes (Office of the President, 1997).

Organisational KM practices are not only central to the private organisations, but the public sector as well which has realised the enormous need for organisational KM. Darroch (2003) states that it is essential to have organisational KM practices, and the precise organisational KM practices ought to be acquired for the public sector organisations. Appreciating and recognising the value of organisational KM is not an option for the public sector in Namibia but a must. Organisational KM allows an organisation to use OK advantageously and aids in handling the pressure of competition. Nonaka (1994) argues that in an economy where the only certainty is uncertainty, the only source of lasting competitive advantage is applying or improving organisational KM.

Substantial scientific research in the field of organisational KM by researchers such as Ladd and Heminger (2003); Riege (2005); and Yeh, Lai and Ho (2006) focussed on organisational culture, processes, barriers, practices and enablers of organisational KM in the American, Asian and European setup. Literature on organisational KM in Africa and Namibia specifically is still at infancy stage. According to Mchombu (2010, p.20) "Africa in general is lagging behind in the adoption of organisational KM". Hasanali (2002) states that effective application of organisational KM initiatives hinges on five

critical factors i.e. leadership, culture, structure, Information Communication Technology (ICTs), and measurements to achieve organisational KM practices.

Contributing to literature on organisational KM practices, McAdam and Reid (2000) examined organisational KM practices in the United Kingdom (UK). Their study revealed that both the public and private sector systematically captured OK and that OK was seized systematically only at senior level and less at middle level. Organisational knowledge (OK) is amongst employees, thus, systematically pursuing and capturing OK benefits the organisation as every worker is a benefactor. A study conducted by the Academy of Management Executives (AME) on the private and public sectors in the USA by De Long and Fahey (2000), concluded that organisational culture is widely held to be a considerable major barrier to creating and leveraging of OK assets. A study conducted by Baquero and Schulte (2007) on the exploration of organisational KM practices in the private and public sectors in Colombia revealed a low level of organisational KM practices. It was also established that the success of organisational KS rests on organisation cultural change. Al-Athari and Zairi (2001) examined KM in both the private and public sectors in Kuwaiti. The study showed that changing employee's behaviour to share OK was a challenge in managing OK.

A study conducted in Pakistan by Abbas and Khamal (2011) showed positive perceptions of employees towards organizational culture, organisational KM practices, and organisational performance. Organisational KM contains practices that do not happen in isolation from other structures and facilities in the organisation. Chris (2009) embarked on a study of the impact of organisational KM practices in Durham, England and argues that organisational KM enablers remain classified as technological and structural. It is thus essential for the MGECW to have an ICT infrastructure and skilled personnel in place that support KM practices, as OK remain harvested, stored and

disseminated among employees using different ICT tools. A study by Singh and Kant (2008) reveals that one of the barriers that hinder organisations to achieve organisational KM are the deficiency of top management commitment.

1.2 Problem Statement

The importance of OK in organisations, both the private and public sectors has been highlighted by several studies (Abbas & Khamal, 2011; Al-Athari and Zairi 2001; Baquero & Schulte, 2007; Chris, 2009; De Long & Fahey, 2000). The same studies have shown that organisational KM practices i.e. Organisational Knowledge Acquisition (OKA), Organisational Knowledge Dissemination (OKD), Organisational Knowledge Sharing (OKS), Organisational Knowledge Transfer (OKT), and Organisational Knowledge Capture (OKC) hinge on different factors i.e. organisational culture and structure, leadership, and technology. As shown in the orientation of the study, most of the studies on KM were conducted mainly in American, Asian, Middle Eastern and European countries. The literature also shows that not many studies on organisational KM was conducted in Namibia and in the public service in particular, hence there was need to conduct this case study of MGECW, Namibia. This study thus focused on examining organisational KM practices in relation to the barriers and enablers i.e. culture, structure, technology and measurement of KM in the MGECW, Namibia.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The overall objective of the study was to explore the extent of use of organisational KM in the MGECW through an investigation of organisational KM practices. The following are the objectives that directed this study:

1. To examine OK Sharing, Knowledge Acquisition, Knowledge Dissemination, Knowledge Transfer and Knowledge Capture in the MGECW, Namibia;
2. To examine barriers and enablers to organisational KM in the MGECW, Namibia;
3. To examine the work culture and attitudes of personnel which affect organisational KM and its practices in the MGECW, Namibia;
4. To examine how management supports organisational KM practices; and
5. To draw up recommendations on how the implementation of organisational KM could be enhanced in the MGECW, Namibia.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study aimed at making a small contribution to the realisation of Namibia becoming a KBS as per Vision 2030 by expanding the understanding and application of organisational KM practices through the case study of the MGECW, Namibia. It also contributes to the body of knowledge since not many studies have been done on KM in Namibia. Further, the study could also inspire and generate a platform for more studies and debate on the topic.

1.5 Limitations

Maxwell and Patton (as cited in Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005) state that a small sample size does not allow for the generalizability of results due to that participants are chosen based on information rich. Results drawn from this study cannot be generalised outside the MGECW, Namibia, but can be replicated to other Ministries. The sample was limited to the Head Office and regional offices only, leaving out the constituency offices staff members who may have had an input on the case study.

1.6 Literature review and theoretical framework

Managing OK offers collective prominence for governments in addressing challenges manifested in a KBS. Comprehensive studies on organisational KM in Namibia are limited. The only study known to the researcher was that of Mchombu conducted in 2012 waiting publication. This literature review first defines the various concepts of OK and organisational KM followed by the various key issues reflected in the objectives.

OK is defined by Davenport and Prusak (1998, p. 5) as a “fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, expert insight and grounded intuition that provides an environment and framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information”. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) assert that OK remains classified as tacit and explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is referred to as personal knowledge found in people’s minds, while explicit knowledge is referred to as codified organisational knowledge i.e. in training manuals (Polanyi, 1998). In other words, every employee is a reservoir of intellect, due to learning and experience. Organisational KM is defined as “a process of creation, organising, sharing, and use of OK for development results” (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2007, p. 7). The definition denotes organisational KM as a comprehensive process that turns the organisation into an OK processing machine that harvest employee intellect for efficient and effective action in the organisation.

Though scientific research remain vital in areas central to the field of organisational KM, it seems that there is a need to further refine the conceptualisations and measurement of organisational KM practices in the public sector to enhance the values of service delivery through KM. Organisational KM literature in the public sectors in Africa appears to be practically scarce; but scholars in other parts of the world have advanced a number of liberal studies on organisational KM. For instance, Cong, Li-Hua and Stonehouse (2007) examined organisational KM in the Chinese public sector. The study revealed that the essential factors

in successful organisational KM initiatives depend on the appropriate and effective sharing of OK. A study conducted on an organisational KM cycle by De Gooijer (2000), highlighted factors which affect the OK cycle such as culture, individual value systems, managing initiatives and benchmarking.

Lwoga (2010) also examined organisational KM approaches in Tanzania and reveals that organisational KM models ought to remain and be applied cautiously in the developing world, due to policies, legal framework, ICTs, and culture. Organisations operating in the developed countries are different compared to developing countries due to ICT infrastructures. A study by Ondari-Okemwa and Smith (2009) in Kenya concluded that the public sector is immersed in bureaucracy, and does not provide incentives to create, dispense and partial OK. The literature reviewed shows no specification on how the traits of organisational culture, measurement, employee characteristics sway the execution of organisational KM practices in Africa's public sector.

1.7 Theoretical framework

Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI (Socialisation, Externalisation, Combination and Internalisation) four models of Knowledge Conversion of 1995 was used for this study. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) SECI model process comprises a lively interaction among tacit and explicit knowledge and vice versa. The model starts with the socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation, each nature of knowledge is transformed. The study applied the model to examine how OK was shared, created, disseminated, transferred and utilized through social interaction in the MGECW. Furthermore, it was applied to examine how the MGECW, Namibia turns tacit knowledge into explicit.

1.8 Methodology

1.8.1 Research design

This study was descriptive based, grounded on mixed method approach through a concurrent triangulation strategy/design. Creswell (2003, 2007) state that mixed method research includes the gathering and scrutinising of quantitative and qualitative data in different stages of the research process. Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989) stress that mixed method research addresses both overall purposes of triangulation, complementarily, development, initiation and expansion. Creswell (2003, 2009) states that concurrent triangulation design requires that two data is collected and analysed separately, thereafter compared and interpreted results are merged. This study used the survey method and data were collected via in-depth interviews, assessing the present understanding of the concept of organisational KM and policy issues from senior managers and a questionnaire was administered to middle management looking at the key dimensions of organisational KM practices in the MGECW, Namibia.

1.8.2 Population

The target population of the study was the entire MGECW's personnel, which totalled 510 in 2013.

1.8.3 Sample

For this study, non-probability sampling was used for qualitative research through purposive sampling for senior managers and probability sampling was applied for quantitative research through simple random sampling at middle management level using 2013 current employee register. The total sample size of the study was 100 respondents, 80 middle management respondents targeted to fill in questionnaires and 20 key-informant senior managers' were set for the interviews. The MGECW in Namibia was purposively selected; for the reason that the researcher was an employee of the organisation. Thus, the researcher found the opportunity

to contribute to the understanding of organisational KM and its practices in the organisation through the study. The researcher was cognisant of bias, thus guarded against it.

1.8.4 Research instruments

Data collection instruments for the qualitative approach, were interview guides and a questionnaire was used for the quantitative approach.

1.8.5 Validity and reliability

Joppe (2000) refers to reliability as the consistence of the results and accurate representation of the total population under study, and validity as how the instruments measure what it intends to measure. Certifying the validity of questionnaire and interview questions, content was examined by connoisseurs in the field of KM and their views were considered in revising the questions.

1.8.6 Procedures

Permission was requested to conduct the study from the MGECW, Namibia. Questionnaires to the regions were sent by courier service and the researcher delivered questionnaires to head office by hand. Furthermore, face to face interviews were conducted in structured interview guide and the audio recorder was used. Data was collected simultaneously by means of interviews and questionnaires at one collectable phase.

1.8.7 Data analysis

The study used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in analysing data i.e. simple linear regression in data processing, capturing and analysing. Descriptive statistics were used through univariate graphical i.e. frequencies and percentages, depicted in the form of histograms and bar plots. Data collected through structured interviews was analysed through content analysis.

1.9 Research ethics

Given the importance of ethics in social science research, this study ensured the anonymity of subjects and participation in the study was voluntary. The researcher respected the dignity of the subjects and there was honesty in all the dealings of data analysis and data interpretation.

1.10 Definition of terms and concepts

This section defines key concepts and terms that are used in this study. These are as follows:

1.10.1 Data: Bhatti, Khan, Hussain, Ahmed, and Rehman (2011); Bhatt (2001); Frost (2010), Keramati & Azadeh (2007); Liew (2007); Nonaka (1994) define data as raw numbers and facts comprising of basic, unrefined, and generally unfiltered information.

1.10.2 Information: According to Bhatt (2001); Frost (2010), Keramati and Azadeh (2007); Liew (2007); Nonaka (1994); Rehman (2011), information is a flow of messages or processed data. Bhatti, Khan, Hussain, Ahmed, and Amidon (1997) emphasise that information is data with context.

1.10.3 Knowledge: The Oxford English Dictionary (2013) defines knowledge as the understandings which symbolise facts, evidence, information and skills attained through technical know-how or tutelage both in theoretical and practical terms. OK refers to the meanings and beliefs created from the message or information (Bratianu, n. d.; Chikati & Mpofo, 2013; Devanport & Prusak 1998; Mchombu, 2007; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Knowledge is categorised as tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Tacit knowledge is that knowledge which is intuitive and unarticulated such skills, competences, capacities, know-how, experience, difficult to codify. Explicit is knowledge that can be codified in formal, systematic language and shared in discussion or writing such as an instruction manual, or a report of research findings (Serrat, 2009).

1.10.4 Knowledge management (KM): KM is the explicit and systematic management of processes enabling vital individual and collective knowledge resources to be identified, created, stored, shared, and used for benefit (Serent, 2009, p. 3). Its practical expression is the fusion of information management and organizational learning. According to Ondari-Okemwa and Smith (2009, p. 29), KM is:

...understanding and discovering knowledge; capturing and acquiring knowledge from a variety of sources; selecting, filtering and classifying existing OK storing and saving OK; designing OK ontologies; adapting and/or creating new OK; measuring and evaluating OK; visualising OKJ; distributing and/or transferring OK to others; sharing and applying OK; retaining and maintaining OK as an asset”.

1.10.5 Knowledge management practices (KM Practices): KM practices are the practices such as knowledge acquisition, sharing, dissemination, capture and transfer

1.10.6 Organizational Culture: Organisation culture is a mixture of an organisation’s traditions, values, attitudes and behaviours (Bock, Kim & Lee, 2005; Dennison (1996).

1.11 Organisation of the Chapter

The study titled “A Study of Knowledge Management Practices: A Case Study of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW), Namibia”, is examined within following Chapters and topics:

Chapter 1: Introduction.

The chapter provides some brief context of the MGECW, discusses the problem statements, objectives of the study, significance of the study. The chapter gives a brief overview of the literature review and the methodology.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter is discusses relevant literature and the theoretical framework.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

In this chapter, philosophical assumption such ontology, epistemology and methodological standpoints of this study are discussed including, the population and sample, and methods used to collect data.

Chapter 4: Data presentation and Analysis

The study findings from the survey and the interviews are presented.

Chapter 5: Discussing of research findings

The findings presented in chapter are discussed under this chapter, comparing with the literature,

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter summarises the findings, draws conclusions showing if and how objectives were met and provides some recommendations.

1.12 Summary

There is a lack of studies showing the whole picture of organisational KM practices and challenges in a Namibian context. Therefore this case study on organisational KM practices in the MGECW in Namibia an institution within the public sector made some contribution to the body of knowledge and provided much needed information for policy and practice. The next chapter reviews related literature on organisational KM and discusses the study's theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced and outlined the purpose of this study undertaken to explore the organisational KM practices in the MGECW. This chapter reviews the literature related to this study. A literature review is a process of assessing/analysing relevant sources or literature related to the research topic or problem under study (Booth, Colomb & Williams, 1995; Bryman, 2006, 2012; Hart, 2005; Kumar, 2012). The chapter provides a range of literature within the organisational KM discipline which is presented in three sections. The first section of the chapter critically discusses concepts such as data, information, OK and KM, including the theoretical framework. The second section explains organisational KM practices such as OK Acquisition (OKA), Knowledge Dissemination (OKD), Knowledge Sharing (OKS), Knowledge Transfer (OKT), and Knowledge Capture (OKC), which are the core pillars of this study. Other issues drawn from this study's research objectives such as organisational KM enablers and barriers such as organisational culture, leadership and information communication technology (ICT) are discussed in the third section of the chapter. The literature reviewed in this study consisted of books, journal articles and research reports.

2.2 Definitions of information, data, organisational knowledge (OK) and knowledge management

The debate on what is OK has dominated academic discourse since the inception of Greek philosophy. There are several definitions of OK depending on various scholars, for example, whether the definition is from the field of theology or philosophy. In addition, there is no consensus on the definitions of data, information, OK, and KM. Bhatti, Khan, Hussain, Ahmed, and Rehman (2011); Bhatt (2001); Keramati & Azadeh (2007); Nonaka (1994) define data as raw numbers and facts, while information is a flow of messages or processed data. Thus, data

are raw, discrete facts or figures, while information is processed or organised data and OK is the making meanings and beliefs created from the message or information (Bratianu, n. d.; Chikati & Mpofu, 2013; Davenport & Prusak 1998; Mchombu, 2007; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

The above definitions are summed up by Wiig (as cited in Gordon & Smith, 1998), Li & Song (2009), The Oxford English Dictionary (2013) who maintain that OK is the understandings which symbolises facts, evidence, information and skills attained through technical know-how or tutelage both in theoretical and practical terms. Information designates circumstances, situations and problems and data are a meaningless themes or points in space and time, without reference to either space or time.

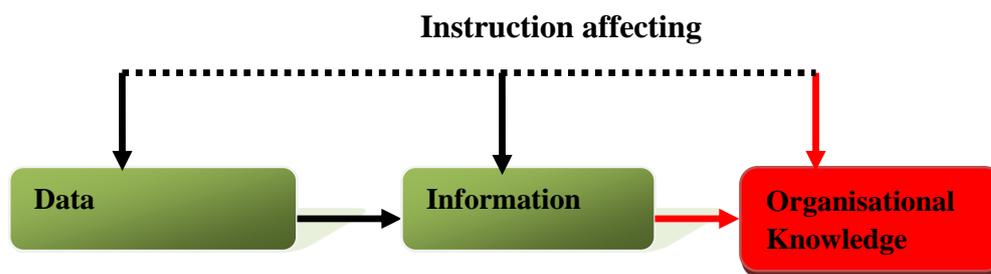


Figure 2.1: The mutual relation between data, information and organisational knowledge
Source: Li and Song (2009)

Figure 2.1 above summarises the process of how OK is made out of data and information. This process transforms raw data to information and the creation of OK. The creation of OK out of data is therefore a methodical know-how or intelligence embedded and framed in people's minds acquired through social and organisational expedition, tactically stored in the mind, grounded on meaningful experience and framed by past and new adventures. OK is one of the most valuable possessions in an organisation and it is an essential competitive pillar for success. This study adopts the definitions by (Chikati & Mpofu, 2013; Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995) which refer to OK as being emanating from information and experience, including justified beliefs of an employee.

Moreover, Scarbrough, Swan and Preston (1999) state that OK is multi-layered and multifaceted, comprising cognition, action, resources and a social relation. The epistemological standpoint of social relation on OK denotes that OK is socially constructed, as employee in groups participate in a dialogue and in relation to shared tasks or problems (Moradi, Saba, Azimi, & Emami, 2012). Blackler (1995) argues that OK is multifaceted and complex, being situated and abstract, implicit and explicit, distributed and individual, physical and mental, developmental and static, verbal and encoded. OK contains magnitude in context. Stankosky (2005) argues that it is contextual in dimension through its state of description: (a) communities of practice (b) organisational settings. Thus, communities of practice (COP) represent a group of individual employees with a common interest on one hand. On the other hand, the MGECW's organisational settings define how OK flows within the organisation.

Besides this classification of OK, Gholipour, Jandaghi and Hosseinzadeh (2010, p. 1864) assert that OK is now accepted as an essential weapon for supporting competitive advantage which many organisations are beginning to manage. King and Martin (as cited in Rai, 2011, p. 780) argue that "the prominence of OK is particularly more with need constantly developing innovative ideas to participate in the speedily changing business environment". Toffler and Toffler (as cited in Beijerse, 1999, p. 95) point out that "the real value of companies depends more on ideas, insights and information in the heads of their employees and in data banks and patents these companies control, than the trucks, assembly lines, and other physical assets they have, and the capital itself is now increasingly based on intangibles." It is therefore generally accepted that OK is employees-based and embedded in the MGECW, smoothed by a contributory mutual relationship amongst employees and structures in place.

Furthermore, OK takes a practical approach. A subsequent operational explanation of OK is explored by authors whose stand point is that OK in this regard increases an entity's capacity

for effective action; it exhibits in two folds either as tacit and explicit OK (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Bratianu, n. d.; Chikati & Mpofu, 2013; Huber, 1991; Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Wiig, 1999). Tacit OK (TOK) is personal and experience-bound, it is OK that cannot be freely articulated sometimes in words, but it is collected and based on experience (not codified OK), found in the employee. TOK is the most crucial OK, even though it is hard to illustrate or capture, thus employees know more than they tell (Polanyi, 1983; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). To illustrate this, Mchombu (2007, p. 25) argues that “a master craftsman after years of experience develops a wealth of expertise at his fingertips, but he is often unable to articulate the scientific or technical principles behind what he knows.” To exemplify more, Figure 2.2 below shows the richness, the importance and the relations of tacit and explicit OK.

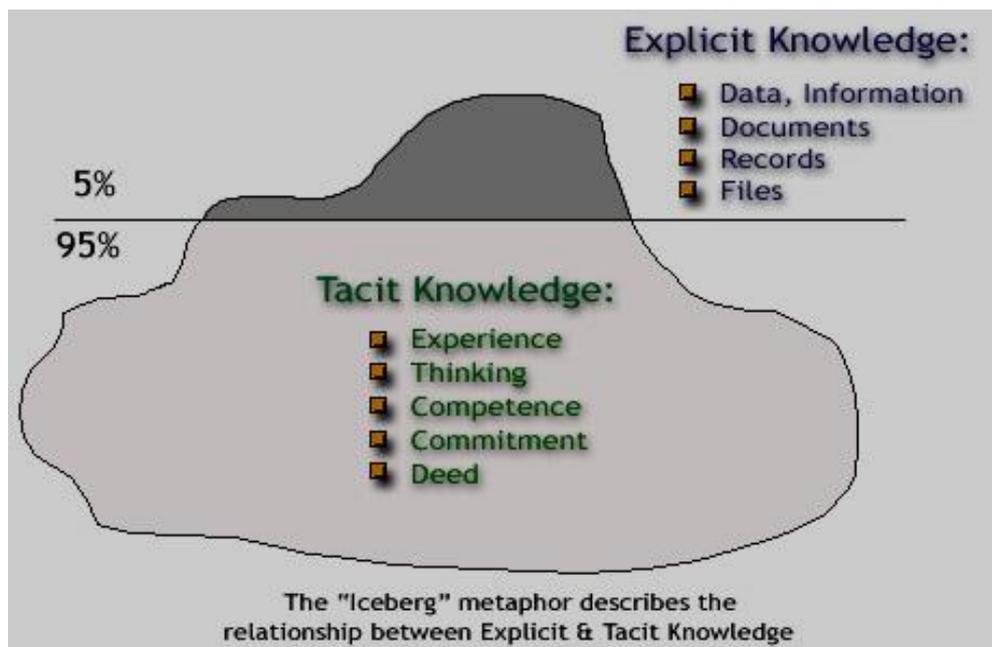


Figure 2.2 The 'Iceberg' Metaphor describing a relationship between Explicit and Tacit organisational Knowledge

Source: Cognitive Design Solutions (2010)

The iceberg metaphor above depicts the two forms of OK, the water line indicates the demarcation of two forms of OK (tacit and explicit). The above waterline (5%) indicates explicit OK which is most difficult to disseminate, transfer and distribute. Below the waterline is tacit OK. OK that is embodied and self-transcending OK, this form of OK (tacit), is very

quiet difficult to disseminate and transfer from one employee to others in the MGECW. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) compare the process to that of bread baker, where “self-transcending OK takes place in a more day-to-day practices, yet the OK that empowers a certain baker to originate baking bread in the first place is an example of not-yet embodied OK. Drawing an index concurrence from the literature above, the narratives of data, information and OK can be narrowed , data are the grades of crude elementary illustrations of veracity or certainty, while, information ought to be data that has been refined in a purposive manner that contains meaningfulness. Hence, OK is actually considered to emanate from information that has been refined to present meaningfulness. What has been described above shows the interdependence of explicit and tacit OK underlines the conception and the importance of the relationship of tacit and explicit OK. Hence, this study looked at the interaction amongst tacit and explicit OK in the MGECW in Namibia.

2.2.2 Theoretical framework

In organisational KM discourse, theoretical frameworks entail parallel approaches, for example, designs, models, reference models, which are broadly used towards describing modules, strategies or technical architectures and their mutuality (Hahn & Subramani; CEN; Heisig as cited in Pawlowski & Bick, 2012). A theoretical framework involves the process of concepts, aspects in terms of progressions and structures in relation to a certain problem in order to generate an enhanced understanding; precisely it enlightens the rest of the study’s research design and substantiates the study. According to Pawlowski and Bick (2012), organisational KM frameworks are fashioned to accomplish a mutual understanding towards a field or to structure methods and practices or to classify research gaps.

2.2.2.1 Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI Model

To understand OK creation in the MGECW, this study adopted Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) SECI model in which OK is understood to be generated and self-transcending amid tacit and explicit OK. Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI model emphasises the importance of OK creation through the interaction of tacit and explicit OK. Figure 2.3 hereunder illustrates the underlined relations and processes of OK creation.

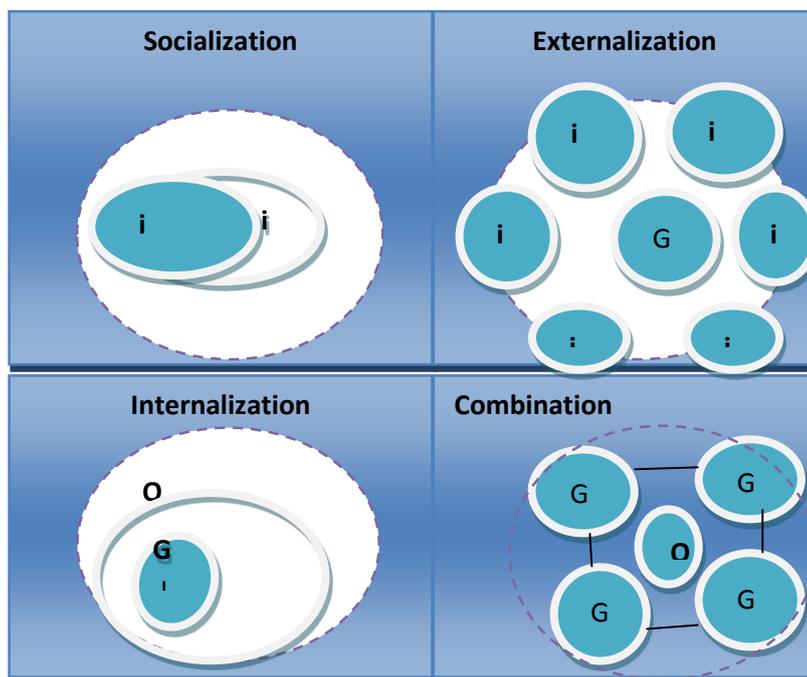


Figure 2.3: SECI Model

Source: Nonaka & Toyama (2003)

What is interesting to take note in Figure 2.3 above is the most crucial issue of the symbols in the diagram, that is, “I” stands for individuals, “G” for group and “O” organisation. These are contacts among OK generators (employees) with organisational activities, culture and process within the MGECW. This progression of OK conception (SECI model) occurs through a comprehensive translation among tacit and explicit OK in the organisation. Nonaka (1994) asserts that the SECI model plays the part of smoothing OK creation. With the SECI model, Nonaka and Takeuchi attempted towards contemporaneous abstract of just how tacit OK might

be made explicit, and at the sometime re-internalised to create a new OK. These ideas are more in dynamism in terms of OK transfer within the organisation (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). The above assertion is parallel to Rahmani, Rahmani and Moradi (2013, p. 95) who argue that Nonaka and Takeuchi consider organisational “KM as a process of OK creation, and that the model OK creation always starts from the individual, private or personal OK which is usually hidden and becomes a valuable OK”. The SECI model is the interface of tacit and explicit OK through the process of socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation within and with the organisation in relation to organisational KM practices. Socialisation entails sharing information; externalisation results in the transformation of tacit OK becoming explicit OK; combination comes from communicating internally and externally; whilst internalisation is about understanding explicit OK reusing it and generating tacit OK. Nonaka and Takeuchi’s framework provides the basis for understanding tacit and explicit OK in relation to OK sharing, dissemination, transfer, and capture for this study.

OK is a result of individual thinking and organisational work experience. Blacker (as cited in Gholipours, Jandaghi, & Hosseinzadeh, 2010, p.1864) asserts that “OK in the MGECW in fact resides in employees in several ways: (a) *in the brain*: in terms of conceptual skills and cognitive abilities; embodied in terms of being action oriented, situational and only partially explicit, linked to the individual’s senses and physical abilities. (b) *in culture*: in terms of shared understandings achieved in the process of socialisation and acculturation; (c) embedded *in systemic routines* that include relationships between technologies, roles, formal procedures and emergent routines and encoded in terms of information conveyed by signs and symbols in books, manuals, codes of practice and electronic media”.

However, this researcher was conscious of the weaknesses of the SECI model. Adler (1990, 1995); Bratianu (n. d.); Gourlay (2006); Li and Gao (2003); and Snowden (2000); argue that

the creation of OK by SECI was only considered and developed under a Japanese context, of which there is much difference and application in a different work environment. They also point out that the breadth of tacit and explicit OK cannot be transformed amicably. Similarly, Tsoukas (2002) argues that TOK cannot be captured, translated or converted. It can only be demonstrated when an organisational employee performs duties. This way new OK exhibits not only after the tacit turn into explicit, but through expert presentations, demonstrations and innovating ideas during social interaction. Furthermore, Tsoukas (2002) asserts that the SECI model is too crude because it lacks consideration of the complexity interaction of employees among themselves in the organisation. This study investigated the interaction of employees and also looked at any complexities that hinder OK sharing, creation, acquisition, transfer and dissemination in the MGECW in Namibia.

The literature discussed above provides the understanding and descriptions of OK in terms of the SECI model. However the model does not reflect a contextual and practical understanding of OK in the Namibian context. Hence, this study dealt with understanding how to apply the model to examine how OK is created, disseminated, transferred and utilised through social interaction in the MGECW in the Namibian context.

2.2.3 Organisational Knowledge Management (KM) defined

In spite of the perceived prominence to organisational KM practices for organisational success, its definition continues to be slightly ambiguous. Defining organisational KM is delicate due to different schools of thoughts (Bhatti et al, 2011; Chikati & Mpofu, 2013; Desouza & Paquette, 2011; Earl, 2001; Grossman, 2007; Keramati & Azadeh, 2007; Mchombu, 2007; Pérez-López & Junquera, 2013; Sutton, 2007).

Nonetheless, the researcher argues in this study that, besides the claims about uncertainties surrounding the definition of organisational KM, its importance to organisational success is

unquestionable. The following key concepts are found in the organisational KM definition: organised, processes to create, leverage and share OK. According to the e-Knowledge Centre (as cited in Mchombu, 2007, p.26), organisational KM is “a disciplined approach to managing all the OK processes found in human collectives (a set of people with common goals). Organisational KM is what an organisation does to accomplish its goals more effectively by delivering the right OK to the right person at the right time and in the right organisational context. By engineering human environments for optimal production, organisational KM practices, and usage of OK, the organisation increases its ability to take effective action, compete and survive. Organisational KM ensures the survival of an organisation by leveraging collective wisdom to increase responsiveness and innovation.

To understand organisational KM in this study, the following definitions were also important. Andreu and Sieber (1999); Chikati and Mpofu (2013); Desouza and Paquette (2004); Pan and Scarbrough (1999) argue that organisational KM is a procedural way of developing a set of standards and its application to enhance organisational performance set around experience and skills. Furthermore, organisational KM is a specifically specified systematic process for acquiring, organising and communicating both tacit and explicit OK of employees so that other employees may make use of OK through sharing in order to be more effective and productive (Alavi & Leidner as cited in Siakas & Georgiadou, 2010; Kanter, 1999; Spiegler, 2000). Organisational KM embraces models, processes and technologies to reinforce the fortification, growth and exploitation of OK as an asset (White, 2004).

The definitions discussed above are all intertwined as they state that organisational KM fosters the organisation's efficiency and effectiveness through the use of the OK possessions. Organisational KM is credited with a vital part of innovation and it helps organisations with the leveraging of OK to improve performance of the employee and organisation, and

acknowledging employees as creators of OK. Organisational KM rests on factors such as employees, processes and technology to manage OK.

Thus this study took the position that the processes of organisational KM practices play a pivotal role in the organisation's success. Schiuma (as cited in Rahmani et al. 2013, p. 94) argues that organisational KM processes enable organisations to acquire new OK, use it, store it, share it and protect vital OK resources which will lead to enhance the impact of OK to achieve strategic objectives. According to Carrillo, Robinson, Al-Ghassani, and Anumba (2004); Kasimu, Aniruddin and Abdullah (2013) organisational KM influences the organisation to create new OK to induce innovation and to improve organisational performance. KM inclusively is a mechanism reflected towards the management of OK, people, processes and technology for organisational success. The importance of OK in today's competitive marketplaces is not limited only to the private sector, but to the public sector; these sectors have realised the value of organisational KM (Desouza & Paquette, 2011). Table 2.1 hereunder shows explanations for adopting organisational KM in the organisation.

Table 2.1 Critical Reasons for organisational Knowledge Management

Reason	Description
Organisational survival	Effective KM allows organisation to adopt and survive in a dynamic and competitive marketplace.
Competitive differentiations	KM is critical driver of competitive advantages because it enhances the capacity of the organisation to innovate.
Globalisation	Globalisation creates an urgent need for organisation to be able to manage knowledge across countries and contents.
Aging workforce	Managers are anticipating baby boomers retirement in large numbers and are actively preparing for knowledge transfer to young workers.

Source: Desouza and Paquette (2011)

Understanding organisational KM enables organisations to gain insight and understanding of their own experiences and procedures of achieving the organisational benefits such as embracing and enhancing decision making within the public service (Wiig as cited in Syed-

Ikhsan & Rowland, 2004). Since the organisation under this study is in the public sector, this researcher asserts that organisational KM objectively makes sure that OK is leveraged collectively in the organisation, whereas employees learn from each other via organisational KM practices. Usman and Ahmad (2012, p. 22) assert that “the main focus of organisational KM is steering a strategy, identifying and communicating the various types of OK that reside in processes, people, products and services in order to support integration to improve productivity and efficiency”. Organisational KM definitions above help with an understanding of KM and its importance towards organisational performance. This study investigated its applicability in the MGECW, in the Namibian context.

2.2.4 Organisational Knowledge Management Practices

This study focuses on five segments of the organisational KM process, which are to acquire, capture, share, disseminate and transfer OK. Laudon and Laudon (as cited in Chigada & Ngulube, 2015, p. 2) state that organisational “KM practices help organisations to refocus on using OK that exists already, by creating an environment for innovation rather than limiting themselves to best practice solutions only”. Thus, in this study these organisational KM practices should be seen as a direct or indirect contrast of each organisational KM practices. This researcher argues that OK is generated based on mutual understanding of employees and the organisation’s objectives through organisational KM practices as depicted in Figure 2.4 hereunder:

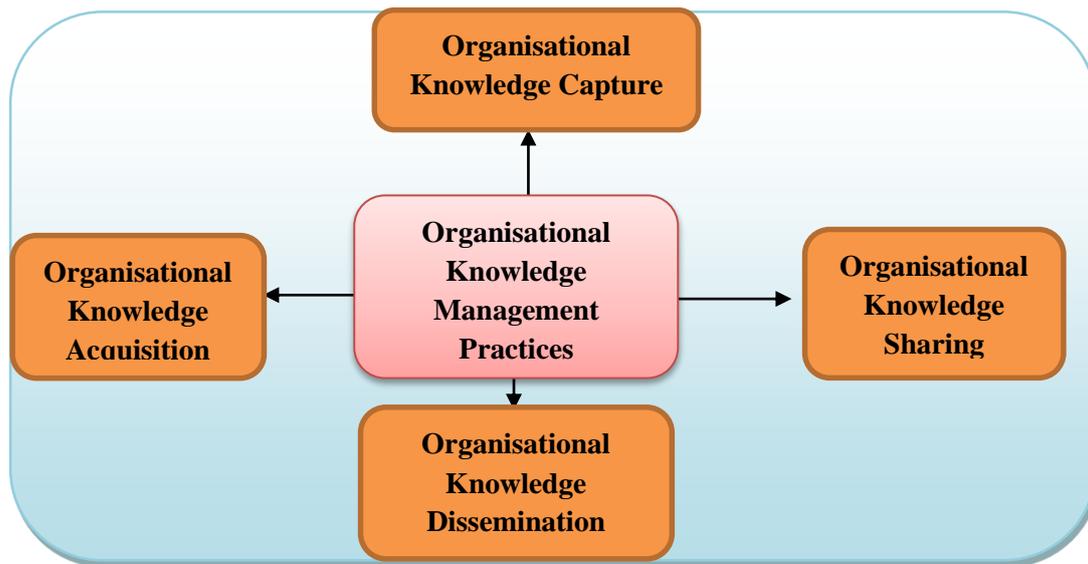


Figure 2.4 Mutual relations of organisational KM practices

Organisational KM practices shown in Figure 2.4 above are important for this study because they show how the OK in the MGECW needs to be disseminated and shared for competitive edge, where also the organisation ought to capture, acquire, and manage OK within or from external sources. In this study, the MGECW organisational KM practices helps with “the way ideas are translated into action in the process accomplishing specific goals, thus, KM practices include the understanding of organisational KM, OK generation, acquisition, organisation, storage, transfer, sharing and retention” (Chigada & Ngulube, 2015,p. 2).

2.2.5 Organisational knowledge acquisition (KA)

The considerable interest in setting up an OK database for organisational reuse is important for the MGECW. Olson and Reuther (1987) argue that OK able employee/s or consultant/s have stored rich representations of facts, objects, attributes, as well as sets of inference rules that connect these constellations of facts for usage in problem-solving situations. These facets need to be acquired by the MGECW from individual or groups of employees. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995, p. 59) argue that “individuals create OK, the organisation create a context for individuals to create and amplify OK”. According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (as cited in Chigada & Ngulube, 2015, p. 3) “80% of organisational knowledge in organisations lies in the brains of

people who possess know-how, secrets and personal skill that will never be shared if no one works on it”.

Agarwal and Tanniru (1991, p. 123) refer to “organisational KA as a process of extracting domain-specific problem-solving expertise from an OK source and representing it in machine manipulates form”. Holsapple (2004); Holsapple and Jones (2004); and Timonen (2006) argue that organisational KA is as a process to acquire new OK from internal and external sources and assembling it for suitable successive use. Pacharapha and Ractham (as cited in Chigada and Ngulube, 2015, p.2) define OK acquisition as “the process of the development and creation of insight, skill and relationships”. Thus, in the MGECW, for OK to be acquired, ‘... there should be willingness and ability of a recipient to acquire and use OK are crucial elements’ (Chigada and Ngulube, 2015, p.2).

However, there are challenges in terms of acquiring OK. Huber (1991), O’Dell and Grayson (1998), Matusik and Hill (1998) and Powell (1998) argue that it is not easy for any organisation to acquire OK, as it’s trickier, time-consuming and comes from peripheral sources such as recruitment of new employees, acquisition, associations and joint ventures. Employees generally acquire OK mostly through the process of learning. This OK could be gained through job experience and training within or outside the organisation. Organisations acquire OK through their employees. Huber (as cited in Jashapara, 2004, p. 70) asserts that “organisations acquire knowledge through the processes of congenital learning, experimental learning, vicarious learning, grafting and searching and noticing.” This study looked at how organisational KA engages the process of mapping out in-house knowledge confined by the organisation, which can be advantageous as soon as individual division remains not responsive of OK existence in another division in the MGECW.

Fong and Choi (as cited in Rahmani et al., 2013, p. 96) argue that “there are two forms of organisational KA, internal OK acquisition and external OK acquisition. In addition, Fong and Choi (as cited in Rahmani et al., 2013) state that internal KA comes from job rotation, transferring the useful and valuable OK of staff in written form, and evaluating the experience of assignments, external OK acquisition comes from special staff members that are responsible for communication with outside the organisation or hiring people outside the organisation. In contrast, behavioural psychologists argue that verbal communication is untrustworthy as a source of OK, while clinical psychologists indicate that cognitive defences are a blockade to internal communication, thus to counter these barriers they developed techniques such as protocol analysis and personal construct theory (Abdul-Gader & Kozar, 1990). Collins, Green and Draper (as cited in Abdul-Gader & Kozar, 1990) argue that there is a problem of accessing experts’ OK, as experts may not be aware of its significance. Organisational KA activity contains sub-activities of classifying suitable OK from external sources, capturing the identified OK from the external sources, organising the captured OK, and transferring the organised to a processor, either for immediate use or assimilation within the organisation for subsequent use (Hosapple, 2004; Holsapple & Jones, 2004).

It is important for organisations like the MGECW to access high tech-worth employees that add value and innovative ideas around the organisation. OKA in OK contexts is referred to in two contexts as direct and indirect acquisition of OK. Even though, Abdul-Gader and Kozar (1990) argue that organisational KA as a process is of two kinds, task-oriented techniques and interview-oriented techniques. Table 2.2 below summaries mechanisms on organisational KA and shows the two aspects, KA (direct and indirect acquisition of knowledge) and the underlining process through activities for OK acquisition in the organisation.

Table 2.2 Organisational KA processes

OKA group	Organisational Knowledge acquisition consolidated activities
Direct acquisition	Conducting external survey, Gathering knowledge via competitive intelligence, Looking for windows of opportunity Gathering advice from consultants, customers or suppliers Gathering advice from the professional literature (books, newsletters, journals, etc.), Obtaining data sets, Obtaining a patented process Licensing patents and processes, Obtaining intellectual property (patents, trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets) Observing failed/successful efforts of others, Capturing tacit knowledge as well as explicit, Monitoring the technological advances Subjecting employees to external training, Participating in inter-organisational communities of practice to gather knowledge, Gathering both public and private information when learning about a firm, Hiring employees from competing firms specifically for accessing the knowledge, developed at these firms, Using research-intensive firms as organisational mechanism to combine the capabilities of versatile scientist outside the boundaries of the firm and, Relating interruptions to acquisition of new work routines
Indirect acquisition	Acquiring a knowledge-rich company, Forming joint ventures with other organisations, Contracting with other organisations, Hiring an employee, Recruiting those with expertise, Improving processes through purchase of technology, Focusing on knowledge of customer needs to drive the organisations efforts, Informally collecting comments from clients, Using relationships for acquisition of information

Source: Holspale and Jones (2004, p. 160)

OKA helps with the process of locating, accessing, collecting and extracting of OK for any organisation. According to Grover (1982) many organisational KA methods are spontaneous and have a common practice and suggests that their procedure take place in three segments such as a domain definition, fundamental OK formulation, and OK consolidation. Similarly, Easterby-Smith (as cited in Blackman & Henderson (n. d.) identified six academic approaches to Organisational Learning (OL) in reference to OKA. This study used only the following three of the approaches due to their importance to this this study: identification of OK from some type of existing OK or experiences, an acceptance of the importance of learning and an awareness that what is learnt may not be a linear progression, nor may the OK that will be acquired be clearly predicted. These approaches also accept that the learning depends on input OK entering into an employee or the system in an organisation in order to produce new OK.

Arkin (1993); Attwood and Beer (1988); Nevis, DiBella and Gould (1995); and Nguyen, Neck and Nguyen (2009) agree that organisations become self-referential systems where they determine what they consider as valid OK. There is therefore a need to know and encode what the individual actually seeks to add to the information and OK flow in the MGECW. This may become increasingly serious if the concept of setting learning targets is encouraged as a way of developing learning. With that, the setting of learning targets is a strategy being advised to those who wish to measure the acquisition of new OK, which in turn is seen an indicator of increased learning in the MGECW.

Blackman and Henderson (n. d.) identified training needs of individuals and the formulation of plans to achieve these initiatives as significant in organisational KM. Delahaye (as cited in Blackman & Henderson, n. d.) argues that organisational transfer or acquisition of new OK is strongly affected by the individual decisions as to whom they wish to transfer with and why, and inputs and outputs of OK are affected by the social credibility of those to be shared with. The organisational intellectual credibility of the source to learn from, who would get the glory from the outcome of the OK and how trustworthy individuals are, are cited as problems.

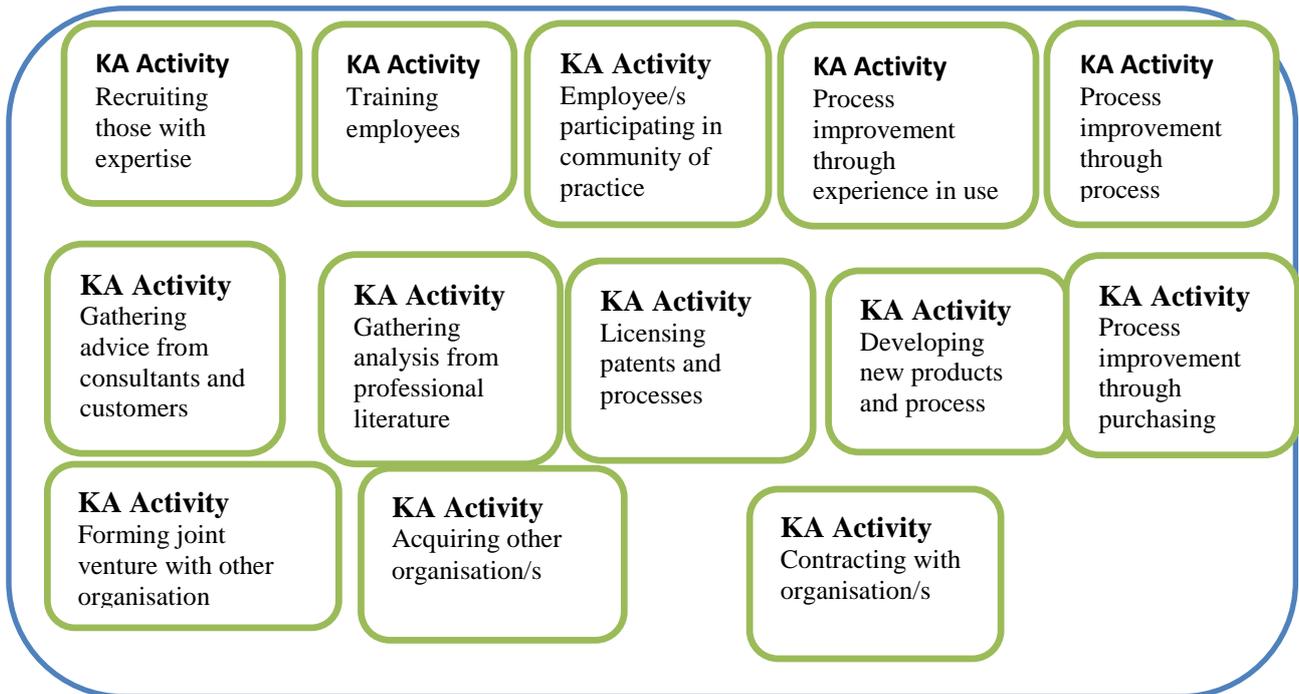
Despite the above mentioned problems, considerable recognition of the importance of OK in adding value to an organisation's success, challenges and benefits have been experienced (Lessard & Zaheer, 1996; Ruggles, 1997; Szulanski, 2000). A study by Ruggles (1997) showed that managers were doing better compared to middle management employees in terms of transferring OK within the organisation. Similarly, Bierly, Kessler and Christensen (2000, p.603) assert that "OK is acquired through experience where "education, training, and seasoning of a person can help them along the path to wisdom. And these experiences can aid in understanding the broader context of issues, seeing how new OK can be integrated into existing ones, and assigning value to different types of knowledge."

Weldy (2009, p. 59) recommends that “the OL and organisational transfer of training are both critical tools for learning and managing OK in organisations”. Bierly et al. (2000) claim that employee OK is transformed into OK through three dimensional phases: *Transformational leadership* (TL): Bass (as cited in Bierly et al., 2000, p. 610) states that TL “occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interests for the good of the group.” TL mechanisms among others include: *Charisma*: providing vision and sense of mission, instilling pride, gaining respect and trust; *Inspiration*: communicating high expectations, using symbols to focus effort, expressing important purposes in simple ways; *Intellectual stimulation*: promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving, and *Individualized consideration*: gives personal attention, treats each employee individually, coaches, advises.” *Organisational culture and structure*: Help with constructing the robust trust systems, through coaching and organisational rituals, perceptible signs of advocated values, and other practices that symbolize these standards.

According to Torbert (1991) organisational structures should overcome barriers that limit OL. The fundamental aims of liberating structures is to empower employees to challenge conventional wisdom by expanding their degrees of freedom and discipline. *Knowledge transfer (KT)*: The very processes of KT and OL provide a fundamental mechanism for the development of organisational wisdom. Simply put, organisational wisdom can be enabled through an effective organisational communication system that encourages learning. Anand (as cited in Bierly et al., 2000, p. 610) asserts that the rationale is that OK is “transferred from person to person, department to department, and level to level; it does not only carry the potential of broadening the organisation's overall knowledge base but its usefulness is simultaneously transmitted.” Over time the wisdom becomes institutionalised, remaining with the organisation even when the initial ‘wise’ individuals leave. Thus, the amount of time and

effort spent by managers on understanding OK are the key determinants of OKA in the organisation (Tsang, 2002). Gaines (2003) states that OKA happens in organisations through what is referred to as an OK map, where activities occur through the steps as revealed on the table below.

Table 2.3 Organisational KA Map



Source: Gaines (2003)

Table 2.3 depicts how employee/s connect with others in acquiring new ideas/OK and it also demonstrates how they search for OK. This happens through acquiring OK from an OK reservoir namely, database, apprenticeship, simulation and training. In a formal training, organisational KA pursues to kindle employee's appeal into unique ways that meet the characteristics of an effective member of the organisation (Gaines, 2003). Employee/s often will contact each other within the MGECW's organisational locale to share OK. These employee (managers or not) ought to have more home-grown OK and have a substantial know-how of the organisation's operations. Moreover, Gaines (2003) asserts that OK acquisition relates to the SECI model which plays a crucial role in terms of interaction for employees and

the MGECW to acquire OK. Similarly Yli-Rento, Autio and Sapienza (2001) indicate that social interaction and network ties and dimensions of social capital are associated with OK acquisitions. Further, this OK acquisition is associated with OK exploitation in terms of competitive advantage.

The above reviewed literature re-counts mechanisms of organisational KA and identifies a number of important achievements of KA such as organisational network system ties, shared values, and trust for OK. Hence, this study looked at understanding these aspects and their applicability in the MGECW in Namibia.

2.2.6 Organisational knowledge capture (OKC)

The present era of a Knowledge Based Society (KBS) intrinsically links OK to the MGECW underlying activities. Many organisations have developed databases and repositories to store OK for current and future reference. OK and skills have developed into a broadly recognised advantage for the organisation where its work rests on increasingly organisational information processing. Nonetheless, organisations face challenges in discovering mechanisms of capturing tacit OK. Dalkir (2005, 2011); Davenport and Prusak (1998); Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995); Polayi (1989); and Sanderson (2001) assert that the importance of tacit capturing OK is of great importance to the organisation. However, tacit OK is more difficult in identifying, prioritising and capturing than explicit knowledge (Mchombu, 2007). Davenport and Prusak (1998); Jones (2012); Mulder and Whiteley (2007) and Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) define organisational KC as a variety of techniques used to mine individuals, technical OK, such as insights, experiences and social networks; lessons learned can be shared to mitigate OK loss.

In this study, capturing OK is understood as a process undertaken by the organisation to locate required OK from its employees and consultants. Tacit OK is emphasised due to its complexity and importance to the MGECW success. This researcher argues that Tacit OK is the main

source for creating new OK for a continuous innovation in the MGECW. A survey of 400 Chief Executive Officers revealed that 42% of an organisation's knowledge is held in employee and that it is almost equally important to explicit knowledge (Nonaka, as cited in Sanderson, 2001).

Organisational KC is a crucial process for organisations and it counts on knowledge workers to bring knowledge into the organisation and wishes to inspire internal flows around the organisation (Desouza & Paquette, 2011). Without OK identification and utilisation, organisations are unsafe and have a crisis in surviving in a KBE. Initially, it is important for an organisation to make sure that OK is captured and codified in such a way that it can become a part of the existing OK base for the organisation (Dalkir, 2005, 2011). Therefore, if the organisation seeks to capture and preserve OK, it is significant to reflect on the sort of OK (tacit and explicit) which bring about success.

Traditionally, organisational KC emphasises individual employees' role in gathering information and generating new Tacit OK (Dalkir, 2005). Therefore, generally, OKC regards experienced expertise as a library, where someone in an organisation can tap into and acquire valuable OK. Furthermore, recognising employees who possess valuable undocumented OK is crucial and it is thus vital to capture OK in a structure that is consumable to other employees. The most valuable OK resides in the heads of experts, as it is sometimes impossible to express (Dalkir, 2005, 2011; Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

However, it has been observed that organisational KC comes with a substantial problem. Hansen (as cited in Zhou, Siu & Wang, 2009) refers to two phases in the KC process. These are transfer problem i.e. "*search problem*". This refers to where the personality ought to discover the essential OK and locate an appropriate source among the organisation's employees' web. Thus, this various and heterogeneous linkage is indispensable in enhancing the ego OK searching ability for providing a diverse OK base which is non-redundant to ego's

current knowledge base. Thereafter comes a “*transfer problem*” phase, where the ego ought to understand and absorb the receipt OK. This can be reliably achieved through fostering trust and regular contacts with the OK reservoir.

Besides that, individual and group level OK capture is characterised as a transformation of valuable expertise from a knowledge source explicitly, human expert and documents to an OK repository-corporate memory. Parsaye (as cited in Dalkir, 2005, p. 83) points out that “three major approaches used to capture or acquire OK from individuals and groups, which is; (a) *Interviewing of experts* (structured interviews, stories), (b) *learning by being told* and (c) *learning by observation*.” In other words, OK is based on the experience from local employees or consultants hired by the organisation. Hence the great importance of having a systematic process of capturing OK. These methods are related to tacit OK and they ought not to be totally barred from other methods capturing tacit OK. Capturing includes, among others:

Ad-hoc sessions: organising and mobilising a COP or informal professional network such as brainstorming sessions taking place face to face and using technologies, that is, instant messaging, e-mail, teleconferencing and chat rooms. *Road maps*: This is formal in nature, road maps tend to facilitate problem solving meetings that are scheduled, convened and normally follows the agenda. Its objective is to solve daily problems in a public forum. *Learning history*: this represents a retrospective history of significant occurrences for the organisation as described in the voices of employees who took part (Parsaye as cited in Dalkir, 2005, p. 83).

Moreover, the mechanisms above nurture OK by understanding and capturing the significant features of organisational KM (Dalkir, 2005, 2011). *Action learning*: It is based on the fact that employees tend to learn by doing. Small groups can be formed with participants who share common issues, goals and learning needs. They should meet regularly and report their progress,

brain storm alternatives, try out new things and evaluate results. It is a form of task-oriented group work and learning that is suited for narrow specialised domain and specific issues (Dalkir, 2005, 2011; Zhou et al., 2009).

E-learning: E-learning denotes capturing valuable procedural OK and documentation of all historical, procedural changes and justification of change. *Learning from others* through business guest speakers and benchmarking against best practices: learning through external benchmarking which involves learning about what the leaders are doing in terms of their best practices, either through publications or site visits and then adapting their best practices. Benchmarking assists in identifying better ways of doing business (Dalkir, 2005, 2011). By so doing, OK is contestable and improved, re-examined and created, which brings new OK. As a result, considering the importance of the process of KC comprehending organisation success, understanding these processes and principles creates valuable organisational KM practices for the organisation.

The process of multifaceted OK capture in the organisation reconceptualises the organisation to provide a salutary corrective success for the organisation. Dalkir (2005, 2011) claims that OKC at organisational level (happens at a macro level) where the process entails; *Grafting*: which is the movement of OK amongst organisations. The process involves the organisation in gaining access to tasks or process-specific OK that was not previously available within the organisation. Huber (1991) says that this is typically achieved through mergers, acquisition or alliances in that there is direct passing of OK between organisations. *Vicarious learning*: is a process that occurs when observing other organisations in practices or demonstration of techniques and procedures. *Experimental learning*: at this level OK is created by doing and practicing. It is based on repetition-based-experience through establishing routines and procedures. *Inferential learning*: learning at this level is through interpretation of events, states, changes and outcomes relative to the activities undertaken and decisions made. This

process or mechanism creates awareness which transcends the orthodox in terms of OK access which underscores technical know-how for employees. Furthermore, organisations ought to understand and know what kind of OK and skills are critical, what is at highest risk, and who retains that knowledge in the organisation (Huber, 1991). Polanyi, Claxton and Leornad-Barton (as cited in Sanderson, 2001) caution that the process of capturing of tacit OK should not be made to restrict organisations, departments or employees to only a fraction of OK that can only be expressed in words. It enhances an organisation's ability to assess and impart new outside OK, which could bring creativity. Without harvesting tacit OK in any format, any time and intellectual dislocation and the organisation always lose OK from their employees when they are transferred within or outside the organisation (Sanderson, 2001).

However, organisational KC is a complicated mechanism for an organisation to embark upon. A study by Hari, Egbu and Kumar (2004) on OK capture identified OK capture as the most challenging process in the organisational KM cycle. However, capturing OK within the MGECW helps in problem solving, managing change, OL, succession planning and innovation. A study by Bresnen, Edelman, Newell, Scarbrough and Swan (2003) showed that the processes of OK capture, transfer and learning in project settings rely heavily upon social patterns, practices and processes in ways which emphasise the value and importance of adopting a community-based approach to managing OK. Another study by Mulder and Whiteley (2007) on emerging and capturing tacit OK found that initiative was supported under bounded conditions, a shared sense of purpose and an iterative process where ownership was possible, tacit knowledge could be captured. It was further found that in surrounded environments tacit OK was well organised, confirming its end purpose for being.

Issues emanating from the literature above regarding organisational KC provide the understanding of the concept and its importance in organisations. This study examined these findings to ascertain their applicability in MGECW in Namibia. The study further deliberated

on issues such as exit interviews, project/s and conference reviews being conducted by the MGECW in Namibian context. Additionally, the MGECW was surveyed to ascertain the availability of inventory and repositories (data warehouse) that include the capturing of tacit OK and how it turned into explicit OK (existing recorders, documents).

2.2.7 Organisational knowledge sharing (OKS)

Organisational KS is also considered as an important element of organisational KM, based on two understandings, to transfer tacit OK among individual employees (socialisation) and as precedent of OK creation, enhancing innovation (Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS), 2012). Contributing to the understanding of OKS definition in this study, Khalil and Shea, 2012, p. 43) define OKS as “the exchange of different types of OK between individuals, groups, units and organisations”. Andreeva and Kianto (as cited in Rahmani et al., 2013); and Bircham-Connolly (as cited in Sandhu, Jain & Ahmad, 2011) argue that organisational KS helps organisations to use internal and external OK, through conveying the best practices from one division to another. Employees engage in the process of trading OK amongst themselves or in groups and departments through procedures or un-procedurally to realise organisational goals. OKS is understood as a process of passing required OK to the receiver in need.

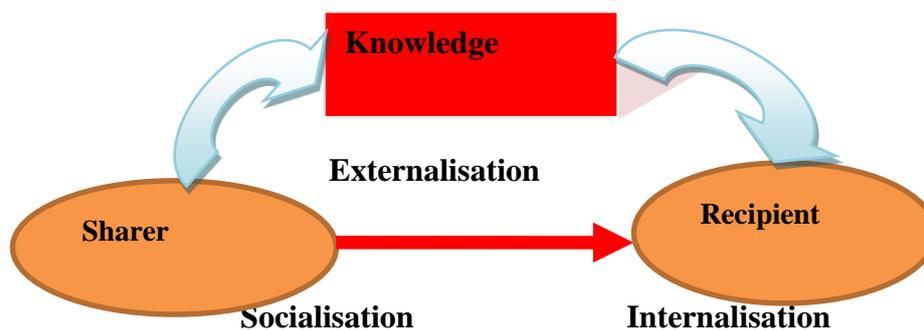


Figure 2.5: Elements in organisational knowledge sharing processes

Source: HIS (2012)

Figure 2.5, depicted the underline relationships among the elements of organisational KS, where the effectiveness of OK sharing will also depend on relationships with the receiver in internalising the referred message. It all depends on an OK worker's willingness to impart OK effectively, and its impact will depend on the seeker's ability to absorb and retain the new OK (absorptive capacity) (HIS, 2012).

Employee interactions take place in various combinations in an organisational setting, the process of sharing OK takes place procedurally at a gradual pace of organisation's operations. Bhatt (as cited in Rahmani, et al., 2013) acknowledges organisational KS takes place within sectors and between hierarchical levels of sectors. It is a process of making OK available to others in the organisation. Organisational KS between individuals is the process by which knowledge held by an individual is converted into a form that can be understood, absorbed, and applied by other receivers who contribute to both individual and organisational learning (Ipe as cited in Olatokun & Elueze, 2012).

Furthermore, the exchange of organisational ideas and technical know-how leads to the formation of new OK. For this study, organisational KS has been identified as a practice and its significance depends on the connection amongst employee/s (reservoir of OK). Organisational KS is a fundamental key to the success of all organisational KM strategies, and the effective OKS practices facilitate recycling and renaissance of new knowledge both at individual and organisational levels (Siakas & Georgiadou, 2010.).

Organisational KS contains three genes - KS is time consuming, OK is power and KS involves trust (Siakas & Georgiadou, 2010.). Thus, in description the "three genes" firstly, "organisational KS is *time consuming* denotes the limited amount of time during workday and spending time on working vs helping colleague/s or codifying the OK" (Siakas & Georgiadou, 2010; p. 4). Secondly, *OK is power*, as employees start to hoard their OK in the belief that they could manipulate OK to ensure their own success, sharing becomes a myth; also individuals

have a reason to doubt the value of their OK, exposing it increases their perception of vulnerability (Hofstede, as cited in Siakas & Georgiadou, 2010, p. 4). Thirdly, organisational *KS involves trust*; since employees accumulate OK at a considerable expense of time, resources and energy, they would not give away unless they are assured that it will not be misused and that there is a good chance of reciprocity” (Siakas & Georgiadou, 2010. p, 4).

Siakas and Georgiadou (2010); Hendriks (1999) state that organisational KS helps the MGECW in knowing and understanding what makes employees help each other in terms of learning and sharing their hard earned OK. In an organisation, provision of incentives and motivations create a culture that ought to enhance the sharing of OK. This will provide a link between the individual and the organisation by moving tacit OK for organisational usage for economic and competitive. The whole organisational KS helix happens from an employees’ technical know-how to create and share knowledge in the permission of an organisation’s structure or systems. Organisational KS entails vigorous collaboration amongst individual employees (Wenger, as cited in Mushtaq & Bakhari, 2011).

Similarly, Harris (1990) argues that for organisational KS to occur, an employee or organisational departments ought to have an interest in helping others to develop a new capacity for action within the organisation. Organisational KS is not a one-time act in which an organisation creates OK and share the OK, but a systematic series of undertakings of making sure that the shared OK reaches the intended recipient with the intended impact. OK production depends on employee/s and the structure of the MGECW. Thus, the MGECW’s abilities to effectively leverage its knowledge is highly dependent on its people, who actually create, share, and apply the knowledge, and leveraging of OK is only possible when people can share their knowledge and build on the knowledge of others (Olatokun & Elueze, 2012).

In this study, the common understanding between individuals, groups, departments or divisions involved in the sharing of experiences or OK is important. Organisational KS is crucial for

every organisation as it enhances employee performance through the acquisition of new ideas. To ease the process aspect, organisational culture (OC) needs to be taken into consideration. Davenport and Prusak (1998) refer to OC as the most important aspect of OKS. (OC) is defined as shared values, beliefs, symbols, and behaviours (made up of its members') that guide individual decisions and actions at the unconscious level within the organisation (Lutherns, 2007). The atmosphere (OC and organisational structure) of the MGECW determines and permits individual employees or groups of employees to engage in sharing OK and experiences either through informal settings (for example, storytelling) or formal settings such as meetings and conferences. OC plays a fundamental role in structuring OK sharing behaviour of individuals and organisational culture is evolved contextually within which specific situations are embedded (Dennison, 1996; Bock, Kim & Lee, 2005). OKS not only makes possible the conversion of an employee's OK to OK, but fosters employees themselves into learning or into organisational learning. Few mechanisms have been found to yield and drive organisational KS in organisations. Young (2010,p. 5) identifies mechanisms such as "peer assist, learning reviews, after action reviews storytelling, communities of practice, collaborative physical workspaces, OK cafés, communities of practice, taxonomy, document libraries, knowledge bases (wikis, etc.), blogs, social networking services, voice and voice, OK clusters, expert locator, collaborative virtual workspaces, knowledge portal, video sharing and mentor/mentee as driver of Organisational KS".

OK sharing behaviour is an individual act because OK is possessed by them (Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Konno, 1998, Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Therefore, the goal of organisational KS is to make sure that OK reaches the intended recipients and is duty-bound to have an impact with respect to the types of processes emphasised. The processes and practices of organisational KS have far reaching consequences to an organisation, where employees' commitment rests on the organisation itself. Learning processes which take place via

networking ought to be an organisational context. Hooff and Weenen, Ardichvill et al (as cited in Lin, 2007) argue that organisational KS rides on a process where employees mutually exchange OK and create new OK. Reviewed literature above offers a description and the understanding of KS processes for organisations. Hence, this study compared these findings to the MGECW in the Namibian context.

Organisational KS literature cited above emphasise on a number of areas, including environmental factors such as organisational context (organisational climate, group characteristics) and individual characteristics (personality). Emerging substantial studies have recognised the importance of OKS for motivating employees to share. Organisational KM are mainly found in European, Asian and American setups. A study conducted by Ardichvili, Page and Wentling (2003) on motivation and barriers to participation in virtual knowledge sharing communities of practices indicated that, when employees view OK as a public good belonging to the whole organisation, OK flows easily. In addition, when employees are hesitating to contribute towards knowledge sharing, it is because of fear of criticism. Further the study found that there is a need to develop various types of trust, ranging from individual based trust to institution based trust.

Studies by Chen, Elnaghi and Hatzakis (2011); Lilleoere and Hansen (2010); and Yao, Kam and Chan (2007); in China and Denmark, revealed that organisational KM and KS ideas were welcomed in all government departments and that tacit organisational KS took place but it was hampered by Chinese organisational culture. Furthermore, professionals have different views and practices for OKS and OC and technology traits were found to form crucial fundamentals for organisational KM. The studies recognised tacit OK as important, and showed a synergy in KS enablers that fostered a closeness and proximity of employees. Other exploratory studies by Liao, Liu, To and Lin (2009); Paroutis and Al Saleh (2009); and Vuori and Okkonen (2012) in Asia (Thai public organisations) and Europe (Irish organisations), on motivation for

knowledge-sharing using Web 2.0, revealed that elastic rewards (recognition and respect) were the most significant influences on motivation to contribute knowledge.

Olatokun and Elueze (2012) on attitudes towards KS in Nigeria, found that expected associations and contributions were the major determinants of lawyers' attitudes towards OK sharing. Expected rewards were not significantly related to lawyers' attitudes towards knowledge sharing. A positive attitude towards knowledge sharing was found to lead to a positive intention to share OK, although a positive intention to share OK did not significantly predict a positive OK sharing behaviour. The level of Information Technology (IT) usage was also found to significantly affect the OK sharing behaviour of lawyers.

Fombad, Boom and Bothman (2009) studied organisational KM strategies in law firms in Botswana. The study revealed that OK was considered a strategic resource. However, employees were not engaged in developing programmes and lawyers had no idea what organisational KM was all about. Another study by Stafford and Mearns (2009) on organisations embraces social networking in relation to OK sharing at a multinational business solutions corporations in South Africa. The results revealed that online social networking tools were effective and that management at IBM encouraged employees to make more and more use of the tools for knowledge sharing and knowledge creation. Furthermore, the outcome of that study demonstrated the effectiveness of online social networking tools and served as encouragement to hesitant organisations to adopt social networking in their business practices. Literature reviewed above suggest a considerable understanding of organisational KM on individual's perceived competence and is based on their intention to contribute growth to OK through KS. This study examined the practices in the MGECW in a Namibia context.

2.2.7.1 Organisational knowledge sharing barriers

Chen, Elnaghi and Hatzakis (2011); Clayton and Fisher (2005); Hall (2001); Hansen and Nohria (2004); Husted and Michailova (2002); Lilleoere and Hansen (2010); Riege (2005) and

Yao, Kam and Chan (2007) identified the following organisational KS barriers that impede the effective exchange of OK:

- a) individuals' dispositional impediments;
- b) management practices- as locking up tacit OK, denying time to engage in transfer, organisational structures;
- c) multi-layered structures that impede OK flow;
- d) trapping of knowledge in closed groups and work teams, under-utilisation of organisational systems set up;
- e) lack of organisational commitment and operational priority;
- f) starving OK transfer of money, time, management or IT support.;
- g) internal competition within organisations that discourages collaborative behaviour and erodes the effectiveness of OK sharing activities,
- h) cultural impediments- belief that OK is power and not to be given away, or the nature of cultures such as the bureaucratic; and
- i) the ICT trap, based on the assumption that IT positively supports and improves knowledge sharing, while discounting the important role played by personal interactions in the process.

Kankanhalli, Tan, and Wei (2005); Schepers and Van den Berg (2007); and Willem and Scarbrough (2006) state that another barrier that hinders organisational KS operations is the perceived costs of sharing. Another descriptive thought for this study is that of permeability by McDermott and O'Dell (as cited in Wang & Noe, 2010) who emphasise on the dimension of organisational culture in two folds, such as sharing of OK which is strongly associated with a pre-existing central value of the organisation and that linkage for sharing OK is built on prevailing webs of employee use in their daily activities.

Furthermore, an organisational climate that emphasises on individual competition may pose a barrier to OK sharing whereas accommodating and cooperative team perceptions help to create trust, a necessary condition for OK sharing. Therefore, organisations ought to establish structures that permit open communication to inspire employees' interactions and sharing of knowledge for the benefit of organisations. Similarly, Cummings (2003, p. 1) states that "literature identifies five primary contests that can affect such successful OK-sharing implementations, including the relationship between the source and the recipient, the form and location of the OK, the recipient's learning predisposition, the source's OK -sharing capability, and the broader environment in which the sharing occurs".

Organisational KS studies around such as by Al-Alawi (2005); Al-Marzooqi and Mohammed (2007) on practice and challenges of Organisational KM, OC and OK sharing, reveal that trust, communication, information systems, rewards and organisation structure are positively related to organisational knowledge sharing in organisation. McDermott and O'Dell (2001) argue that OC is regarded as the key inhibitor of a successful knowledge sharing environment. This argument is substantiated by studies of McDermott and O'Dell (2001); O'Dell and Grayson (1998); Sandhu, Jain and Ahmand (2011); and Wang & Noe (2010) which showed that organisations where organisational knowledge sharing was embedded into organisations' structures did not change their culture to correspond with their knowledge management initiatives. Instead, organisations adapted their approach to organisational knowledge management to fit their culture. This materialised through linking, sharing knowledge to solving practical business problems; tying sharing organisational knowledge to a pre-existing core value; introducing knowledge management in a way that matches the organisation's style; building on existing networks people use in their daily work; and encouraging peers and supervisors to exert pressure to share organisational knowledge. Gurteen (1999) asserts that

organisations have to generate an OK sharing culture that encourages employees to work more collectively and team up to share and ultimately to make OK more productive.

This study took note of individual progressive studies on organisational barrier to organisational KS such as the one by Khalil and Shea (2012) on OKS barriers. The study revealed that employee/s were perceived as a prominent barrier to organisational KS, followed by organisational capability and fear of revelation and OK nature. Mostly, fear of revelation was found to be the most influential barrier to OKS effectiveness, bound on three effectiveness measures, that is awareness of research activities in one's department, sharing of research knowledge with others in the institution, and satisfaction by sharing research knowledge with others in the institution.

On the other hand, one of organisational KS barriers has to do with attitude and behaviours of the employee/s to hoard OK for their perceived thought of job security. Husted and Michailova (2002) point out that some employee behaviours and attitudes normally restrain OK sharing. They cite (a) deficiency of OK and, power, (b) unwillingness to spend time on sharing OK, (c) fears about the misuse of the OK other employees worry about the misuse of OK that they diffuse, (d) a high esteem for hierarchy, and (e) avoidance of revealing deficient confidence in the knowledge. Furthermore, Husted and Michailova (2001) argue that there are potential OK transmitters who may choose to hoard their OK for at least two reasons: fear of losing their value by sharing knowledge with other people and protecting competitive advantages. These potential OK transmitters may deter from sharing OK due to the cost involved; either cost for articulating their OK or transferring it in a tacit form or both. Similarly, Riege (2005) identifies individual behaviour or employees' perceptions, environment and technology related to either employee or groups within an organisation function as a barrier to KS.

Liebowitz and Chen (as cited in Sandhu, Jain & Ahmand, 2011, p. 210) state that organisational KS barriers in organisation are associated with poor organisation and management, lack of

OKS culture, low motivation to share OK, bureaucratic structures, and OK hoarding culture. Hansen and Nohria (2004, p. 28) argue that to alleviate these problems, “managers can work to establish relationships between employees from different subsidiaries, but they must do so before specific collaborative events are launched. One of the most effective mechanisms is to rotate employees in different organisational units and subsidiaries”.

A study by Lin (2007) on organisational KS on a firm’s innovation capability in China shows that two individual factors (enjoyment in helping others and OK, self-efficacy) and one of the organisational factors (top management support) significantly influence OK sharing processes. The results of this study also indicate that employee willingness to both donate and collect OK enabled the firm to improve innovation capacity. Connelly and Kelloway, Lin and Lee (as cited in Lin, 2007) argue that organisations can successfully promote an OK sharing culture not only by directly incorporating the OK in its business strategy, but also by changing employee attitudes and behaviours to promote willing and consistent organisational KS.

Another interesting aspect observed was the hoarding of OK which has a characteristic behaviour, with circumstances attached to a custom environment of suspicion and confidentiality due to fear and misinterpreted OK (Husted & Michailova, 2002). Understanding the value of OK in a sharing process rests on awareness and support from senior management either technological or social in an organisation. Arguably, it is important for the organisation to adopt a systematic process where OK is of great value, to offer opportunities to employees to learn from various experiences either directly or indirectly, including structural learning and communities of practice. The reviewed literature contributes to the ever growing empirical KS studies and offers foundation terms of organisational decision making that nurture KS effectiveness in relation to the SECI model.

2.2.7.2 Information communication technology (ICT) for organisational knowledge sharing

ICT has made communication or the sharing of OK more efficient. OK sharing has its pedigree in ICT in terms of transmitting/sharing and dissemination of innovation with management and organisational support. This has been confirmed by Shahid and Alamgir (2011) that ICT enabled OK Sharing which indicates that if employees are tech-savvy and management considerably supports employee involvement in the process of design and deployment of ICT enabled OK sharing, technology barriers can also be greatly reduced and even entirely eliminated. Several mechanisms and tools have been developed to help with the facilitation of OKS in organisations to help employees communicate and ensure access to OK such as e-mail, electronic discussion forums, bulletin boards, white boards, audio and video conferencing and popular within organisation (Handzic & Zhou, 2005).

Huysman and Wulf (as cited in Lin, 2007) acknowledge that ICT use and organisational KS are closely associated because ICT can enable rapid search, access and retrieval of data and can support communication collaboration among organisational employees. This is supported by Al-Alawi, Al-Marzooqi and Mohammed (2007) who indicate that trust, communication, information systems, rewards and organisation structure are positively related to OK sharing in organisations. Similarly, Hendriks (1999) asserts that ICT assists OK sharing in the following ways: ICT effectively lowers at least some barriers involved in OK sharing, facilitates the access to information bases, storing data that are relevant beyond the individual level, improves the processes involved in knowledge sharing and helps to locate the various elements relevant to the process of knowledge sharing

An exploratory study by Jarvenpaa and Staples (2000) revealed that personal propensity to share information, experienced comfort with the use of computer technology, perceptions about the quality of content found in information systems, and the degree of task interdependence

experienced by each employee were significant predictors of participation in computer-mediated information exchange. Wasko and Faraj's (2000) study of three computer-related Usenet newsgroups serving as cross-organisational communities of practice, showed that people participated because they wanted to feel part of and promote a professional community they valued, and because doing so helped them stay up to date with current ideas and innovations. They also reported that they volunteered their advice to others in the community because they found it enjoyable and satisfying to help others, and because it was due reciprocity for the help they themselves obtained from the community. Organisational KS strategically benefits employees and the organisation by connecting professionals across platforms across distance, standardised professional practices, avoiding mistakes, leveraging best practices, reducing time to talent, building reputation and taking on stewardship for strategic capabilities (Dalkir, 2005).

However, a study by Lam and Lambermont-Ford (2008) revealed that within a specialised organisation, the social problem of OK sharing may be surmounted through traditional stimulus, with the establishment of epicurean motivation via extrinsic incentives like training and career progression. Teamwork was also found as critical, where it is strengthened by rigorous acculturations, and extrinsic motivators that align with hedonic motivation may also reinforce the propensity for OK sharing. On the other hand, monetary extrinsic motivators gave the impression not to be appropriate on their peculiar standpoint, and seem to "crowd out" other supplementary incentives.

Most of all reviewed literature has also shown the considerable relationship between organisational KM and OK -sharing organisational successes, in that individuals share their OK. Hence, this study took a closer look at employee/s learning abilities from their mistakes and viewed behaviour attitudes that affect organisational KS in relation to SECI Model.

2.2.8 Organisational knowledge dissemination (OKD) and transfer (OKT)

In a competitive and modern technological organisational environment, organisations have found themselves in a situation where OK transfer and dissemination play a fundamental role in organisation success. In this study, the process of decisive aspects that encourage or obstruct the organisational transfer of knowledge institutes a significant area of concern (van den Hoff & van Weenen, 2004). However, to understand organisational KT, this study adopted Szulanski- Hippel's (as cited in Szulanski, 2000, p.5) definition of KT as a process (not a one-time act) in which an organisation recreates a complex, causally ambiguous set of routines in new settings and keeps it functioning. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) (n. d.) defines organisational KD as “the disclosure of OK by any appropriate means other than publication resulting from the formalities for protecting knowledge” (p. 4).

Organisational KT is referred to as a process that includes OK dissemination and distribution, thus leveraging patent discovered OK amongst systems, that is, individual employee/s, departments, who have common characteristics to receive, transfer and share knowledge. Organisational KM authors and scholars such as Argote and Ingram (2000); Carlile and Reberich (2003); Hoof and Ridder (2004); and Vito, Garavello and Schiuma (1999) define OK transfer as a way of identifying accessible OK that already exists and acquiring it and subsequently applying this OK to develop new ideas or enhance the existing ideas to make a process/action faster, better or safer. Basically, “transfer of OK is not only about exploiting accessible resources, that is, explicit OK, but also about how to acquire and absorb it well to make things more efficient and effective in organisations” (Liyanage, Ballal & Elhag, 2009, p. 9). Organisational KD and KT are used interchangeably, referring to knowledge dissemination, organisational knowledge transfer and knowledge distribution (Demarest, 1997; Garvin, 1993; Gupta & Govindarajan, 2000; Huber, 1991; McAdams & McCreedy, 1999).

The above explanation of organisational KD and KT demonstrates that employees in the MGECW ought to have access to useful information (explicit) and best practices and help with swift problem solving in the organisation. It all depends occasionally on a behavioural aspect of the employee/s in terms of willingness to share OK and on the following three collections of motivation drivers: (a) individual factors, (b) attitude towards OK sharing and (c) cost and benefit from OK sharing. Contextual factors, specifically subjective norms and organisational climate, and finally the OK factors, namely perceived value of OK, are other motivation drivers (Pacharapha & Ractham, 2012).

The operations of organisational KT and KD in terms of how OK is transferred (structured or unstructured processes) among employees is somewhat complex. Davenport and Prusak (1998) argue that it is part of organisational life and that OK is not only transferred procedurally but also un-procedurally. On this premise the importance of knowing requires OK and OK should be tailored according to the needs of the individual employees. Furthermore, identifying potential OK performance problems that permit OK to be discovered and transferred within the organisation is momentous. The approaches of OK transfer entails codification and personalisation (Hansen, Nohria & Tierney, 1999). For codification, OK is standardised, structured and stored in information systems/structures, whereas in these systems OK can be retrieved through a well-organised indexation structure and dispersed to all branch offices of the organisation through data networks. The objective is the application of explicit OK. In personalisation, the process emphasises the importance of tacit knowledge transfer from one employee to another, whereas the OK storage structures are less vigorous compared to codification. The methods used prefers personal employee contact to discuss experienced difficulties, solutions, methods, costs and to ease the employee's process to be involved performing comparable responsibilities (Hansen, Nohria & Tierney; as cited in Joia & Lemos, 2010).

Organisational KT is marked from side to side by changes in the OK or performance of the recipient department employee/s and the organisation as a whole; thus, it is measurable by assessing the impact of OK or changes in performance (Argote & Ingram, 2000). For example, an exploratory study by Darr, Argote, and Epple (as cited in Argote & Ingram, 2000) in a performance-based approach to measuring OK was used to estimate the extent to which the productivity of fast-food stores was affected by the experience of the other stores in their franchise. However, a study by Pacharapha and Ractham (2012) on KA reveals that employees' knowledge acquired is influenced by the recipient's perceived value of OK content and knowledge source. Furthermore, this influence varies among those who are experts and those who are novices in the acquired OK sphere.

A study by Burgess (2005) discovered that employees who perceived greater organisational reward for sharing, spent more time with an immediate work group sharing OK. Further, due to mobility in the organisation, employees would hold their OK or were less in sharing with others and more likely to seek information. Therefore, organisational dissemination and transfer of OK takes place when an individual employee receives trusted OK from a knowledgeable individual or group of experts, where rewards and recognitions encourages the process. Confirming this in their study, Roloff and Sefcik (2010) suggest that interactive formats may be more efficient than one-way communication. In particular, responses in this study indicated that participants found the workshops to be more useful than traditional lectures, but speeches were also viewed as somewhat more useful as participating in discussions. As a result, the content matters most among recipients of OK on the six KT main elements which affect the OKD process in an organisation (Georgopoulos, 2008) such as:

- *Organisational KD Object*: what is being disseminated – the forms which OK takes (e.g. Intellectual Property or human expertise), *Transfer Mechanisms*: how OK is disseminated is closely linked to the forms of knowledge (e.g. licensing or spin-offs).

OK Originator: the organisation from which the OK originates. *Dissemination Agents*: the organisations i.e. intermediaries which transfer OK from the originator to the recipients, making use of Relationship Management strategies to connect organisations across the dissemination chain. *Demand Environment*: the external factors which can affect the demand for the disseminated OK. *Transfer Recipients*: the organisations which receive the disseminated OK.

In contrast, dissemination or transfer of OK should be understood in an organisational context for what it is intended for. In relation to this, Durrant (2008, p. 26) asserts that organisational KT “occurs when OK becomes part of the organisation’s process, systems and activities, knowledge that is part of the organisation’s structural capital is therefore more visible than individual knowledge.” However, a need for OK transfer in the organisation of individual or a group of individuals ought to make a difference to the recipient/s by transforming the employee into a knowledgeable employee.

For instance, Minbaeva, Pedersen, Fey and Park (2003, p. 587) argue:

... pure transmission of OK from the source to the recipient has no useful value if the recipient does not use the new OK, because clearly the key element in OKT is not the underlying (original) knowledge, but rather the extent to which the receiver acquires potentially useful knowledge and utilizes this OK in own operations.

Therefore, there has to be a desired need for the receiver to contextualise the received OK into the context and use in problem solving. Davenport and Prusak (1998) argue that organisational KT transforms employees’ behaviour and develops particular new OK that drives to new employees’ behaviour.

Organisational KT/D reviewed literature helps to understand the dissemination structure which centres on OK delivery to employees in reference to: (a) expertise locator systems (assist to find employee/s inside the organisation with desired expertise), (b) Portal systems (Web page), and (c) newsletters (either electronic or print format) provide for regular dissemination of OK and collaboration and meeting support systems in the framework of organisational context. This study therefore discussed at the above aspects' applicability to the MGECW in Namibia.

2.2.8.1 Processes of organisational knowledge dissemination (OKD) and knowledge transfer (OKT)

Organisational KT occurs through various forms in organisations. Organisations are actually active OK processing machines due to a vast number of employees involved. Thus, processes are clustered into two forms: structured and unstructured OK transfer (McQueen & Chen, 2010). Szulanski (2000) recommends a four-stage OK transfer process for structured organisational KT (as cited in McQueen & Chen, 2010). McQueen & Chen (2010, p. 57) forms of organisational KT occurs in a structured and unstructured processes such as: *Structured OK transfer* is formal, planned and is an intentional transfer process. *Unstructured OK transfer* is an informal, unplanned and spontaneous transfer process, but based on the "structured transfer stages". Unstructured OK transfer does not adopt structured OK transfer in an ordered step by step process, and can jump directly to a step without adoption of earlier steps. Organisations or employees always share a universal work culture which corresponds to organisational KD/T.

Further, it should be understood that structured OK transpires in a particular order, whereas the unstructured happens under no particular order and the later take place frequently in organisational undertakings. Furthermore, be it formal or non-formal, the process in the organisation is charged with the responsibilities of making sure OK is important to the existence of the organisation. Thus, communication channels through different mediums should be exercised in accordance with organisational success. According to Chen and

McQueen (2010, p. 57) organisational KT “is structured or unstructured process from one or different sets of employees to another is significant depending on OK transfer”, as outlined below:

Structured organisation KT types: (a) *Initiation (search)*. The first stage, initiation, starts with identifying the problem and the required knowledge. The discovery of the required OK may include a search for potential solutions, a search that leads to the discovery of superior knowledge. Once the required OK to solve the problem is found, this flows through to the second stage of implementation. (b) *Implementation (learning)*. The implementation stage is where the OK sources and recipients plan and carry out all activities that are necessary for knowledge transfer to take place. (c) *Ramp-up (practice)*. The third stage, ramp-up, is where the recipients begin using the acquired knowledge. Issues and problems are worked out to ensure that the recipients are able to achieve satisfactory performance. The ramp-up stage provides a relatively brief window of opportunity to rectify unexpected problems. (d) *Integration (grasp)*. The integration stage begins after the recipient achieves satisfactory results with the transferred OK.

Unstructured organisation KT types: (a) *unstructured copy*. Copy” means copy selectively to accommodate existing conditions at the destination. “Copy” is a basic type of transfer of OK, and it is a necessary survival-level task. In this type, the transfer of OK is based on pre-existing OK sources such as libraries, archives and databases, or to imitate someone’s way of performing a task. In this type, the OK is more explicit than tacit. (b) *Unstructured adaptation*. This type of OK transfer involves more commitment to transfer OK than type one. This type of transfer occurs when expected or appropriate knowledge cannot be found in the pre-existing OK sources because of OK environmental changes. (c) *Unstructured fusion*. The fusion type of OK transfer occurs when expected or appropriate OK cannot be found in pre-existing OK sources, or pre-existing resources are not directly applicable. This shows that organisational KT in a structured

or unstructured process from one or different sets of employees to another is significant depending on OK transfer.

O'Dell and Grayson (1998, p. 172) argue that successful OC of sharing, transfer, and change depends on the following capabilities: “a process improvement orientation, a common methodology for improvement and change, the ability to work effectively in teams, the ability to capture learning, and the technology to support cataloguing and collaboration.” Thus, organisations ought to have a culture of sharing where employee/s understand the need for desired OK, and specific OK ought to solve specific objectives of the recipient of knowledge.

2.2.8.2 Mechanism for organisational knowledge dissemination and transfer

Handzic and Zhou (2005); and Stanley (2003) argue that OK can be transferred differently using various mechanisms as outlined below:

(a) *Documentation of Explicit OK*: Documenting of OK as explicit is the most desirable mechanism by the organisation; this OK is in training, manuals, and books. This mechanism takes consideration of broad geographical areas. (b) *Technology*: O'Dell & Grayson (as cited in Stanley, 2003) and Handzic and Zhou (2005) state that ICT has brought effective and efficient way to disperse knowledge through Lotus Notes, E-mail and database where employees acquire and share knowledge. (c) *Face to Face*: Davenport and Prusak (1998); Dixon (2000), Hackett (2000); Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995); and Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (as cited in Stanley, 2003) accredit face to face mechanism as the most effective way of transferring OK in the organisation.

Davenport and Prusak (1998) emphasise the need to bring a group of employees together one room or location is a more important aspect in transferring of OK. (d) *Physical transfer of person with knowledge*: Davenport and Prusak (1998) and O'Dell and Grayson (1998) state that the actual transfer of employees from one location to another was and still is the most

effective way of transferring OK and best practices in the organisation for the employees. Handzic and Zhou (2005) argue that formal mechanisms such as training sessions (on job or classroom) are believed to ensure greater distribution of OK but could limit or may inhibit creativity. (e) *Communities of practice (COP) and organisational KT*: Lesser and Stock as cited in Handzic & Zhou, 2005) assert that COP refers to a group of people in which two or more employees regularly meet or engage in sharing and learning based on common interest. COP has been referred to as one of the emerging and currently widely used strategy by many organisations in facilitating the transfer and sharing of best practices and knowledge amongst fellow employees. Jashapara (2004, p. 203) states that “COP are informal, selecting groups that are open-ended, without any deadlines or deliverables but serve a number of cognitive and social interests COP set their own agendas and elect their own leader.”

The above cited literature suggests that each session of KT mechanism can be performed in ways that contribute to the competitiveness of the organisation and are complemented and influenced by transfer of OK. Szulanski (2000) highlights five basic elements that are likely to influence the transfer of OK. The elements are channel, message, context, recipient, and source. The above traits are significant to the process of KT based on the organisation’s expertise. The benefits of COP help to drive the strategy, start new lines of business, solve problems quickly, transfer best practices, develop professional skills and help organisations to recruit and retain talent (Wenger & Snyder, as cited in Jashapara, 2004, p. 205). Considering these findings in the context of the MGECW’s OK transfer practice, provide a key to a comprehensive exploiting and understanding of the competitiveness potentiality of OK transfer and dissemination (De Long, 2004). This explains how these practices can be beneficial to the MGECW. Moreover, the archetypal Figure 2.7 below is used to structure the exploration of benefits and connections between OKT/D and organisational competitiveness. This researcher recognises that the major

organisational KT/D primary practices are fundamental in inspiring and managing the process, as depicted in figure 2.6 below.

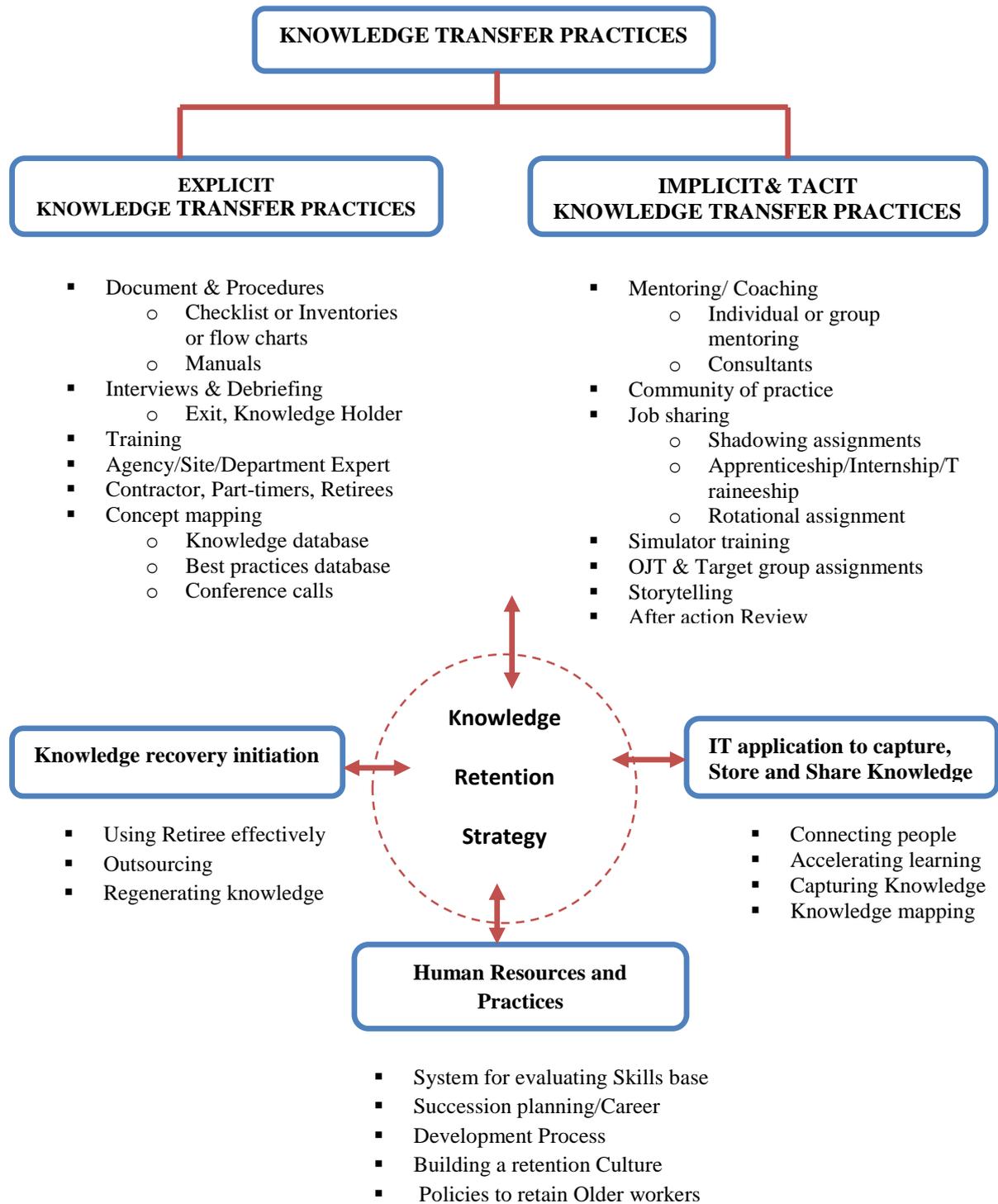


Figure 2.6 Organizational Knowledge Transfer Practices

Source: De Long (2004)

Figure 2.6 provides a summary of the organisational KT/D primary practice activity, centres mainly on OK retention strategy in the organisation. Thus, the figure helps with understanding how OK is created, and exchanged to context specific where learning takes place among employees. With KT practices, the organisation refines its OK by identifying distinct types of activities within each practice, either tacit or explicit knowledge. Thus, managers ought to take into consideration any of these practices in designing formula which yields successive leveraging of knowledge. Consequently, this study paid attention to these organisational KT primary practices/activities in the MGECW by finding out what the main types of OK KD/T that the MGECW was involved in.

2.2.8.3 Barriers to organisational knowledge dissemination and transfer

Davenport and Prusak (1998); Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995); and Reige (2007) have identified OK transfer barriers as individual and organisational. Organisational KT barriers also include cultural and localisation (Hard & Lindkvist as cited in Cantoni, Bello & Figerio 2001). Davenport and Prusak (2000); and O'Dell and Grayson (1998) identify organisational culture as an obstacle to the transfer of OK in organisations. These obstacles could be in form of (a) ignorance; (b) no absorptive capacity; (c) lack of pre-existing relationships; (d) lack of motivation; (e) lack of trust; (f) different cultures, (g) vocabularies, or frames of reference; (h) lack of time and meeting places or a narrow idea of productive work; (i) the belief that OK is prerogative of particular groups, or not-invented-here syndrome; (j) and intolerance for mistakes or need for help. On the other hand, Szulanski (1996) and Szulanski (2000) argue that barriers are of the following forms such as predictors of stickiness, a diachronic analysis of stickiness, initiation stickiness, implementation stickiness, ramp-up stickiness and integration stickiness.

Abrams, Cross and Levin (2003); Hansen, Mors and Lovas (2006); Teece (1986); Tsai (2002) and Szulanski (1996) also identified several barriers to OK transfer and sharing, which include OK tacit-ness, limited absorptive capacity of OK receivers, perceptions of competition by OK providers, and lack of trust between providers and receivers. Nelson and Winter (as cited in Szulanski, 2000) states that the integration phase comprises upholding a slight and full truce in intra-organisational conflict, including where fellows of the organisation are satisfied to show their role. Adler (1990, 1995), Galbraith (1990); Murphy & Reyburn (1993); and Tyre and Orlikowski (1994) argue that the ramp-up stage is a relatively brief window of opportunity to rectify unexpected problems where the recipient is likely to begin using new OK ineffectively.

Furthermore, Adler (1990) and Galbraith (1990) emphasise that implementation stickiness as a strategy of the implementation stage depends on how challenging it is to bridge the communications gap between the source and the recipient and to fill the recipient's technical gap. Bridging the communication gap may require solving problems caused by incompatibilities of language, coding schemes and cultural conventions. Further difficulty may also result from poor coordination between the source and the recipient, especially when either the source or the recipient of knowledge deviates from agreed upon responsibilities. Leonard-Barton (as cited in Szulanski, 2000, p. 14) argues that "when this occurs, the source or the recipient may do less than is expected from them or conversely may do more than is expected leading to situations where the recipient usurps some of the roles of the source or where the source intrudes the domain of the recipient".

On the other hand, "Initiation stickiness is the difficulty to recognize opportunities to transfer and to act upon them to initiate the OK transfer. An opportunity for a OK transfer can be said to exist as soon as the seed for that transfer is formed, that is, as soon as a gap and OK to address the gap could be found within the organisation" (Leonard-Barton (as cited in Szulanski, 2000, p.14). Cyert and March (as cited in Szulanski, 2000, p14) assert that the discovery of a

gap may trigger a problematic search for suitable solutions. Szulanski and Forsgren (as cited in Björkman, Rasmussen & Li, 2004, p. 444) refer to barriers as “motivational factors, whereas a subsidiary may be reluctant to transfer OK to other units for fear of losing a position of superiority, or because it is insufficiently compensated for the efforts and costs involved in the process of knowledge transfer.” KT barriers in the organisation are related to the process of including the participation of employees in the process of OK transfer.

However, literature reveals understandings and in particular organisational context understandings. The applicability of these elements were investigated in the MGECW in Namibia looking at employee/s behaviour/ attitude and organisational culture thus its definite response vestiges to be found.

2.2.9 Enablers and barriers to organisational KM

Organisational barriers and enablers to organisational KM are in one particular class. Critical achievement issues can develop to critical failure factors if they are not correctly implemented or monitored (AL-Hussain, 2012). Gholipour, Jandaghi and Hosseinzadeh (2010, p.1864) argue that organisational “KM enablers (or effective factors) are the overall organisational activities that positively affect knowledge-creation, these activities include; facilitating relationships and conversations as well as sharing local knowledge across an organisation or beyond geographic and cultural borders”.

Organisational KM barriers could be based on individual departments due to the fact that in organisations one may find that one department is willing to seek OK whereas the other department does not. It is for this reason that in order to certify a successful organisational KM practice, it is essential to take note of hindrances influencing the operation of OK sharing within an organisation and develop plans to overcome them (AL-Hussain, 2012).

De Long (1997); Hamdzic and Zhou (2005); Hasanali (2002); Lee and Choi (2003); Rai (2011); and Ryan and Prybutok (2001) and argue that organisational KM enablers and barriers are OC, leadership, technology and measurement, open OC, senior management leadership and commitment, employee involvement, teamwork and information systems infrastructure. Luger and Kraus (2001) stress that organisational KM barriers arise due working environment. Thus organisational enablers are aimed at nurturing management of OK regularly which kindles sharing, creation, dissemination, capturing and acquisition of OK to facilitate KM within an organisation. However, organisational KM scholars such as Hedlund (1994); Jarvenpaa and Staples (2000); Jones, Chonko and Roberts (2003); Lee and Choi (2003); Nelson and Coopriider (1996); Szulanski (1996); and Scott (2000) identify mistrust as a key barrier to OK exchange and creation that a high level of trust reduces the risk in OK exchange. However, Hansen and Nohria (2004); Toben, Weber and Wunran (2002) assert that barriers relate to employees and could unfold as organisations fails to understand collaboration in three different ways: (a) *unwillingness to seek input and learn from others*, (b) *inability to seek and find expertise* (both individual and the organisation), (c) *an unwillingness to help*, and (d) *inability to work together and transfer knowledge*. This study looked at these factors which are said to hinder organisational KM operations in the MGECW. Table 2.7 below depicts barriers to organisational KM in relations to employees.

Table 2.4 Organisational KM barriers related to Employees

Different languages	The language barrier is a problem when dealing with people from other organisation either from the same country as well as from abroad. When dealing with international companies, it was recognised that it can lead to misunderstandings if people who do not speak a language with a certain level of competence. It was mentioned that meetings are sometimes unproductive because the topics discussed were only half understood. A further problem in this context occurs when two colleagues of the same company and the same country are involved in the same project but belong to different domains. The understanding of what they are talking about can be significantly different.
Fear of penalty/fear of losing profile	The presentation of not clearly defined ideas (“soft ideas”) is often considered to be a weakness, thus reducing the space for creative thinking and the creation of synergies to develop ideas
Idea robbery	This barrier describes the fear that the idea of an individual employee could be taken by another who then gets the acknowledgement and rewards for that idea. It implies the need for the protection of proprietary knowledge among employees.
Fostering established communication channels	At the same as on an intra-organisational level, communication channels between colleagues across different companies must be maintained and fostered, thus resulting in high efforts. Since the establishment of good relationships is very time consuming, means must somehow be provided to support this task.

Source: Toben, Weber and Wunram (2002, p.4)

2.2.9.1 Organisational culture

Gholipour et al., (2010); Handzic and Zhou (2005); and Thoben, Weber and Wunram (2002) state that OC is widely revered as one of the critical factors of organisational KM enablers, and is progressively documented as an aspect in promoting intellectual assets. An organisation’s values, principles, norms, unwritten rules and procedures comprise its cultural OK resource (Holsapple & Joshi as cited in Gholipour et al., 2010).

Schein (as cited in Nguyen & Mohamed, 2011, p. 209) also argues that “OC consists of two layers of concepts, namely, visible and invisible characteristics and the visible layer means external buildings, clothing, behaviour modes, regulations, stories, myths, languages and rites. The invisible layer means common values, norms, faith and assumptions of business organisation members.” These patterns actually influence how individual employees have to

act and behave in the organisation; these acts and behaviours are regarded as norms and values of the organisation and they affect organisational KM implementations. The attitude of top leadership always has an effect on the effectiveness of OC; thus if the organisation is to achieve or cultivate an innovative and OK friendly culture, it is important for top management to commit and act as role models (Handzic & Zhou, 2005).

Singh and Kant (2008, p. 143) assert that “the lack of organisational structure can discourage organisational KM activities which certainly hinder the prospect of effective implementation of organisational KM in the organisation”. Organisational structure ought to nurture compact connections and effective collaboration among employees (Gholipour et al., 2010). Thus, Zhou and Fink (as cited in Handzic & Zhou, 2005) state that those organisations which are able to make use of a variety of organisational form to create an environment that supports collaboration and knowledge sharing are more successful in their operations. Even though employees are willing to overcome these barriers, subsequently organisational barriers makes them impossible to prosper due to closed OC, rigid hierarchies, out-dated procedures and lack of understanding and procedures of the organisation (Lugger & Kraus, 2001). Okhuysen and Eisenhardt (as cited in Gholipour et al, 2010) assert that structure acts not only as a channel for knowledge flows among individuals, but also can provide a platform for changing and improving those flows. As Handzic and Zhou (2005) point out, if the organisation aims to develop an innovative and knowledge-friendly culture, top management must commit to deliver and consistently act on that.

2.2.9.2 Leadership

Sherman (as cited in Luthans, 2005, p. 547) refers to leadership as a “matter of aligning people toward common goals and empowering them to take the actions needed to reach them.” Handzic and Zhou (2005, p.37) assert that “ characteristics of leadership are that of being a

catalyst through inspiring, mentoring, setting examples, listening and engendering trust and respect, organisational KM requires individuals and team leaders with a diverse range of skills, attributes and capabilities to manage and motivate change.” Top management are the driver of change in the organisation; they inspire employees to understand the importance and the benefits of organisational KM. Corresponding to the above assertion, a study by Nguyen and Mohamed (201) shows that both transformational and transactional leadership is positively related to organisational KM practices. They also revealed that charismatic leadership and contingent reward leadership behaviours have greater influence on all the dimensions of organisational KM practices. With deliverance by organisational KM, “top management or organisational leadership should have strong interpersonal, communication and change management skills, an understanding of the business, technological expertise and the ability to build relationships” (Handzic & Zhou, 2005, p 36). A basic conviction on organisational KM in the organisation is that it will not work unless top management champion organisational KM with full support; it is a collective action. As a study by Bartczak, Boulton, Rainer, Oswald and O’Malley (2010) showed that a number of deleterious managerial factors have thwart progress, the most significant being lack of leadership commitment and lack of evidence/measurement that reveal a return on investment.

According to Crawford and Politis (as cited in Nguyen & Mohamed, 2011, p. 208), “leaders create the conditions that allow (or otherwise) participants to exercise and cultivate their knowledge manipulation skills, to contribute their own individual OK resources to the organisation’s pool of OK, and to have easy access to relevant OK.” Hasanali (2002, p.1) also states that “leadership have key role in certifying success in almost any initiative within an organisation.” It is a practical matter of interacting effectively where managers and employees are literally the piston of organisational KM. Thus, top management creates and develops the atmosphere that ensures that the sharing, capture, dissemination, transfer and acquisition of OK

happen successfully. Nguyen and Mohamed (2011) argue that most organisational leaders face a challenge to inspire capacity in others by generating an environment in which acquiring and sharing knowledge is encouraged or even demanded. Bukowitz and Williams (as cited in Nguyen & Mohamed, 2011, p 208) echoed the same sentiment and suggest that, in a knowledge organisation, leaders are no longer the source of knowledge and are no longer perched at the top of an organisation, but rather in the centre.

The literature discussed above enabled this researcher to understand what the barriers and facilitators of leadership towards organisational KM practices. Hence, this study regards leadership practices as barriers in the MGECW 'in a Namibia context.

2.2.9.3 KM and technology (ICT)

ICT is considered as one of the critical factors for effective organisational KM practice (Rasli, Madjid & Asmi, 2004). ICT has revolutionised how information is passed from and around organisations, and helps with the movement, retrieval and storage of OK within and across organisation's boundaries. Organisational KM practices occur through various dynamic forms in an organisation one of ICT. ICT involves the process of generation, creation, acquisition of knowledge, validation of OK, codification of OK, analysis and mining and transfer/sharing/dissemination (Stankosky, 2005). Technological mechanisms assist and ease the process of organisational KM practices such as organisational KM systems, data warehousing and data mining activities, as a result, the importance of employee and supporting OK technologies has grown proportionally (Desouza & Paquette, 2011).

Leonard (as cited in Gold, Malhotra & Segars, 2001) argues that, the technical system within an organisation determines how OK travels throughout the enterprise and how OK is accessed. Technology permits the individual or group of employees to track internal and external OK within the organisation and employee/s in need of specific types of OK know where it resides

(Gold et al, 2001). For example, a study of implementation of organisational KM in higher Education in the United Kingdom reported that the existing facilities like libraries, electronic collections of learning materials, networks for e-mail communication, and management information system provide data on the organisational employees' profiles (Rowley, 2000). Wang and Schulte (as cited in Stankosky, 2005, p. 113) assert that even the simplest technology, for example emails, can enhance the flow of knowledge among employees. ICTs help employees stay connected with information, and people with each other, but it is not the solution to own its own problems in the organisation (Cong & Pandya, 2003).

Moreover, technological dimensions propose that organisations have to identify the appropriate hardware and software for conducting organisational KM and make sure any technology used must fit the organisation's people and processes. An organisation should build a technological infrastructure as identified by its employees' needs in knowledge resources and right for the processes. Advanced technologies (for example, secure intranets, browsers with dashboards and portals, intelligent search techniques, semantic modelling of knowledge ontologies, contextual taxonomies) may be successfully deployed in organisational KM systems to manage intra- and inter-firm OK (Kulkarni, Ravindran & Freeze, 2007). Thus, establishing an organisation with a wide range of intranet, with extensive communicating and collaboration capabilities to share explicit OK helps with dispensing OK (Kulkarni et al., 2007, Cong & Pandya, 2003). Also organisation needs to build an OK portal, a virtual OK platform that is accessible via the organisation's wide intranet to share tacit OK without being face to face through means such as email, discussion groups, chat-rooms, audio and video conference (Cong & Pandya, 2003). ICT helps with the flow and a variety of information within the organisation and also make it possible to manage and transfer this information through IT systems through OK portals.

These OK portals ought to have OK repositories where the transfer of crystallised OK flows back to portals; it also helps with a quick accessibility of information among employees. According to Cong and Pandya (2003) ICT assists in storing OK assets in an electronic medium to enable efficient and faster access and retrieval. These provide customised access to knowledge resources by pull or push technology to facilitate interaction with citizens, customers, suppliers, partners and others (Cong & Pandya, 2003, p 31). ITC ought to meet the requirements as a natural medium for the movement of OK (Borghoff & Pareschi, 1997). Consequently, ICT oriented organisational KM fundamentally wishes to codify OK in order to turn tacit to explicit OK through documentation and on-line technical handbooks and references. ICT further helps to organise the flow of organised OK through storing and retrieval.

Organisational KM tools are important in achieving organisational KM strategies in the organisation; however, the tools have a duty to add value to organisational KM processes and help to achieve measurable improvements. A study from the American Productivity and Quality Centre (APQC) shows that organisations embarking on organisational KM efforts generally rely for accomplishing their goals, on the setting up of a suitable IT infrastructure (Borghoff & Pareschi, 1997). ICT tools are important for organisational KM practices; however, emphasis should be placed on the needs of employee(s) in the organisation and the type of organisation in general.

Thoben, Weber and Wunram (2002) state that barriers related to technology are not regarded as pertinent like organisation and people. Moreover, there is a danger in a viewpoint that sees IT-driven organisational KM strategies as culminating in objectifying and classifying knowledge into static, inert information, thus disregarding altogether the role of tacit knowledge (Borghoff & Pareschi, 1997). Thus, the processes of organisational KM should be built on a collective process. The process includes the following: capture and store, search and

retrieve, send critical information to individuals or groups, structure and navigate, share and collaborate, synthesise, profile and personalise, solve or recommend, integrate and maintain (Serrat, 2008). The literature as discussed on organisational KM and technology highlighted the role of ICT in facilitating organisational KM. This study, therefore investigated ICT capabilities and its role in organisational KM in the MGECW, Namibia.

2.10 Summary

This chapter reviewed related literature focusing on current experiences of organisational KM. Reviewed literature re-counts mechanisms of organisational KA and identifies a number of important achievements of KA such as organisational network system ties, shared values, and trust for OK. The literature suggests a considerable understanding of organisational KM on individual's perceived competence and is based on their intention to contribute growth to OK through KS. The ever growing empirical KS studies offer foundation terms of organisational decision making that nurture KS effectiveness. The literature as discussed on organisational KM and technology highlighted the role of ICT in facilitating organisational KM. The next chapter presents the study's methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in this study which explored the organisational KM practices in the MGECW in Namibia. The chapter discusses the philosophical, epistemological and methodological assumptions of the study as well as the research design and methodology. These philosophical assumptions played a significant role in shaping the study's research design and methodology. Further, the chapter discusses the population, sampling plan, instrumentation, and data collection procedures for the study. Lastly, the chapter concludes by deliberating on the methods of data analysis and ethical considerations of the study.

3.2 Philosophical assumptions of the study

Research methods formerly emanate from philosophies of social science. Fossey, Harvey, McDemott and Davidson (2002) argue that debates on philosophical suppositions such as ontology, epistemology and methodology have dominated social science research discourse. It is essential when embarking on any social science research to deliberate on different research paradigms.

3.2.1 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

It is important to offer a brief clarification of ontology, epistemology and methodological standpoints of this study. Firstly, it is important to give a brief discussion on what constitute a paradigm. A paradigm refers to a worldview, set of brief (metaphysics) and values that deal with definitive or ideologies (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Crotty, 1998, 2003; Guba, 1988; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 107) state that "it represents a worldview that defines for its holder the nature of the world, the individual place in it, and the range possible

relationship to that world and its parts.” A paradigm entails the suppositions and propositions which are more of thoughts about the configurations and synchronisation of the social world. Ontology and epistemology commonly signify a worldview that effects the facet and perspective of social reality. The research paradigm embraces and serves as an abstract of a system interconnected by patterns and reasoning served as intangible of ontology, epistemology and methodology. These worldviews are of two in nature such as objectivism (positivism) and subjectivism (interpretivism). Thus, looking at the world through these lens has had an influence on many social science researchers. It is from this standpoint that the positivism paradigm rests its subscription to the commandments of natural science. Positivism is more concerned with the natural scientific methods and it is associated with quantitative analysis. Positivism was coined by Auguste Comte who developed the method to study society using the methods of natural science. Howe (1988, p.10) states that positivism “is the view that scientific knowledge is the paragon of rationality, that must be free of metaphysics and based on pure and free of the interest, values, purposes and psychological schemata of individual, thus knowledge must adhere to the above standards.” Positivism looks at human behaviour as passive or reflexive driven and dictated by social external forces.

On the other hand, interpretivism paradigm or anti positivist was developed to counter the opposition of positivism standpoints. Interpretivism paradigm subscribes to the mandates of qualitative analysis, developed to study and understand human beings behaviour, experiences looking at the expanded imputed definition of meanings, constructivism. Burrell and Morgan (1979); Howe (1988) and Williams (2000) state that interpretivism paradigm takes into consideration issues such as human intentions and that beliefs ought not to be relegated; they should be studied in their natural settings (social world). Interpretivists argue that some social science researcher have an effect on research settings so is the analysis and that human life hinges on subjectivity and the external social environment aid to socially construct reality.

According to McDemott and Davidson (2002), ontology and epistemology as social scientific beliefs, aid in describing the nature of reality towards the admissible scientific evidence. Their importance is to comprehend the facets of social science research as they harmonise the study's standpoint and its underlying theories. Ontology relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics. Burrell and Morgan (1979); and Crotty (1998, 2003) define ontology as the study of existence or being. Crotty (1998, 2003) argues that it is more about investigating or the interests are "what kind of the world is the social science researcher examining, with the characteristics of reality and the anatomical structure of reality. Thus, ontology has to do with question such as "what is there that needs to be known, or what the nature of reality is; is it objective nature or the product of individual thoughts (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

Some social science researchers embrace the idea that there are multiple realities in the world as each individual's realities may differ from person to person due to their world views and experiences (Blaikie, 1993; Fossey et al., 2002; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Myers, 1997). The supposition is that reality is an objective gadget waiting to be discovered and ought to be acknowledged. The main characteristics underlying these paradigms are objectivist and subjectivist suppositions. Sarantakos (1993, p. 32-33) argues that "objectivist regard reality as objective perceived uniformly through senses, where human beings are rational and with no free will, where science operates on deductive, with value free aimed to explaining facts and predict future occurrences ... Objectivists argue that reality exists in singular and independent forms from the social science researcher/s, where they operate under a value neutral custom "detached from reality understudy".

On the other hand, subjectivists argue that reality is spiced with an expanded definition of subjectivism, whereby human beings create their own world. Subjectivism is based on inductive logic and ideographic operating on interpretation and value driven to understand

social life with the emphasis on the meaning attached. Subjectivism, according to Jonassen (1991, p. 59) is that “reality is more in the mind of the knower, the knower constructs a reality, or interprets it, based on perceptions; it is concerned with how humans construct knowledge a function of experience of mental structures and of belief that one uses to interpret objects and events.” In summary, Figure 3.1 below illustrates the underlying differences among subjectivism and objectivism while taking into account their differential suppositions.

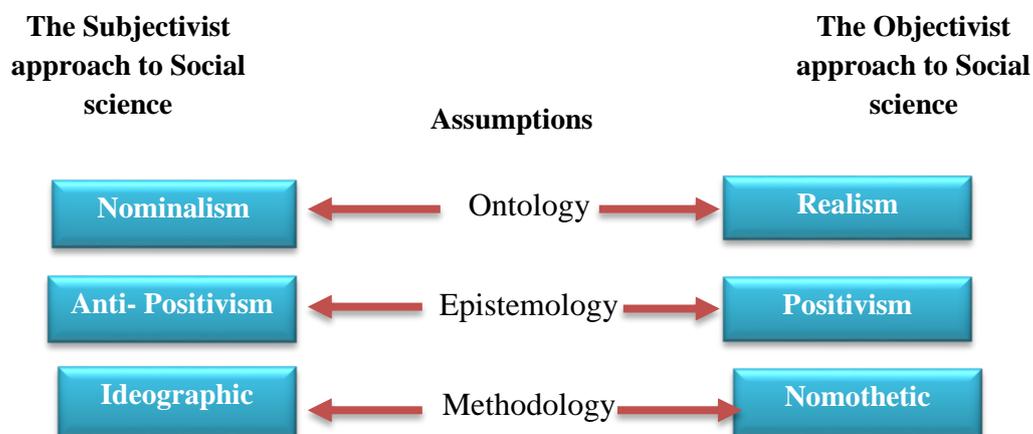


Figure 3.1 The underline dimension subjective and objective assumptions

Source: Burrell and Morgan (1979)

Figure 3.1 above shows the two major philosophical traditions objectivist and subjectivist with their respective norms, and the expressions allied with them. Epistemology operates on determining the nature of knowledge, how it contributes to knowledge, and the existence of knowledge itself. Creswell (1998) asserts that epistemological assumption is that there is a fundamental interaction between research participant and the social researcher, and reality is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann as cited in Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002). Epistemology entails the process of understanding and offering the account of how certain that knowledge with its aspect is comprehensible, it focusses on propositional logic of know-how

or knowable. Blaikie (1993); Burrell and Morgan (1979); and Crotty (1998, 2003) refer to epistemology as a philosophy or a set of suppositions in a probable method toward attain knowledge, how what exist may be apprehended with certainty, what can be known and what format is satisfactory to subscribe to true knowledge. The above assumptions had an influence on the research design of this study. Methodology helps the social science researchers to have different views on a social world (Burrell & Morgain, 1979; Blaikie, 1993; Crotty, 1998, 2003; Fossey et al., 2002). The methodological standpoint reflects the practical strategies that a social science researcher follows to unpack what is not known and make them known. For this study, a case study research design was used (Kothari, 2004). The case study design was preferred for the reason that it studies in profundity rather than in breadth.

3.3 Methodological assumption

Social research in the scope of natural and social sciences has anticipated diverse views, in keeping with the above philosophical traditions. Myers (1997); Creswell (1998); Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004); and Walsham (1993) argue that quantitative or qualitative approaches are often based on some fundamental assumptions about what constitutes 'valid' research and which research methods are appropriate to obtain facts. The philosophical basis discussed above of positivism and interpretivism paradigms associated to these assumptions assisted to address the outlined methods and research objectives of this study. Related to the positivism paradigm in this study is the quantitative approach, which claims that knowledge is derived from scientific methods of inquiry, as opposed to interpretations based on supernatural beliefs and conjecture (Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002). The positivism enquiry paradigm is associated with normative and quantitative analysis.

Parahoo (1997) argues that methods used in natural science stand to be applied in studying of human behaviour. Quantitative studies are more characterised by empiricism, which is the

furthermost central to the distinctive of positivism. Quantitative methods hinge on greater samples carefully chosen randomly, and presents an organised scientific inquiry of phenomena based on works of mathematical calculations. Positivists generally assume that reality is objectively interpreted and can be described by measurable properties which are independent of the observer (researcher) and the instruments thereof. Guba and Lincoln (as cited in Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002, p.44) argue that “the investigator is capable of studying a phenomenon without influencing it or being influenced by it, inquiry takes place as through a one way mirror.” The above quantitative reference factors played a significant role to the researcher in determining and deciding what approach or method to use in the collection of data from the sample of middle management employees of the MGECW in Namibia.

Furthermore, positivists believe in empiricism and hold the assumption that the constraints of empirical observation and the scientific method serve to build the best possible foundation for justifying beliefs about the world, and leads to objectivity and truth in the assertions. Parahoo (1997, p. 40) defines empiricism as the theory that assumes that facts are anything that human senses can actually observe. Through that, social researchers have succeeded in empirically studying concepts, for example attitude and behaviour by using instruments such as scales, eased by observation by the social science researcher (Parahoo, 1997). As this study explored the extent of organisational KM in the MGECW through an investigation of organisational KM practices focussing on middle management employees towards participation in OK Acquisition (KA), Knowledge Dissemination (KD), Knowledge Sharing (KS), Knowledge Transfer (KT), and Knowledge Capture (KC) it was deemed necessary to adopt a quantitative approach using a questionnaire.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004); Sale, Lohfeld and Brazil (2002) argue that the transcendence of constructivism, idealism, relativism, humanism, hermeneutics and even postmodernism in qualitative studies are important to understand reality. They emphasise that

it is quite difficult for the knower and known to be separated because the subjective knower is the only source of reality. Interpretivism research paradigm is frequently associated with social constructivism and qualitative analysis. Qualitative methods from the interpretivist paradigm, operate on the principle that the framework in which social behaviour arises, including the meanings are attached to their experiences and ought to be studied in degree to comprehend human social behaviour (Parahoo, 1997, Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002). The interpretivism method functions are under the supposition that access to reality is made probable via language/s and shared meanings. Thus, interpretivism paradigm seeks to understand these meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things (Bieger & Gerlach, 1996). Understanding these cases needs interaction by the social researcher and the respondent to see and to interpret those cases in a very colourful litigated way to gain the insight of these experiences.

Hence, this study employed the interpretive paradigm under qualitative method to ply for the 20 senior managers in the MGECW towards understanding of organisational KM practices using structured interviews under qualitative to obtain qualitative responses. This researcher found that it was not reasonable to omit them out of the study because of their in-depth OK and experience pertaining to the operations of the MGECW.

The weaknesses of one method mentioned above have been suppressed by the collaborative strengths of the other methods, resulting in mixing methods and hence the confidence in the study's findings (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007). The mixed method enabled this researcher to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods to investigate the extent of organisational KM in the MGECW through an investigation of organisational KM practices.

3.4 Research design

A case study research design was adopted for this study which was designed to investigate the insights of organisational KM in the MGECW and to provide the understanding of organisational KM practices (Malhotra, 2004). This study was descriptive and grounded on the mixed method research approach through a concurrent triangulation strategy. Bryman (2006, 2012); du Plooy (2009); Kothari (2004); Kumar (2012); and McMillan and Schumacher (2001) state that a research design is a strategy and structure of investigation to acquire evidence in answering research questions or objectives. It designates the method used to bring about the study by clarifying questions such as when, from whom and under what conditions were the data obtained. The mixed method research approach was used for this case study assisted in advancing and developing numerous angles to understand organisational KM practices in the MGECW.

Mixed methods is defined as “the process of research where the social science researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). Its ontological and epistemological standpoint originates from a pragmatist philosophy (Morgan, 2007). Creswell (2003, 2007) argues that it bridges the gap between quantitative and qualitative methods. Concurrent procedures were used in this study, in which the researcher “converged quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem” (Creswell, 2003, p. 16). Mixed methods provided a practical approach for this study, where collected data were integrated to complement each other and give a practical picture of organisational KM practices in the MGECW in Namibia. In this study the goal of this combination (mixed methods) was more to develop understanding than to search for corroboration (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2004).

The researcher developed a strategy to fit the research objectives and the methodology. A fully integrated mixed methods concurrent design was applied in guiding this study. This was done through a survey method. Thus, the research design included two main data collection techniques: (i) a self-administered questionnaire was developed with the aim to gather quantitative data significantly with the first three research objectives (ii) a structured interview was employed to gather more qualitative and related information in line with the third and fourth research objectives. Creswell (2003, 2007, 2009) states that concurrent triangulation design requires that data should be collected and analysed separately. The interpreted results should then be merged.

3.5 Research population

For this study, the total target population was all the MGECW registered employees in Namibia. The population consisted of 544 registered employees country wide based on the most up-to-date figures available from the 2013 Employee Register which was obtained from the MGECW Human Resource Department.

3.6 Sampling

Bryman (2012); du Plooy (2009); Kumar (2012); Payne and Payne (2004) and Ross (2005) argue that the prospect of studying the whole populace is impossible. Therefore, a sample should be chosen from the population to represent the entire group. Sampling is the selection of a subclass of the populace to be studied. Kothari (2004, p. 152) defines sampling as “the selection of any part of an aggregate or totality on the basis of which a judgement or inference about the aggregate totality is made, actually the process of obtaining information about the entire population by examining only a part of it.”

The total sample initially selected for the study was one hundred respondents (MGECW employees out of 544) distributed as follows; eighty middle management respondents received

questionnaires to complete; sixty six responded and returned the questionnaire. Out of twenty key senior managers, sixteen were interviewed. The researcher was aware of various sampling techniques involved in social science research: probability sampling (random sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling and sampling using multiple probability techniques). On the other hand, non-probability sampling comprises purposive, quota, snowball and theoretical sampling; they do not employ sampling measures of probability theory and a representative is not ensured (Sarantakos, 2005).

Purposive sampling, qualitative methods were used for key informants (senior managers) and these were deliberately selected because of their technical know-how of the MGECW (Payne & Payne, 2004). Barbour (2002); Creswell (2009); Maxwell (2010); Sarantakos (1993, 2005); and Teddlie and Yu (2007) assert that the purposive sampling technique is used in qualitative studies and where components (individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) are purposefully picked. The researcher pursued to understand the underlying meanings of the organisational KM practices from the perspectives of managers and the organisations (Payne & Payne, 2004). Patton (as cited in Manson, 2002) states that it is important to select information rich cases for the study. Information rich cases are those from which the social researcher will learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research.

On the other hand, *probability sampling* was applied for quantitative research through simple random sampling for this study. Sarantakos (1993, 2005) argue that probability sampling is a procedure in which the choice of respondents is guided by principles, according to which every unit of the target population has an equal, calculable and non-zero probability of being included in the sample. Simple random sampling was chosen because it rides on the generalisation that all target populace middle management of the MGEWC's employees had a chance to be selected for study (Hittleman & Simon, 1992). Keppel (as cited in Creswell, 2009, p. 153)

asserts that during simple random sampling “each individual has an equal probability of being selected from the populace, ensuring that the sample will be representative of the population.” Thus, random sampling was used. The lotto method was used using the MGECW employees’ register which was used as the sampling frame to select research participants for the quantitative approach. Thereafter, names reflected in numbers were drafted on small papers and picked from a bowl; all those who were picked formed part of the study. Thus, there were eighty randomly selected employees. Sarantakos (2005) refers to this as a lottery method under simple random sampling method.

3.7 Research instruments

Social science researchers use various instruments for data collection. Some of the instruments include observation, interview, questionnaire and focus group discussion. For this study, the researcher used the *questionnaire* and structured *interview*. The OK on organisational KM practices of both senior and middle management respondents was collected by looking at how normally they employees engaged in OK or knowledge sources with (other employees), within and other external source.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

According to Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003), questionnaires are used towards gathering immense magnitudes of information from a diverse number of respondents. Haralambos and Heald (1989); Hittleman and Simon (1992); and Manson (2002) define a questionnaire as a systematic arranged set of questions used to collect data through a written format from the research respondents, the technique is associated with quantitative methods. Sarantakos (2005); May (2001); Kothari (2004) state that the survey is more descriptive based and often is associated with questionnaires to collect vast information from research respondents. The survey cannot achieve success without a questionnaire (Crawford, 1997). A questionnaire always contains three types of questions such as open-ended, closed-choice and multiple choice

questions. Closed-choice and multiple choice questions contain structured categories in order for the respondent/s to select only a precise response or responses of choice either a yes or no or agree or disagree (Crawford, 1997; Haralambos & Heald, 1989; Hittleman & Simon, 1992). Questionnaires can be dispatched to the research respondents through a mail via postal services or administered through email(s) or the web. For this study, open-ended questions were used; the format gave option to the middle management respondents to answer in writing without restrictions (Haralambos & Heald, 1989; Hittleman & Simon, 1992). The advantages of using a questionnaire were that it was a more economical, fast and efficient technique to collect vast amounts of data from a numerous middle management respondents in the MGECW (Crawford, 1997; Haralambos & Heald, 1989; Hittleman & Simon, 1992; Manson, 2002).

Data was collected by the researcher using a structured self-administered questionnaire from middle management employees in their respective duty stations around thirteen regional offices in Namibia. A self-administered questionnaire entails the process whereby respondents complete or fill in the questionnaire by themselves at their respective places and return the questionnaire after completing it (Haralambos & Heald, 1989; Hittleman & Simon, 1992; Kothari, 2004; Manson, 2002; May, 2001; Sarantakos, 2005). The self-administered questionnaire offered middle management respondents' a greater freedom of expression of their views and understanding of organisational KM practices within the MGECW. Furthermore, the self-administered questionnaire was use due to the fact that employees of the MGECW are extensively geographical isolated or too remote and the study was more exploratory nature. Questionnaires were used under the quantitative method to collect data from eighty middle management respondents.

Questions were compiled as per set questionnaire standards agreed with supervisors and by specialists in KM. The courier service (NamCourier) was used to send questionnaires to the respondents in the MGECW in all thirteen regions offices. The questionnaires were distributed

to different employees and collected after three weeks. Each questionnaire composed of set agreed standards which included seven sections. Thus, data were collected using a structured questionnaire which was divided into seven sections. Section A collected demographic data on each of the middle management respondents. Section B drew information about the senior and middle management respondent's knowledge on organisational KM practices: OK sharing, dissemination, capture, transfer, acquisition including enablers and barriers of organisational KM, and management support for organisational KM in the MGECW. For definite variables in the questionnaire for middle management respondents, data were collected either indicating a "yes or no". Thus, it was based on close ended and open ended items and composed of approximately from 1-10 questions for each section relating to the field of organisational KM practices.

3.7.2 Interviews

For this study, interviews were also used. The interviews were used to make triangulations since the nature of the data gathered was different. Thus, themes and topics for the interviews were grounded on literature understanding, and a total number of sixteen managers and assistant managers were interviewed. The researcher used face-to-face interviews to collect data. In interviews, respondents were encouraged to share their view in a very openly discussion (Crawford, 1997; Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Haralambos & Heald, 1989). In this study the structured interview was selected and utilised. *Interviews* (structured) were used to collect qualitative data divided into sub-section. Section A drew information about the senior respondent's knowledge on organisational KM practices knowledge sharing, dissemination, capture, transfer, acquisition including enablers and barriers of organisational KM, and management support for organisational KM in the MGECW. Structured interviews gave the researcher some flexibility to control a discussion; observe the body language and probe to gain in-depth understanding of organisational KM practices from senior managerial

perspectives. Crawford, 1997; Creswell (2003, 2009); Sarantakos (1993, 2005) emphasise the advantage of interviews as reflexivity in natural settings and the researcher is flexible in his or her undertakings. As a result, the interviews for this study focused more on how management supported organisational KM practices, barriers and enablers organisational KM and on culture and attitudes towards organisational KM practices in the MGECW. The senior managers were well experienced and were able to offer rich information. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in their offices and the process was complemented by an audio tape during the interview proceedings.

Creswell (2009) asserts that the advantage of face-to-face or one-on-one interviews is very useful when participants cannot be directly observed. Furthermore, Sarantakos (2005) contends that interviews offer a high response rate, are easy to administer, give the researcher an opportunity to observe non-verbal behaviour, ability to control the atmosphere/settings, capacity to correct any misunderstanding by the research participant and enable the researcher to control the orderliness of questions. Barbour and Barbour (2003, p. 180) affirm that “interviewees or focused group participants may therefore play a significant role in alerting the researcher to further aspects that merit investigation.” The researcher used audio digital tape recorder.

3.8 Validity and reliability

The extent to which research findings offers credible results rests on its validity. Validity helps to look at the degree of accurateness whether the study ought to reflect the concept/s and measures what was supposed to be measured. Baily (1982); Bryman (2006, 2012); du Plooy (2009); Joppe (2000); May (2001); Kumar (2012) and Sarantakos (1993) refer to the validity and reliability as capabilities of the study to produce sound and trustworthy results and measures what is intended to be measured. Thus, ensuring highest validity and reliability for this study, the researcher mixed methods approach (triangulation). This study’s research

instruments' validity were derived and rested on the following perspectives: face, concurrent and construct validity. Face validity entails judgement made towards an instrument in terms or relations of orderly and consistency connection betwixt the questions asked in this study's objectives (du Plooy, 2009; Joppe, 2000; May, 2001; Sarantakos, 1993). Concurrent has to do with degree to which a single instrument in comparison with others brings similar outcome when administered concurrently; predictive is of a degree to which an instrument prefigures this study's outcome. Construct entails that each construct contributes to the total divergence ascertained (du Plooy, 2009; Joppe, 2000; May, 2001; Sarantakos, 1993).

In cases of validity in the quantitative approach, data should be collected accurately and how data should assist in accomplishing what is supposed to be measured, while in the qualitative approach, it has to with truthfulness of the study. Face validity was effected through looking at the questionnaire and interview questions content, also to evaluate the extent to which questions elicit what they were supposed to measure. Thus, in this regard authorities in the field of KM and supervisors' comments were used to examine the contents, and their views were considered and where necessary questions were re-developed and adjusted.

The aspect of face and content validity was dealt with by scrutinising at all final recommendations before embarking on full data collection of organisational KM practices in the MGECW. Baily (1982); Sarantakos (2005) and May (2001) argue that face validity refers to an instrument (questionnaire) when it measures what it is intended to measure whereas content validity implies all potential features of research questions or topics. Terhardt (as cited in Saratankos, 1993) argues that findings are presented and drawn in systematic conclusion, so it is to be followed and tested through argumentative validity.

Adhering to reliability, the study used an interview guide for qualitative method. Questionnaires were administered to the respondents had the same or similar presentation of

questions and questioning, thus, data collected had reliability in it due to the consistence of questions set. The researcher also followed a guideline during the whole process of data collection, and the whole process was documented. However, the researcher would like to state that a case study of the MGECW in Namibia on organisational KM practices present a portrait of the stated organisation's employees' beliefs, feelings, notions and precepts on organisational KM practices only. Thus, the MGECW is a dynamic organisation in existence, whereas the conditional environment where it operates from are perpetually subject to modification or to change, this gives the impression that the findings ought not variegate consistence due to ever-changing organisational situation (Park, Ribière & Schulte, 2004).

3.9 Procedures

Permission was requested from the MGECW, Namibia, via a letter from the supervisor (see annex A and B) to the Permanent Secretary (PS) of the MGECW. Thereafter, the Permanent Secretary issued an internal memo which was circulated among employees (see annex B) giving permission to conduct the study. Data were collected concurrently by means of interviews and questionnaires at one phase. Questionnaires for the respondents in various regions of the country were sent by a courier service (NamCourier) and the researcher delivered questionnaires to head office by hand. Furthermore, face-to-face interviews were conducted in a structured interview custom. The researcher's note taking was complemented by the use of the tape recorder.

3.10 Data analysis

This study comprised qualitative and quantitative data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 22.0, was used to enter and analyse quantitative data. Responses were summarised and analysed through descriptive statistics. The basic overview of the survey results (questionnaires) was processed and presented on the basis of descriptive statistics using universal graphs,(frequencies and percentages), depicted in the form of

histograms, graphs and bar plots. The percentages of respondents were calculated by each section based organisational KM practice. The total for each section was calculated as the average of the percentage of responses. Baily (1982, p. 390) argues that “descriptive data generally consist primarily of what the data look like in the form of cases analysed.”

Data collected through structured interviews were analysed through content analysis through the interpretive approach. Sarantakos (1993, p. 299) argues that “qualitative analysis is not abstract as quantitative analysis, thus with qualitative data, the researcher searched for patterns of data, that is, forms of current behaviour, events towards organisational KM practices, thereafter moved from description to interpretation of data.” With content analysis, social researchers are able to ensure objectivity on their analysis in agreement to clear instructions that allow diverse researchers in obtaining similar results from the same messages or documents (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1987). The aspect of inclusion and exclusion was the *modus operandi*; only messages which supported the research objectives were considered; the process was carried out specifically to establish coding and categories the pattern in a qualitative data. The coding framework of organisational KM practices involved the following themes: knowledge capture, knowledge sharing and dissemination, and knowledge acquisition, including management support to the referred organisational KM practices. Thus, the coding framework was developed from the preliminary coding and analysis, leading to interpretive processes of analysis to refine the themes. Coding focused on identifying relevant words from the responses based on the relationships to the organisational KM practices.

3.11 Ethical considerations

Given the importance of ethics in social science research, the respondents were informed about the objectives of the study through cover page epistle. Questionnaires were anonymously delivered to the respondents to ensure the confidentiality of the information

provided, for those outside head office, the courier service was used with specific office number delivery. Informed consent was also obtained in writing and the researcher respected the dignity of the respondents; all respondents were asked the same questions and treated in the same manner throughout the study. In this study, honesty was applied in all the dealings of data collection, analysis and data interpretation. There was no citing of personal identification. Sarantakos (2005, p.18) contends that “it is now common practice that respondents are informed in writing of all aspects of the research, that they are given the option to take part in the study or refuse to do so, that they have the right to step out of the research at any time, and that they sign an informed consent”.

3.12 Evaluation of the methodology

In social science research, research methodology is believed to contain perceptible numerous contests that social researchers normally run into during the research processes. Many studies, including this study of organisational KM practices in the MGECW, have no exception in experiencing such challenges. According to Ngulube (2005.p. 139), “research methods should be evaluated in order to explain what information was needed, how it was got more accurately and cheaper and how it was analysed.” The methodological approach and methods, sampling procedures, units of analysis, data collection techniques, instruments of data collection and response rates normally determine the outcome of the study. In overcoming these contests, social researchers ought to evaluate their methodologies; this makes sure that similar studies ought not to encounter similar bottlenecks if they are to embark on analogous studies.

In this study the researcher understood that social research is distinctively of two types, quantitative and qualitative methods. The selection of these approaches influences the questions asked, the approaches selected, the types of data analyses and the definitive aim of the study. Creswell (2003, p. 18) states that quantitative research “employs strategies of inquiry

such as experimental and surveys, and collects data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data.” Walsham (1993) defines qualitative research as an “approach that regularly accentuates words, feelings, perception, reasonably not quantification in gathering and analysis of data. The actual discussion above offered the necessities for this study in using and mixing research methods (qualitative and quantitative research design) in exploring organisational KM practices in the MGECW in Namibia. Similarly, reviewed literature showed that not many studies have seen light on this topic in Namibia. Ngulube, Mokwatlo and Ndwandwe (2009 p. 105) state that “the assumption is that mixing or integrating methods can add insights and understanding that might be missed when a mono-method (qualitative or quantitative) strategy is used.” Thus, in this study, mixed-methods research approach was designed to guarantee the reliability and validity of quantitative procedures (Romm & Ngulube, 2014). Furthermore, in social science research it is vital to guarantee data collection and analysis are consistent with acknowledged practice in field of study and discipline. Furthermore, Ngulube (2005, p. 136) argues that “the response rate is a basic parameter for evaluating a data collection effort”. Non-response is a major problem in surveys (Williams, as cited in Ngulube, 2005 p. 136). Considering the above challenge, as the study triangulated these methods complemented each other in terms of covering bottle-neck of each approach.

In addition, bearing in mind during data analysis, it was discovered that item response posed a challenge for this study. Questionnaires were not fully completed and only demographic questions were answered leaving out key questions on organisational KM practices. According to Sarndal, Swensson and Wretman (as cited in Ngulube, 2005, p. 136), “unit non-response occurs when some elements that would have been selected for the survey turn out to be non-observations due to refusal, language limitations and unavailability of the respondents or incapacity to participate.” Similarly, in this study it turned out that some questionnaires were returned without an attempt to answer some of the questions. The researcher regarded

unanswered questions “*no response*”. Roth (1994); and Roth and Switzer (1995) state that gaps in such a nature in data leads to problems such as a possible drop in statistical power and a great sample extent ought to be found to mark statistical tests accurate. Ngulube (2005, p. 136) states that “incomplete questionnaires that are unusable could also be regarded as non-response.” Nevertheless, Ngulube (2005, p.137) also argues that “authorities have not agreed on what constitutes an adequate response rate.” This study’s unit response was seventy six (76) out of eighty (80) questionnaires, a response rate of 95%. Among those which were returned, ten (10) were half complete. Babbie and Mouton (2001) (as cited in Ngulube, 2005, p. 137) assert that a response rate of “50% is adequate for analysis while responses of 60% and 70% are good and very good respectively.”

For qualitative interviews, semi-structure interviews were used for (20) senior managers of the MGECW who were purposively selected. Only sixteen managers (16) took part in the study. These challenges were experienced with senior managers as they had several postponements, limited sessions and cancellation of sessions due to work commitments. Through their busy schedules, some agreed to be re-interviewed and complete the remaining sections where questions could be covered within or less than scheduled minutes. For the remaining sections, numerous attempts were made to have them completed but to no avail. Thus, other researchers who wish to look into similar studies have to take into consideration predicaments of such nature in getting hold of research respondents. Nengomasha (2009, p. 135) states that “arranging for interviews takes time and there is no guarantee of getting hold of individuals on the set date and time.” Similarly, this situation was observed with the returning of questionnaires where respondents had to be told when to return questionnaires besides the agreed date. It was found that respondents had other commitments such as workshops or other work obligations to attend to.

3.13 Summary

Mixed methods research was an appropriate approach for exploring organisational KM practices in the MGECW in Namibia. Researchers wishing to embark on similar studies, employing similar research methodology need to take cognisance of the challenges highlighted in the evaluation of the methodology section. Such challenges include incomplete questionnaires, difficulties arranging for interviews or getting respondents to keep appointments. The use of focus group discussions, observations and document search should be considered. The next chapter is on data analysis and presentation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data analysis and presentation

4.1 Introduction

As presented in Chapter One, the study primarily sought to explore organisational KM practices in the MGECW in Namibia. This chapter presents the analysed data gathered from middle management employees via questionnaires and interviews with senior managers in the MGECW in Windhoek, Namibia. The purpose of data analysis was to assess data using systematic processes to reach reasonable conclusions from the data collected. Data analysis is the process of transforming unstructured or unordered data to structured and ordered data by offering the explanation of cases to make meaning out of the total data collected (Gillham, 2000; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Marshall & Rossman, 1990). Quantitative data collected via questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS version 22.0 using descriptive statistics. The results were presented in the form of graphs and tables.

Qualitative data collected via interviews were analysed using content analysis. The qualitative results are in the form of description of inclinations and themes, with direct verbatim citations from the interview reports. The findings from questionnaire and interviews are integrated. Data from interviews covering issues in objective 3 and 4, namely: to examine the work culture and attitudes of personnel which affect organisational KM and its practices in the MGECW, Namibia; and to examine how management supports organisational KM practices; is integrated with data addressing objective 2: To examine barriers and enablers to organisational KM in the MGECW, Namibia. This was done to avoid repetition. The interviews data confirmed or refuted what was coming from the questionnaires. Data were organised according to the study's research objectives within the following sub-headings.

- Organisational Knowledge Sharing;

- Organisational Knowledge Capture;
- Organisational Knowledge Acquisition;
- Organisational Knowledge Dissemination and Transfer; and
- Barriers and enablers to organisational KM;

4.2 Response rate

Subsequent to the sample selection measures described in Chapter Three, all thirteen (13) regional offices of the MGECW took part in the study. A total number of 80 questionnaires were distributed and 16 out of 20 planned interviews were conducted. The interviews did not ask senior managers their age as it was seen as a sensitive issue and the information was not crucial for the study. Seventy six (76) copies of the questionnaire were returned, reflecting a response rate of 95%, and sixteen (16) structured interviews were conducted, reflecting 80% response rate. This indicates a high degree of response rate from the respondents. Fincham (2008) and Babie (1992) state that a response rate of 50% or 60% is adequate for a survey and 80% is therefore very good. The high response rate is attributed to the invitation letter from the supervisor/s and the internal memo (appendix B) signed by the Permanent Secretary who allowed or invited the MGECW employees to take part in this study. Furthermore, numerous reminders were sent by the researcher to the respondents via phone calls, office visits at headquarters and short text messages. The same strategy of following up respondents was applied to interviews in terms of schedules and reschedules of time and interview dates. Table 4.1 below presents a summary of the response rate for this study.

Table 4.1 The response rate for this study

Questionnaire distributed	80
Interviews planned	20
Interviews conducted	16
Questionnaire returned	76
Questionnaire not returned	4
Questionnaire returned, but not used or rejected	10
Returned Questionnaire used in the Study	66
Response rate for questionnaire used in percentage (%)	82.5%
Response rate for interviews in percentage (%)	80 %

In this study, questionnaires were accepted based on the degree of completeness of answers, meaning only those which provide answers on organisational KM practices themselves in all sections were included and those questionnaires which completed demographic questions were excluded..

4.3 Demographics of the sample

Demographic questions gathered information on academic or professional qualifications of respondents, years spent on the position and the origin of the directorate in the MGECW. From a population size of five hundred and forty four (544) employees of the MGECW, a total number of 66 middle management and 16 senior managerial respondents participated in the study. The age distribution of the population of middle management respondents is presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Age of Respondents**N=66**

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	18-20 Years	1	1.5	1.5
	21-25 Years	9	13.6	15.2
	26-30 Years	17	25.8	40.9
	31-35 Years	16	24.2	65.2
	36-40 Years	11	16.7	81.8
	41-45 Years	11	16.7	98.5
	50 and Above	1	1.5	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	

Table 4.2 shows the list of seven (7) categories of age range options which was presented to middle management respondents. It reveals that the MGECW had a young population with the majority 17 (26%) being within the age group of 26-30 years, followed by 16 (24%) between 31 and 35 years old, then 11 (17%) in the age groups 36-40 and 41-45 years. The age groups 18-20 years and 50 years made up 2 (3%) of the respondents. Table 4.3 below provides distribution information on the Directorates' representation in the MGECW.

Table 4.3 Distribution per Directorate**N=66**

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	General Services and Administration	6	9.1	9.1
	Child Welfare	30	45.5	54.5
	Gender Equality and Research	13	19.7	74.2
	Early Childhood & Community Development	17	25.8	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	

Table 4.3 shows the number of middle management respondents in each of the four (4) Directorates found in the MGECW. It reveals that the highest Directorate representation was for the Directorate of Child Welfare with 30 (46%), followed by Directorates of Early Childhood and Community Development 17 (26%), then 13 (19.7%) was for the Directorate of Gender Equality and Research and the lowest was the Directorate of General Services and Administration with 6 (9.1%).

4.4 Academic/ professional qualification

The study sought to establish the level of education (professional qualifications) of middle management respondents who participated in the study. Figure 4.1 below presents the distribution of the middle managers' professional qualifications.

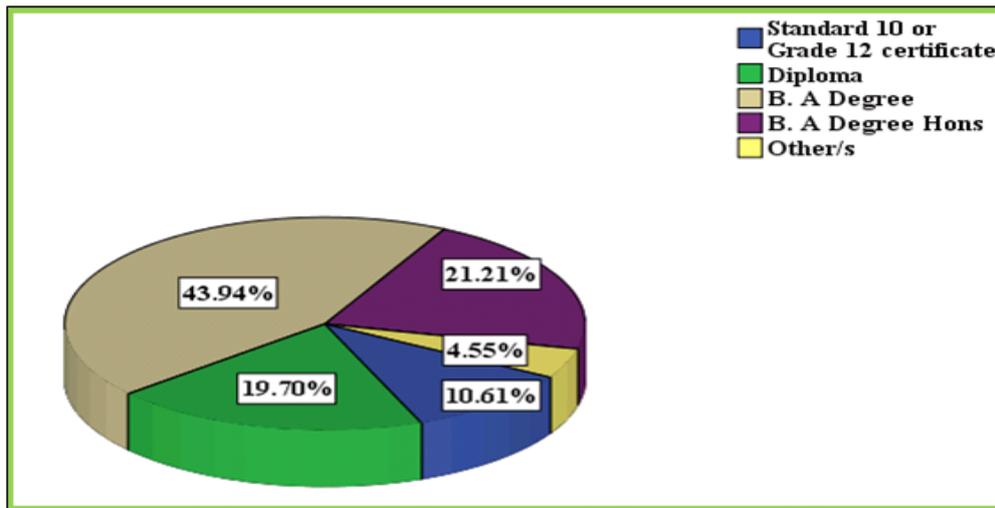


Figure 4.1 Highest level of professional qualifications

N=66

Table 4.5 shows that the minimum educational qualification within the middle management respondents was a diploma of which 13 (19.7%) of the respondents had this qualification. The majority 29 (65%) of middle management respondents had a first degree. The understanding of the questions on the questionnaire is attributed to the highest level of education. Those with post-secondary certificate were 7 (10.6%) and those with other qualifications not specified on the questionnaire were 3 (4.6%). Furthermore, middle management members were asked to show the number of years they had worked for the MGECW. Table 4.4 below presents the period spent by middle management respondents in the MGECW employment.

Table 4.4 Distribution of the period spent in employment

N=66

		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Valid	0 -12 Months	14	21.2	21.2
	1 -3 Years	22	33.3	54.5
	4 - 5 Years	10	15.2	69.7
	5 -10 Years	17	25.8	95.5
	10-15 Years	3	4.5	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	

The majority of middle management respondents 22 (33.3%) had spent 1-3 years, followed by 17 (26%) who had spent 5-10 years; and the lowest representation with 3 (4.5%) was from the age group 10-15 years. This shows that the majority of respondents had spent more than three years in the position where they had accumulated experience.

4.5 Understanding of organisational knowledge (OK) and knowledge management (KM)

The findings from the interviews revealed that OK in the MGECW hinges on tacit/implicit OK and explicit OK. Senior managers in the MGECW had a comprehensive understanding of OK and organisational KM. Some of the responses mentioned by senior managers regarding what OK is, were that “*the know-how, expert knowledge, skills, understanding and experience (something acquired) owned or vested in the people*”. Moreover, on defining organisational KM, 16 senior managers, described organisational KM as the process of managing OK in the organisation for the organisation, for future reference. One senior manager said, “*It is when knowledge is harvested from employees and channelled to other employees to reach and help to achieve certain goals set by the organisation*”.

In addition an interesting aspect from managers was that 10 out of 16 senior managers mentioned that they had heard of *knowledge based economy*, and seven of the senior managers indicated that the MGEWCW adopt organisational KM practices in informal ways. The findings also revealed that their subordinates relied considerably on documented information (*explicit OK*), past experiences (*tacit OK*) and consultants (specialists) in a thought field. Furthermore, senior managers said that organisational KM was based on ICT because OK ought to be dispensed to every office using technology. One senior manager said, “*One needs to be connected to receive email or send information from head office to regional office*”. Furthermore, one senior manager said “*technology helps with the method of storing and easily accessing information documents for office use in any organisation depends on well-developed ICT infrastructure in today’s world of technology*”. This shows that their understanding of organisational KM rested on the connection between managing OK with ICT. However there were no programmes put in place to educate and bring awareness on the understanding and the importance of knowledge management to the MGEWCW.

4.6 Organisational knowledge sharing (OKS)

Quantitative and qualitative data gathered show that a substantial proportion of middle management and senior managers revealed that organisational KS improves learning ability. Organisational KS was found to be high amongst middle management employees of the MGEWCW, with 66 (100%) of middle management respondents strongly agreeing that KS improves the employee’s learning ability. Fifty six (85%) of middle management respondents mentioned that through organisational KS they had learnt of new ideas which had broadened their OK base. They believed that an organisation’s organisational KS is a source of OK, where employees accumulate a massive volume of new skills, understanding and experiences. Middle management respondents were also asked if they had a general willingness to share OK or lessons learned amongst themselves. The results show that OK sharing was favoured by most

and sharing was considered beneficial to themselves and others in the MGECW. Forty-seven (71%) of middle management respondents indicated that they had a general willingness to share their OK, while only 17 (26%) mentioned that they were unwilling to share OK.

The survey also found that the majority of the middle management respondents with degrees had an understanding of KS and its benefits to the employees and the organisation. It was found that middle management respondents with at least a degree as educational qualification 34 (65.1 %) indicated that organisational KS improves their learning ability. Those with a post-secondary certificate 11 (16.7%) were not sure that organisational KS improves learning ability. However, responses from senior managers found that consultations among employees is task oriented, and meeting reports and memos were mostly used to share OK in the MGECW. Interviewee responses suggested that organisational KS was a more important aspect of organisational success and viewed OK as a public OK. One manager said that *“information builds the organisation when channelled successfully in the organisation...”*

The findings from middle management respondents also show that only 32 (49%) of middle management respondents indicated that sharing of OK was most likely to take place within Directorates, while 34 (51%) said that it was more likely to take place across Directorates. All sixteen senior managers' respondents indicated that meetings and workshops dominated the modes of sharing knowledge in the MGECW. However, the study also found that all sixteen (16) senior managers interviewed said they always motivate their subordinates by word of mouth. One senior manager said that *“at the moment, we have measurements in place such as employee performance management reviews introduced by the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) which requires every supervisor to evaluate and encourage a staff member.* One senior manager emphasised that *“the performance review looks at how the MGECW will contribute by improving the performance of its staff in the organisation”*. The majority of the respondents indicated the importance of organisational knowledge sharing at the MGECW.

4.6.1 Organisational Knowledge Sharing Barriers

The results of the study indicate that barriers to the organisational KS were evident from both senior and middle managers' responses. The issues such as organisational individual employee barriers, organisational structural barriers and ICT (IT) were found to be barriers to organisational KS.

4.6.1.1 Individual Employee Barriers

Results show that both qualitative and quantitative data revealed that employee attitudes and behavioural hinder the process of organisational KS in the MGECW. One senior manager said:

Some characters, others who do not want to share their information or knowledge; this is what we need to change in our Directorate(s)...because, if employees are not encouraged to share their knowledge or experience and skills, they themselves will not do so unless if the situation entails to do so.

Interesting to note though is that the majority 62 (94%) of middle management managers were not comfortable with organisational KS. One senior manager said:

We don't share much, that's why you find that there is one employee or directorate doing better than others. Sharing of best practices among employees is not there yet in the MGECW; the platform is not yet formally crafted where we would seat and share our knowledge. I think, it should start from (us) the top level management to lower level.

Quantitative data show that 53 (80%) of middle management respondents mentioned that their OK was kept for future reference while only 13 (20%) said that their OK was not kept for future references.

4.6.1.2 Organisational Barriers

This study sought to find out the organisational structural barriers to organisational KS in the MGECW. Thirty three (50%) of the middle management respondents indicated that there were no structural procedures to encourage them to share their organisational knowledge, while 22 (33%) mentioned that their managers encouraged them to share their OK; 11 (17%) had no response. Seven (7) senior managers indicated lack of time as a barrier which hindered them from sharing their OK. However, they indicated that opportunities such as training and workshops for subordinates were provided by the MGECW. The survey also shows that there were barriers to organisational knowledge flow. Thirty two percent (49%) of middle management respondents indicated that they had no access to ministerial reports and other relevant information when they needed it, while 34 (51%) indicated that they had access to ministerial reports and other relevant information

4.6.1.3 ICT (Technological) Barriers

This study found that ICT was an obstacle to the diffusion of organisational KS in the MGECW. The majority (14) of senior managers said that they had experienced problems in retrieving electronic information or OK. This had hampered their engagement in organisational KS practices due to poor connection and poor ICT infrastructure within the MGECW. One manager said *“sometimes I have to wait for more than half a day or so to have access to my email or internet connection because the server or internet is constantly down”*. One senior manager also said *“the server is problematic especially when you want to access or retrieve the electronic document, it’s really hard to download a document, and one would spent the whole working day waiting to receive that document”*. Similarly, 35 (53%) of middle management respondents revealed that they were not using any internet tools to support organisational KS or to access information or OK, while only 31 (47 %) said they used internet tools to support

KS practices in the MGECW. Table 4.6 below illustrates the breakdown of usage of ICT tools to support KS per directorate by middle management employees in the MGECW.

Tables 4.5 Use of the Internet to support KS per Directorate

N=66

			Currently using Internet tools to support organisational KS		Total
			Yes	No	
Directorate	General Services and Administration	Count % within currently using internet tools to support organisational KS	4 6%	2 3%	6 9.1 %
	Child Welfare	Count % within currently using internet tools to support organisational KS	11 16.6%	19 28.1%	30 45.5%
	Gender Equality and Research	Count % within currently using internet tools to support organisational KS	8 12%	5 16.1%	13 19.7%
	Community Development	Count % within currently using internet tools to support organisational KS	12 18%	5 16.1%	17 25.8%
Total		Count % within currently using internet tools to support organisational KS	35 100.0%	31 100.0%	66 100.0%

Responses from middle management showed that 31 (47%) of middle management respondents were not using the internet to search and dispense OK, while 35 (53%) used the internet to search and dispense OK in the MGECW. Thirty two (48.5%) of middle management respondents indicated that e-mail was used to dispense OK in the MGECW, while only 34 (51.5%) mentioned that they were not using email to share OK. It was found that most of middle management respondents at regional offices had no internet connection. Thirty three (50%) of middle management respondents used 3G devices for internet connection, while 33 (50%) did not have access to the 3G internet device connection. Most of those respondents who

indicated to have internet connection were mainly from the MGECW Headquarters. Half of middle management respondents (50%) had no work email addresses. The other half said that they had private email addresses which they used for organisational work. In agreement, twelve senior managerial respondents indicated that 3G devices were the most affordable tools for internet connection among regional staff members or offices. Other senior managerial respondents said that the mode mainly used for OK communication was via hard copy documents sent through fax machines. One senior manager had this to say: *“It’s what we use most (Fax Machine) to dispense information to various regional offices, since they don’t have internet connection”*. Table 4.7 below shows the frequency and percentage of middle management respondents who were encouraged to share the OK in the MGECW.

Table 4.6 Employees encouraged to share knowledge

N=66

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
No	34	51.5%	51.5%
Yes	32	48.5%	48.5%
			100.0%
Total	66	100.0%	

Table 4.6 above shows that 34 (52%) of middle management respondents were not encouraged to share organisational OK while 32 (48%) indicated to have been encouraged to share OK. The middle management were asked if they were encouraged to work in groups and to have social networks for organisational KS. The results of the study show that middle management engaged in group work and discussions for OK sharing. Responses show that two-third 44 (67%) said that they were encouraged to work in groups, while only 22 (33%) of middle managers were not were encouraged to work in groups, while 36 (55%) middle management were involved in social networking for organisational KS in the MGECW compared to 30

(45%). The results show that poor connection, poor ICT infrastructure and lack of using internet tools to support KS hinder the practice of organisational KS in the MGECW.

4.7 Organisational knowledge capture (KC)

Quantitative and qualitative data gathered on organisational KC practices in the MGECW show a skewed position. The study sought to find out from middle management if in the MGECW OK was easily captured from customers and NGOs. Twenty-four (24) 36.4% of middle management, mostly from regional offices, indicated that the MGECW does not capture any OK from customers and NGOs, while 26 (39.4%) mostly from Head Office indicated that the MGECW captured OK from its customers and NGOs; 16 (24.2%) did not respond. The overall responses show that 32 (48%) of middle management in the MGECW normally missed out on OK not captured from regional offices, customers and NGOs, while 52% mentioned that the MGECW did not miss out on OK from regional staff members, customers and NGOs. Table 4.7 below reflects on the overall responses from middle management on the process of OK capture and record keeping within the MGECW from its customers and NGOs

Table 4.7 Distribution on OK Capture from Customers and NGOs and Record keeping

N=66

			We keep records of all information shared		Total
			NO	YES	
MGECW capture organisational OK from customers and NGOs	No	Count % within MGECW capture organisational OK from customers and NGOs	4 6%	27 40%	31 46%
	YES	Count % within MGECW capture organisational OK from customers and NGOs	3 4.5%	32 48.4%	35 53%
Total		Count % within MGECW capture organisational OK from customers and NGOs	7 10.6%	59 89.3%	66 100%

However, on the question of interaction as a form of capturing knowledge within the MGECW's departments, 31 (47%) of middle management indicated that interaction does not take place, compared to 35 (53%) who said that interaction does take place. Data from interviews reveal that five senior managers would not point to any documented best practices for the core skills in their respective departments. Table 4.9 below shows the overall indication of middle management respondents per directorate towards how the management in the MGECW value regional staff members' insights.

Table 4.8 Distribution per directorate: How the MGECW values regional Staff members' insights

N=66

			Directorates				Total
			General Services and Admin	Child Welfare	Gender Equality and Research	Early Childhood and Community Development	
The MGECW values regional staff members insights	NO	Count % within the MGECW values regional staff members insights	3 4.5%	8 12.1%	6 9%	5 7.5%	22 33.3%
	YES	Count % within the MGECW values regional staff members insights	3 4.5%	22 33.3%	7 10.6%	12 18.1%	44 66.6%
Total		Count % within the MGECW values regional staff members insights	6 9.1%	30 45.5%	13 19.7%	17 25.8%	66 100%

Table 4.8 above shows the responses per directorate on how the MGECW values regional staff members' insights. It reveals that the 33 (50%) being for the Directorates of Child Welfare, followed by 12 (27%) for the Directorate of Early Childhood and Community Development, then 7 (16%) for the Directorate of Gender Equality and Research and 3 (7%) for the directorate

of General Services with 7%. This study also found that the record keeping of OK in the MGECW was not up to date. Twenty two (33.3%) said that the MGECW keeps records for future reference compared to a two-thirds majority (66.7%) of middle management who indicated that the MGECW does not keep records. Forty two (42) (64%) of middle management indicated that memory sticks were mostly used to store records compared to those who said hard copy files 24 (36%) were used to keep records.

It was further established that 35 (53%) of respondents indicated that MGECW does not have specialised electronic database. Senior managers said that that the MGECW does not have a central electronic database where all the information or OK is stored. In the absence of an electronic central database, senior managers said they always encourage employees to capture and document OK individually on their computers. One would argue from that this is an indication that OK documents were concealed by individual employees as their own documentation or knowledge. One manager had this to say: *“We always tell them to write and document their own work, as we don’t have a central electronic database in place, which is supposed to store these documents.”* Another manager said that *“even though we have no improved filing system in place, but one can track a document via requesting from colleagues”*. Furthermore, one manager said *“we have so many documents that are very hard sometimes to find after using them”*.

All (16) senior managers interviewed acknowledged the importance ICT in storing OK in an electronic database for easy access. One senior manager said: *“It (technology) helps with the electronic storage of information and make it easily available when one needs it.”* It was also highlighted by about all senior managers that it was management’s responsibility to determine and foster an environment for KC in the MGECW for operational efficiency. One senior manager said *“it’s important to knowledge what type of knowledge is important for my*

directorate and in particular the MGECW". Table 4. 9 below presents work experience and the tools mostly used for storing OK in the MGECW.

Table 4. 9 Tools used to store organisational knowledge

N=66

			Work experience					Total
			0-12 months	1-3 Years	4-5 Years	5-10 Years	10-15 Years	
Most used tools to capture OK	None	Count % within the MGECW most tools used to capture OK	8 12.1%	14 21.2%	4 6%	12 18.1%	1 1.5%	39 59.1%
	Audio	Count % within the MGECW most tools used to capture OK	2 3%	2 3%	1 1.5%	1 1.5%	0 0%	6 9.1%
	Video	Count % within the MGECW most tools used to capture OK	1 1.5%	4 6%	4 6%	3 4.5%	0 0%	12 18.1%
	Computer Files	Count % within the MGECW most tools used to capture OK	3 4.5%	2 3%	1 1.5%	1 1.5%	2 3%	9 13.6%
Total		Count % within the MGECW most tools used to capture OK	14 21.2%	22 33.3%	10 15.2%	17 25.8%	3 4.5%	66 100%

It was established that 47 (71%) of middle management respondents indicated that the MGECW consulted and collaborated with other organisations, compared to 27.3% (18) who said consultations did not take place between the MGECW and other organisations. Thirty eight (58%) of middle management respondents indicated experts are normally invited to share their knowledge with employees through trainings and conferences.

4.8 Organisational knowledge acquisition (OKA)

In this section, the respondents were asked to indicate forms of organisational KA that the MGECW was engaged in. The study found that 58 (88%) of middle management indicated that they kept themselves updated with ministerial issues, while only 8 (12%) said that they did not keep themselves updated with ministerial issues. It was found that the website, memos, telephonic discussion and face-to-face consultation, including attending conference/workshops were mostly used by the MGECW to keep employees up-to-date. Data gathered from senior management interviews showed that the MGECW relied mostly on communal traditional practices of acquiring OK such as training, workshops/conferences/ seminars or round table meeting discussions, notice board and skills transfer from expatriates via formal meeting consultations. Eight (8) senior managers' respondents said that there were platforms for organisational KA. They said that the MGECW hires experienced external consultants in areas of interest to facilitate workshops/conferences/ seminars and trainings. Further, two senior managers said that they had Directorate advisors within their directorates where Directorate employees had an opportunity to consult. One senior manager said, *"We always acquire credible services of external consultants, I believe this makes us acquired credible knowledge from experienced presenters"*. Figure 4.2 below present's forms of organisational KA within the MGECW used by middle management employees to acquire OK.

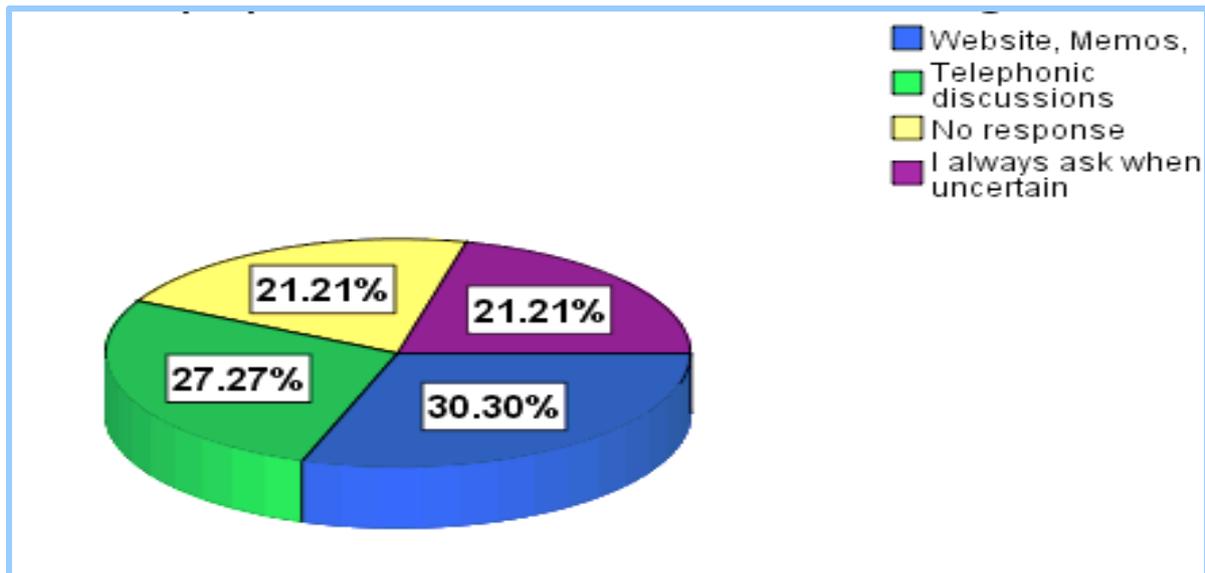


Figure 4.2 Forms of update in the MGECW

N=66

Figure 4.2 shows a substantial proportion (figure) of middle management staff members with various forms used to update and acquire OK in the MGECW. It was found that 52 (79%) of middle management respondents updated themselves with reading or acquiring information by reading on the MGECW website, engaging in one-on-one and telephonic discussions while 21.21% indicated no response. Another interesting aspect found through interviewing senior managers was that, in spite of the evidence of an “*open- door policy session*” as one manager had alluded to, where managers always allow their sub-ordinates to consult with their managers, it was found that new employees were not given enough guidance after orientation. Conference attendance was seen and highly rated as one platform that provided the opportunity to acquire more OK, especially on the international scene, compared to locally organised. One assistant manager said, “*You’re sent to a local workshop or conference where local people are presenting, while directors themselves always attend and learn new ideas on international conferences or workshops.*” This indicates that local organised conferences tended to attract little attention from some employees of the MGECW. Senior managers said they always engage with other external organisations to learn from. One senior Directorate manager said,

“My directorate has formed strong partnership with external organisations like Gender Links South Africa, where we invite them on common grounds or projects”.

Although some managers felt that their subordinates were well informed and involved in the organisational acquisition of knowledge, it was also stated by some senior managers that there was a need to sensitise employees, especially those at regional office on the importance of OK acquisition. Nineteen (29%) of middle management respondents said that they would prepare for next mid-term review, departmental meetings or workshop by reading from ministerial annual reports, workshop reports and minutes of previous meetings, while only 14 (21%) of middle management respondents from regional office indicated that they would prepare from ministerial annual reports and workshop reports. However, 19 (29%) of middle management respondents indicated that MGECW reports were not freely available when needed, while 14 (21.2%) indicated with no response.

Moreover, 55 (80.3%) of middle management respondents said that the MGECW always acquire information for planning, while only 12 (18.2%) indicated that the MGECW does not acquire information for planning. It is evident that middle management respondents indicated that the MGECW acquired information for planning, over 53 (80.2%) said that the MGECW acquired information, while only 12 (18.2%) disagreed and 1 (1.5%) indicated no response. This study found that 35 (53%) of middle management respondents said that they did not search for documents, while 31 (47%) said they always searched for OK documents. It was found that those with work experience which ranged from 1-3 years and 10-15 years, 20 (33.9%) and 15 (25.4%) respectively, favoured interpersonal trust to foster organisational KC and KS, while only 3 (4.5%) who have accumulated a vast experience in the MGECW tended not to favour interpersonal trust as an important aspect to attain OK. This study also found that middle management employees who had worked longer in the MGECW had vast experience which was not utilised. This showed an oversight on the aspect of tapping into this valuable OK.

It was discovered from the data that there was a discrepancy between formal and informal interactions for OK acquisition in the MGECW. Formal gatherings were principally intended for prescribed exchange of explicit OK in the MGECW and informal gatherings were mainly used for informal personal exchange. However, the internet was primarily found to be used for mostly transitory substances in the MGECW, rather than the exchange of ideas. One manager said, *“Employees download unnecessary things such as games, however, on our computers, games or not work related files are strictly prohibited and have been removed by IT section who monitor these devices of any unnecessary programmes...”* There was a strong emphasis from all senior managers that coordination needs to be strengthened. One senior manager said, *“we to strengthen coordination amongst directorates to learn of other’s problems (including all sub-divisions), I think by so doing will help each to acquire knowledge which will smooth decision making process”.*

4.9 Organisational knowledge dissemination (OKD) and organisational knowledge transfer (OKT)

Both quantitative and qualitative data established a very strong preference for the use of fax machines, telephones and face-to-face as forms of dispensing and transferring of OK in the MGECW. It was found from senior management that these traditional channels of communication facilitated organisational KD and KT practices. One can comprehend that communication among senior managers and their subordinates was based on using these particular tools to allow the flow of OK from Head Office to regional offices. This was not surprising as 16 senior managers acknowledged the use of these channels of communication to dispense OK.

The results from senior managers show that in the MGECW, a community of practices for organisational KD and KT was not in place to facilitate the KD and KT. It was found that middle management and senior managers always engaged in face-to-face discussions

(workshops/conferences, meetings) to transfer OK amongst themselves. The survey also found that the MGECW did not engage in any forms of job rotations. It was further found that communication was mainly from top to bottom. The results in Table 4.10 below point to a substantial percentage of middle management respondents per qualification who assisted their colleagues during related tasks and used referred communication tools to dispense OK in the MGECW.

Table 4.10 Distribution per qualification on frequently used communication channels in the MGECW

N=66

			Highest Qualification					Total
			Standard 10 Grade 12 Certificate	Diplo ma	B. A Degree	BA Degree Hon	Othe rs (MA)	
Frequently used communication channels in the MGECW	Telephone	Count % Frequently used communication channels in the MGECW	1 1.5%	6 9.1%	8 12.1%	8 12.1%	1 1.5%	24 36.4%
	Fax Machine	Count % Frequently used communication channels in the MGECW	5 7.6%	4 6.1%	10 15.2%	4 6.1%	2 3%	25 38%
	Face to Face Conferences, Meetings, Interviews	Count % Frequently used communication channels in the MGECW	1 1.5%	3 4.5%	7 11%	1 1.5%	0 0.0%	12 18.2%
	None of the above Mention	Count % Frequently used communication channels in the MGECW	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	4 6.1%	1 1.5%	0 0.0%	5 7.6%
Total		Count % Frequently used communication channels in the MGECW	7 11%	13 19,7%	28 43.4%	14 21.2%	3 4.5%	66 100%

Table 4.10 shows the most common methods used to dispense organisational KD per qualification in the MGECW. A total of 43 (65%) of middle management respondents those with a degree favoured face-to-face (conferences/workshop and meetings) and using telephones. Holders of diplomas and those with Standard 10 or grade 12, 4 (16%) and 5 (20%) of middle management respondents preferred using fax-machines respectively. This was a very significant feature of the study as it indicates what tools are used to dispense OK. The access to the electronic and hard copy publications was very interesting in this study as it was found underutilised. To illustrate more Table 4.12 below gives an overview of the responses on receipt and availability of the MGECW printed publications by middle managers.

Table 4.11 Percentage on the MGECW publications received

N=66

			The Ministry printed are available		Total
			No	YES	
I have received the Ministry publications	NO	Count % have received the Ministry's publications	17 25.8%	23 35%	40 100%
	YES	Count % have received the Ministry's publications	4 6%	22 33.3%	26 100%
Total		Count % have received the Ministry's publications	21 31.8%	45 68.2%	66 100%

Table 4.12 shows that 17 (25.8%) of middle managers said that they had not seen MGECW publications while 23 (35%) said they had seen the publications. It was found also that 4 (6%) of middle management respondents said that OK was not made available to fellow colleagues within a considerable time. On the other hand, 22 (33.3%) of middle management respondents indicated that OK was made available to fellow colleagues through training, newsletters and manuals or reports. Both middle management and interview respondents acknowledged that OK transfer or dissemination happens between employees. One senior manager said, "we're

much into meetings and attending conferences, is it not that these conference presenters always transfer their knowledge to us attendees.”

4.11 Enablers and barriers of organisational KM in the MGECW

This study also sought to establish the enablers and barriers of organisational KM; the aim was to present information barriers and enablers found in the MGECW. Both respondents were asked to indicate barriers and enablers of organisational KM.

4.11.1 Organisational KM enabler in the MGECW

Quantitative data show that 40 (60.9%) of middle management respondents were in agreement that **ICT infrastructure** positively influences and enables employees in sharing, acquiring, transferring, and creating and dispensing OK, while 39.1% of middle management were in disagreement that ICT infrastructures do not influence and enable organisational KM practices.

Qualitative data from senior managers also showed the agreement with quantitative data that ICT enables and facilitates organisational KM, although there were indications of shortage of ICT equipment in the MGECW. For example, one manager had this to say: *“One or two computers provide services to about three to four employees especially at regional offices”*.

Thirty eight (38) 57.6% said ICT influences knowledge sharing, acquisition, transfer and dissemination, compared to 28 (43%) who said that ICT does not have an influence on organisational KM practices. Furthermore, 50 (76%) of the respondents indicated that sharing, acquisition, transfer and dissemination of organisational KM practices depends on ICT, while only 15 (23%) indicated that organisational KM practices do not depend on ICT. From all 16 senior managers, 14 of them were in agreement that top management has to show commitment towards organisational KM. One senior manager said: *“it’s our responsibility as managers to show commitment that managing OK in a knowledge society helps the organisation to move forward, and it all depends on OK....”* Similarly, it was also found that 39 (59%) of middle

management respondents were also in agreement that it was management's responsibility to make sure that organisational KM practices work in the organisation, compared to 26 (39%) indicated that it was not only management's responsibility to make sure there was a smooth operations of organisational KM practices. Furthermore, 64 (97%) of middle management respondents were in agreement that organisational KM collaboration rests on managers and their subordinates in the organisation, only 2 (3%) were in disagreement. Furthermore, the study revealed that 60 (91%) of respondents in the MGECW believed that departmental collaboration contributed to organisational success, while only 6 (9%) did not agree that collaboration contributed to organisational success.

Interview responses from senior managers showed that employees are motivated and those who do best are sent to international conferences and some are recommended for training. One manager said, *"It's what we can do for our employees, since everything is not done here and many decisions in this regard are decided by the Office of Prime Minister. Thirty-five (53%) of the middle management respondents were in agreement that the MGECW management provided learning opportunities for employees. The success and endurance of organisational KM practices in the MGECW hinges on its capability and innovativeness to create new knowledge. Therefore, the researcher wanted to find out whether the MGECW encouraged innovation and willingness to try new undertakings among employees. The majority, 41 (62%) of the middle managers indicated that the MGECW encouraged innovation. These middle managers were willing to let employees engage in new undertakings compared to 25 (38%) who indicated that innovation and new undertakings by employees were not encouraged. Furthermore, quantitative data also show that 47 (71%) of middle management employees said that trust positively influenced organisational KM practices in MGECW, while to 26% indicated that trust had nothing to do with organisational KM practices.*

It was also significant for this study to collect data on issues of social networking. Fifty three (80%) of middle management respondents were in agreement that supportive organisational high level professional social networking influenced organisational KM practices, while 20% said that social networking did not influence organisational KM practices in the MGECW. It was also established that there was a strong agreement from middle management employees that social networks amongst employees and their senior managers influenced organisational KM practices. It was found that 83% of middle management respondents indicated that social networking between management and subordinates influenced organisational KM practices; 17% did not agree.

4.11.2 Organisational KM barriers in the MGECW

Several organisational KM barriers were evident from both quantitative and qualitative data. It was found that most senior managers felt that not all employees in the MGECW were skilled enough in using ICT equipment. They acknowledged that a lot still needs to be done to get the employees with information and knowledge on ICT usage, especially those at the lower rank levels of hierarchy. The study found that the challenges experienced by the MGECW are due to dynamics of employees, technology, organisational workplace culture (such as personalities, beliefs, values desired skills including everyday behaviours and leadership (unsupportive and lack of interactions). All senior managers acknowledged that training was a key part of improving employee performance. Employees required skills on the functions of the MGECW. These results were in agreement with middle management respondents 51 (78%) of them indicated that employee skills were key in enhancing their performance, while 15 (22%) gave no response.

It was evident also that internet connectivity was a problem in all regional offices of the MGECW. Senior managers also acknowledged that there were no Internet connections mainly that catered for all employees at regional offices. On the other hand, forty-nine (49) 74% of

middle management respondents indicated that there was lack of motivation and a structural reward system and poor level of employees engagement in place in the MGECW to promote organisational KM practices. In addition, there was a disagreement with 17 (26%) other middle management respondents mostly from Head Office. Overall, the responses from senior managers painted a negative picture of motivation and reward system in the MGECW. One manager indicated: *“There is no individual reward system in place even though there’s a corporate reward to the best performing directorate, however, the acknowledgement is foremost zero with negative feedback from some managers”*.

Senior managers said that there was a lack of time, motivation, and organisational workplace culture such as lack of rewards and recognition, lack of or willingness to send employees to training/courses by the MGECW. The use of out-dated ICT infrastructure was another problem. The study also found that 61 (92%) of the middle managers were in agreement that there was lack of motivation, reward systems poor communication skills, lack of frequent interaction of senior managers and employees including lack of sharing information at the MGECW. Only 8% felt that motivation and reward cannot act as barriers to organisational KM practices. One manager pointed out: *“Sometimes you will spend a day without accessing or receiving your email, internet could be down”* Another senior manager indicated: *“even if you’re willing to have a discussion forum online, there is a lack of participation from my colleagues, lack ICT skills or language barrier or they don’t have time”*. *There is a lack of supportive organisational structures and low interest from my fellow colleagues.* Moreover, a strong perception of all senior managers was evident that ICT helps and enables organisational KM and depending on improved infrastructure which will enable employees to access documents and time for discussion forums. Also, what was evident from senior managers was that there was an incompatibility on new ICT and lack of technical ICT support amongst employees. One senior manager argued: *“It’s hard to believe that the MGECW and the Public Service in particular*

would operate without ICT in day's world of technology, where everything is about ICT. We are trying our best that our employees have to acquire basic ICT skill. One manager also said: "Technology is very much useful it enables process to receive, retrieve/ search and send information."

Forty five (68%) of middle management respondents indicated that the MGECW did not have high tech-speed computer systems in place, while 21 (32%) were in agreement that the MGECW had high tech-speed computers. However, the study also revealed that 54 (82%) of middle management indicated that the MGECW managers lacked commitment towards organisational KM; besides that 37 (56%) of respondents indicated that managers always created a social enabling environment for OK exchange via conferences, workshops and meetings, compared to 44% (29) who indicated that managers did not create a social enabling environment for organisational KM practices..

Thirty five (53%) of middle management employees indicated that the indexing and search system did not offer access to the stored OK database, compared to 47% (31) who indicated that the indexing and search system offered access to the stored knowledge database. The study found that issues such as low salaries (27%), no reward system (18%), lack of feedback (17%) and lack of motivation from supervisors (15%) were raised as possible organisational KM barriers in the MGECW. Table 4.13 below shows barriers raised by middle management employees on motivation and reward in the MGECW.

Table 4.12 Issues raised on motivation and reward systems as a barrier

N=66

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative percentage (%)
No reward	12	18.2	18.2
Low salaries	18	27.3	45.5
No feedback	11	16.7	62.1
Lack of motivation	10	15.2	77.3
No response	15	22.7	100.0
Total	66	100.0	

Senior managers mentioned a number of possible barriers to organisational KM practices. It was found that twelve senior managers felt that the attitude of employees was a barrier towards organisational KM practice. One manager said, *“There is an attitude of employees to fear change”*. The interviews revealed that employees lacked confidence and interest to engage in social networking for the benefit of organisational KM practices. One senior manager said, *“I’m not sure if they trust their peers to share their piece of knowledge among themselves it looks like they believe that one might steal and benefit one’s ideas, and also you find that when they exit from the Ministry to another, they leave with their knowledge....”*

This study found lack of time as a barrier towards organisational KM practices. Forty seven (47) 71.2% of middle management believed that managers are fully occupied and do not have time to share their experiences compared to 19 (28.8%) who said senior managers always have time with middle management. Furthermore, 35 (53%) indicated that the MGECW had a systematic organisational KM practice, while 47% indicated that systematic organisational KM practices did not exist in the organisation. A large number (73%) of middle management indicated that feedback was not mostly received from their supervisors this include lack of strategic and continuous communication, while 27% indicated that they received feedback from their supervisors. All senior managers complained of lack of funds for training and

equipment. One senior manager said, “Only 5% of our total directorate budget is reserved for training, workshops and conferences.” Furthermore, another senior manager said “there is a lack of resources i.e. finance (budget is insufficient) to procure ICT equipment such as computers, printers and to connect regional offices to internet. The study found out that 53 (80%) of middle management respondents indicated that the bureaucratic structure hindered OK flow and organisational KM practices compared to 20% who indicated the opposite.

4.13 Summary

This chapter focused on the analysis and presentation of quantitative and qualitative data gathered using questionnaires and interviews. During data analysis, descriptive statistics was used from the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for quantitative data and content analysis was used for qualitative data. The data was presented in tables and charts and in a narrative format. The organisational KM practices were analysed in five factors: OK sharing, knowledge acquisition, knowledge dissemination, knowledge transfer and knowledge capture. Enablers and the barriers of organisational KM practices in the MGECW were also identified. It was found that aspects such face-to-face interaction, group discussion, seminars and conferences, and training enabled organisational KM in the MGECW. This indication was an important discovery in this study as conferences and seminars played an important role in shaping and smoothing organisational KM practices in the MGECW. However, barriers to organisational KM were identified as lack of ICT infrastructures, lack of time, negative attitude to organisational KM practices, poor records management, lack of trust and motivation from managers to foster OK. The next chapter presents a discussion of findings of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of research findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study presented in Chapter Four. The MGECW in Namibia offered a unique organisational environment in which organisational KM practices were explored. The discussion is guided by the study's main objective and sub-objectives as outlined in Chapter One. Sarantakos (1993, p. 423) states that "the discussion of the research findings provides answers to the research objectives, and enlightens by highlighting many of the issues highlighted in the research problem." Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (as cited in Matsveru, 2013, p. 130) argue that in the discussion chapter "the findings are not just repeated but their meaning and implication are explained in the light of the purpose of the study." The discussion centres on data obtained from the questionnaire and interviews guide on OK and organisational KM practices, enablers and barriers. Discussion from interviews covering issues in objective 3 and 4 namely: to examine the work culture and attitudes of personnel which affect organisational KM and its practices in the MGECW, Namibia; and to examine how management supports organisational KM practices; is integrated with discussion addressing objective 2: To examine barriers and enablers to organisational KM in the MGECW, Namibia. This was done to avoid repetition. The discussion is organised according to the study's research objectives within the following sub-headings, OK and KM, Organisational KM practices in the MGECW, KS, KC, KA and KD and transfer. The SECI model provided the study's theoretical framework hence there are references to this model highlighting whether the findings are consistent with the model or not.

5.1 Organisational knowledge and KM

The understanding of OK by the respondents relates to definitions by various scholars (Bhatt (as cited in Keramati & Azadeh, 2007); Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Li & Song, 2009; Mchombu, 2007; Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Wiig (as cited in Gordon & Smith, 1998). These scholars indicated that OK entails the understanding which embodies facts, evidence, information, experience and skills or technical know-how vested in theory and hands-on terms of individual employees. This study found a mixture of responses from all respondents on what OK entails in line with what makes OK as literature had suggested. It was found from all respondents that OK is made of capabilities, skills, experience, know-how and expert OK which resides in employee's minds` and documents. All respondents revealed that carrying out responsibilities was based on individual employees' past experiences, training and skills and codified OK such as previous reports and training manuals. It is an opportunity for the MGE CW in particular the Public Service to adopt SECI model through organisational processes to offer training programmes, formalising and creating communities of practice, motivate and encourage employees to share OK by providing time and space for KM practices. Thus, it is essential for the MGE CW to exploit and know that the most important organisational success and its resource (OK) rest on managing OK. As findings showed, there is a need for the MGE CW to encode tacit OK from individual employees into written materials to form intellectual assets. Wagner and Sternberg (as cited in Smith, 2001, p. 318) present methods used to encode OK in the organisation such as:

Selective encoding: select or filter relevant or needed information from the environment, like use specific information in a client's report. *Selective combination:* combine specific information together in ways that are relevant. Show how facts form a pattern

or how the separate parts make a complete whole. *Selective comparison*: see relationships between old and new facts or separate out similarities and differences between past and present. Compare previously known information with new information or apply existing knowledge in ways that create new knowledge.

Thus, the tailored and codified OK are what constitutes OK in the MGECW. This confirms SECI models that employee's organisational knowledge is 'amplified' and 'crystallized' "as a part of the organisational knowledge network of the MGECW"

Notwithstanding some varying understanding on what forms OK from all responses, OK was found to be the foundation of all the undertakings of the organisation's activities in the MGECW. It is worth understanding that formal organisational environment for managing OK in the MGECW was necessitated by the correct advancement of OK. Findings point out empirically in support of Nonaka and Takeuchi SECI's model on tacit OK, recognition of the importance of sharing organisational experience and skills in the face-to-face environment in the MGECW situations as found by this study. SECI model also emphasises the conducive environment for organisational knowledge exchange as the study found no favourable environment for organisational KM practices. Respondents revealed that they were aware of the view that tacit OK was more authoritative as some employees tend to use their OK to advance their own advantage. Mládková (n. d., p. 248) argues that "tacit OK is more problematic, organisations tend to underestimate it and do not create or even inhibit the environment that is necessary for its OK." Smith (2001, p.316) argues that organisations found it is "easier to transform explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge when people cooperate, trust each other and willingly contribute their own valuable knowledge resources." It is worth noting that OK is distinctly assumed and expressive only when employees are encouraged by the

environment of the organisation to contribute their tacit OK into the organisation's OK fountain (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

Although it was found that there was an overall lack of a formal approach to organisational KM in the MGECW, it appeared that there was a high awareness of the importance of managing OK amongst all respondents. The high awareness of organisational KM among respondents was found to be attributed to the extraordinary attention to the importance of OK in Namibia's Vision 2030 document which emphasises turning the Republic of Namibia into a KBS. All respondents said they had either read or heard of "*knowledge based economy or society*". To support the above findings, a study by Fombad, Boom and Bothman (2009) on organisational KM strategies in law firms in Botswana revealed that OK was considered a strategic resource, even though respondents indicated that they had no idea as to what organisational KM was all about. A Malaysian perspective is presented by Gan (2006) who argues that most Malaysians do not understand well what organisational KM is, its functions and tools. Therefore, in the MGECW organisational KM is more to improve employees and organisational performance and make the organisation to be competitive in a KBS, as well as transforming it into an organisational KM processing organisation. Organisational KM helps with functions of OK sharing, OK transfer, OK dissemination and OK capture in the MGECW. This confirms and agreeing OK in the MGECW happens comprehensive translation among tacit and explicit OK in the organisation as SECI Model had suggested. Under this study, it was important to find out the respondents' understanding of the concepts OK and organisational KM in the MGECW.

5.2 Organisational knowledge management practices in the MGECW

To understand organisational KM practices under this study as presented in Chapter Four, this section discusses the key findings on organisational KM practices including enablers and the barriers of organisational KM. Findings presented in Chapter Four on organisational KM

practices and as well as enablers and barriers to organisational KM in the MGECW are similar to studies cited in Chapter Two, for example studies by AL-Hussain (2012); Blackman and Henderson (n. d.); De Long (1997); Hamdzic and Zhou (2005); Hansen and Nohria (2004); Hansen (as cited in Zhou, Siu & Wang, 2009); Hasanali (2002); Husted and Michailova (2002); Lee and Choi (2003); Riege (2005); among others. They indicated that organisational KM enablers and barriers refer to organisational culture, leadership, technology and measurement, commitment, employee involvement and teamwork. Information systems infrastructure was found to pose a greater organisational risk towards the operation of organisational KM practices in the MGECW as they disadvantage the process of organisational KM. These key findings on enablers and the barriers to organisational KM are discussed under each section which follows.

5.2.1 Organisational knowledge sharing

To understand organisational KS as presented in Chapter Four, this section discusses the key findings on organisational KS practices in the MGECW. The main findings have shown a strong understanding from senior and middle managers that KS improves learning ability. The majority of middle management showed that they had a willingness to share OK, working in groups and using ICT tools to support organisational KS. Therefore, 100% of middle management generally agreed that organisational KS leads to increased learning ability. Even though there was a high willingness to share for organisational KS in the MGECW, Hansen and Nohria (2004); Susanty and Wood (2011); and Toben and Wunram (2002) caution that there is significance for organisations to understand that employees are influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to share OK. However, it was found that more than half (51%) indicated that they were not motivated to engage in organisational KS. The benefits of OK sharing were not evident at everyday practical level in many organisations as the literature review suggested (Clayton & Fisher, 2005).

Despite a high willingness shown by middle management to share OK, the findings of this study also demonstrate that there is disagreement about how middle management employees feel towards the current senior management support of organisational KS practices. Middle management respondents felt that there was a lack of commitment towards organisational KS in the MGECW. In addition, half (50%) of the middle management respondents were also of the opinion that management had not engaged them regarding organisational KS initiatives. Based on these findings, it can be argued that the concern is that the MGECW senior management does not regard organisational KS practices as an essential part of organisation success. Thus, this study confirms the findings of Nonaka, Toyama and Konno (2001) on the importance of leadership and the extent to which an organisation can go through the use of the SECI model. This suggests that executive roles cannot be overlooked in certifying the successful application of SECI model for organisational KM practices in the MGECW.

It is also evident that the organisational culture of the MGECW administration tended to encourage non organisational KS practices. Arguably, organisational KS is conceivable only when the MGECW's culture formally accords the expression of organisational work ideas through discussions involving all employees. The foregoing arguments are substantiated by McDermott and O'Dell's (2001) findings which indicated that organisations where OK sharing was not embedded into organisations' structures have not changed their culture to correspond with their organisational KM initiatives. Ling (2011, p. 329) argues that "organisations need to look into creating as well as maintaining a culture whereby workers are willing and able to share, which is a prerequisite in increasing organisational success, because OK sharing is crucial, and management should understand that 'knowledge is power'". Liebowitz and Chen (as cited in Sandhu, Jain & Ahmand, 2011, p.210) argue that "KS barriers in organisations are associated with poor organisational management, lack of KS culture, low motivation to share OK, bureaucratic structures, and OK hoarding culture." Despite the proliferation of

organisational KS studies such as by Al-Alawi (2005), Al-Marzooqi and Mohammed (2007), findings reveal that trust, communication, information systems, rewards and organisation structure are positively related to OK sharing in the MGECW, this confirms the explanation in Table 2.4, referring to Organisational KM barriers related to employees. McDermott and O'Dell (2001) argue that organisational culture is regarded as the key inhibitor or facilitator of a successful knowledge sharing environment.

Moreover, some of the leading themes which were found common through the majority of the responses as barriers to KS in the MGECW were negative attitudes towards sharing, organisational hierarchical structures and culture, and poor ICT infrastructure and lack of management commitments. These findings are similar to the findings in studies conducted by Al-Alawi (2001); Al-Marzooqi and Mohammed (2007); Clayton and Fisher (2005); Hall (2001); Hansen and Nohria (2004); Hendriks (1999); Husted and Michailova (2002); Huysman (2003); Lancaster, Spry, Dalton, Shoolbred (2003); Martin (2003); O'Dell and Grayson (1998); Riege (2005); Truch (2001). The scholars identified the following barriers that impede the effective exchange of OK:

- a) Individuals' dispositional impediments;
- b) Management practices such as locking up tacit knowledge, denying time to engage in transfer and organisational structures;
- c) Multi-layered structures that impede knowledge flow;
- d) Trapping of knowledge in closed groups and work teams, under-utilisation of organisational systems set up;
- e) Lack of organisational commitment and operational priority;
- f) Starving knowledge transfer of money, time, management or IT support;

- g) Internal competition within organisations that discourages collaborative behaviour and erodes the effectiveness of knowledge sharing activities;
- h) Cultural impediments - belief that knowledge is power and not to be given away, or the nature of cultures such as the bureaucratic; and
- i) The ICT trap which is based on the assumption that IT positively supports and improves knowledge sharing, while discounting the important role played by personal interactions in the process.

This study concurs with these authors as similar factors appeared to derail organisational KS practices in the MGECW. Organisational KS appeared as a sundry in the MGECW, as middle management respondents specified that they were not motivated or encouraged to share their OK. More than two-thirds of the respondents pointed out that they have a general willingness to share their OK. However, organisational KS is not happening in the MGECW and preservation was seen as good; thus management needs to make sure that organisational KS takes place. Furthermore, 80% of middle management respondents mentioned that their OK was kept for future reference. Thus the same attitude and approach towards organisational KS of middle management employees appeared to be factors that impede organisational KS in the MGECW. These findings suggest that literally in the MGECW there is no formal comprehension and encouragement of KS practices. Vaiman and Vance (cited in Eaves, n. d, p. 76) indicates that some individuals who recognise the worth of their explicit OK may be deliberately electing to withhold or hoard it from their colleagues and employer to protect personal value. Ling (2011, p. 327) found that many organisations “find it a challenge to leverage OK due to their workers’ intentional and unintentional practice of OK hoarding.” Thus, the MGECW “must create a desire to share OK as a guiding principle for organisational survival in a KBS (Ling, 2011, p. 330). Furthermore, it is important for the MGECW to

understand that KS barriers also point to the reference of low motivation in sharing OK, excessive bureaucratic structure, and knowledge hoarding culture of some employees (Liebowitz & Chen as cited in Sandhu, Jain & Ahmand, 2011).

Moreover, another central barrier found across middle management employees was the view that there was no time for senior managers to engage their subordinates in OK sharing. It should be stressed that most senior managers indicated that lack of time with their subordinates to engage in organisational KS was a problem. Siakas and Georgiadou (2010, p.4) found that “KS is time consuming, denotes the limited amount of time during the workday and spending time on working [versus] helping a colleague or codifying the knowledge.” Arguably, the lack of time by senior managers to engage in formal sharing of OK ought to be attributed to this aspect and other organisational structure commitments which seem to be perceived as more important than organisational KS. These findings appear to also raise questions as to why the MGECW has not enhanced and created sufficient time for organisational KS practices. The fundamental reasons given for limiting organisational KS practices were a general agreement amongst middle management and their senior managers were that of lack of time, resources and excessive organisational bureaucracy. These findings are consistent with the studies by Al-Alawi (2001); Al-Alawi et al., (2007); Ipe (2003); Hedlund (1994); Jarvenpaa and Staples (2000); Jones, Chonko and Roberts (2003); Lee and Choi (2003); Moollan (2004); Nelson and Coopriider (1996); Odari-Okemwa and Smith (2009); Scott (2000); and Szulanski (1996) who found that lack of trust, lack of confidence, aggravated by unproductive communication, lack of time, bureaucracy, information systems, lack of rewards (structural or un-structural) and organisation structure are positively or negatively allied to OK sharing in organisations.

In this study, it was further reported in Chapter Four that there were impediments to organisational KS in the MGECW. Most contentious issues raised by middle management respondents were lack of structural reward, negative attitude towards KS, poor and no internet

connection. It was also found that on the face of it, there was also a lack of a new OK cohort in the MGECW due to the lack of incentives. With regard to this, Ipe (2003) found that rewards and incentives act as a backing influence that may perhaps motivate employees' attitudes to share OK within an organisation. Arguably, when employees engage in group discussions, they generate and learn new OK. According to Nonaka's SECI model of 1995, the socialisation process encourages employees to socialise and share OK through the process of social interactions. Translating the vast amount of the individual's tacit and explicit OK into convenience and to create new OK for its success ought to be challenges where formal KS practices do not happen. Employees engage in the process of trading OK formally amongst themselves or in groups and departments to realise the MGECW goals.

Thus, OK sharing needs to be made a public organisational resource within the MGECW and flow amongst employees while motivating them to share. Ardichvili, Page and Wentling (2003) found that motivation and barriers to participation in virtual knowledge sharing communities of practices indicated that, when employees view OK as a public good belonging to the whole organisation, OK flows easily. Most senior managers emphasised that employees' and management's attitudes toward KS affect perceptions of KS practices in the MGECW. Arguably, in the MGECW there ought to be a great need for management to accentuate the need for staff members to learn from one another and encourage teamwork which will promote OK sharing. Khalil and Shea (2012) found that employees' behaviour was perceived as a noticeable barrier to KS.

Furthermore, Husted and Michailova (2002) also found that some behaviour and attitudes normally restrain organisational KS. Similarly, Husted and Michailova (2002) point to OK hoarding by employees in relation to that custom of suspicion and confidentiality due to fear and misinterpreted OK. Hendriks (1999) found that when individuals recognise that power hails from the OK they retain, OK hoarding becomes an alternative to OK sharing. KS

practices in the MGECW depend much on informal practices which seem to be influenced only by the immediate information need, lack of motivation and lack of reward of employees. The study by Eaves (n. d, p. 67) “demonstrates that a panoptic, pluralistic and interdisciplinary perspective combining human, social, technological and contextual factors must be considered to understand sharing behaviour and optimise organisational KM interventions”. Harris and Dewdney and Dervin (cited in Matsveru, 2013, p. 132) argue that “information needs arise from the seeker’s situation or the need to bridge or close a gap in information.” Wilson (as cited in Matsveru, 2013, p. 38) argues that seeking information is a result of a need to satisfy some goal.” Bryan and Joyce, Cross, and Parker (cited in Ghaznavi, Perry, Toulson & Logan 2012) argue that “the MGECW formal structures and prescribed communication channels fail to develop effective OK collaboration among employees.” Moreover, this study found that the extent of the ICT infrastructure did not necessarily comply with the extent of the OK sharing. MGECW structures, management and employees were found to hinder KS. Smith (2001, p. 312) argues that “supportive work environments and user-friendly, cost-effective technology are key enablers for this entire organisational KS process.”

5.2.2 Organisational knowledge capture (KC)

The findings on OK capture in this study point out that in the MGECW, tacit OK was captured informally, and explicit OK was systematised for organisational use even though there was lack of electronic formal data warehouse. Reference is made to Hari, Egbu and Kumar (2004) who argue that OK capture is the most challenging process in the organisational KM cycle. Also coming from the study is that the MGECW was not engaged in any form of capturing OK via forms of organisational KC such as exit interviews. In this regard, exit interviews offer an opportunity for the MGECW to allow the capture of OK skills and experience from the retiring or departing employees. Hussain and Ravindra (2003) found that exit interviews help management to know the reasons behind employees’ detachment from the organisation and are

perceived by existing employees as a symbol of positive organisational culture. This study found that 48% of the middle management respondents indicated MGECW missed out on OK which was not captured from regional offices. As employees move out of the organisation, they will leave with their tacit OK and it rests with the organisation to formulate strategies which can be used to successfully capture OK. This study found also that respondents felt that in the long run visiting the MGECW website and telephonic discussions would probably save time to access OK considering distances between Head Office and regional offices. Reports were said to contain a sizeable amount of OK in them. Reference is made to Snyder and Wilson (as cited in Wagner, 2006, p.71) who found “that organisations might use expert and internal reports and harvest internal and expert OK to capture OK for the organisation.”

The findings of this study appear to point out that OK capture did not receive substantive attention in the MGECW. Middle managers indicated that it is a challenge to complete tasks without referring to data to obtain information to complete a task. The MGECW appeared not to rely extensively on internal OK of regional staff members and slightly external OK capture was not captured from its customers. Generally, organisational KC honours experienced employees where others can tap into and capture valuable OK that helps the organisation and its employees. In this case, this study found that there is a great need to identify employees who possess valuable undocumented OK and capture the OK. To substantiate the above findings and claims on tapping on experienced employees, Bhatt (2001); Bresnen, Edelman, Newell, and Scarborough and Swan (2003); Dalkir (2005; 2011); Devanport and Prusak (1998); Mchombu (2007); Nonaka (1994); Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995); and Sanderson (2001) found that the best treasured OK is located in the experts where social patterns play a crucial role. Similarly, it was found by this study that the Ministry did not value regional staff insights which could be included in the decision making process. This is in spite of the importance of tacit OK for the success of an organisation as emphasised by several authors

such as Bresnen, Edelman, Newell, Scarbrough and Swan (2003); Dalkir, Nonaka (as cited in Sanderson, 2001); Hari, Egbu and Kumar (2004); and Mulder and Whiteley (2007).

The process or practices of employees' interaction routinely within and with other Directorates and NGOs to capture and keep records of valuable OK serves as an important aspect of KC in the MGE CW. This study found that responses were split in almost half (50%) where employees' who indicated that interaction does not take place within and with other departments to exchange of OK in the MGE CW. In this regard, organisational KC does not flow either new or old OK in the MGE CW. This shows a problem as OK is not sufficiently captured for future reference. It is a reflection that the MGE CW has not prioritised how either tacit or explicit OK aids its operations. From this standpoint, it shows a weakness in the MGE CW as it is losing prospects of capturing tacit OK and turning it into explicit OK to generate the understanding and develop organisational learning. Dalkir (2005), Desouza and Paquette (2011) and Zhou et al. (2009) argue that organisations count on the OK of workers to bring in a vast amount of knowledge. In the MGE CW it appears that OK is both tacit and explicit, thus the Ministry should shift the focus on managing OK as one of the most important organisational resource for its operations, thus capturing and using the OK to the advantage through delivering efficiently and effectively (Stafford & Mearns, 2009). Thus, not being able to identify, capture and utilise that OK is a risk for the MGE CW in this KBS.

Moreover, with regard to record keeping or management, this study found that middle management respondents' responses were surprising and interesting as more than half (50%) of middle management respondents indicated that the MGE CW does not keep records in electronic form, and hard copies, local disk or manual files do not have a specialised database where these records are kept. Furthermore, half of middle management respondents (50%) had no work email addresses; the other half said that they had private email addresses which they used for organisational work. Arguably, it could lead to a situation where it is very difficult to

retrieve documents, and leads to employees to personalise information received via their private emails and saved by themselves. The concerns raised above on record management are similar to some studies carried out by some researchers in this area (Barata, Nengomasha, Nengomasha and Beukes-Amiss (as cited in Nengomasha, 2009). Reference is made to Nengomasha (2009, p. 206) who found that same employees were “aware of what needs to be done regarding records management but do not follow the proper records keeping procedures anymore, yet, some employees had no idea what records are or the procedures, even though there is organisational framework for managing records in the Public Service is in place.”

Furthermore, Nengomasha (2009, p. 207) found that “most employees obliterate e-mail communications and their attachments with no qualms at all, as they do not consider them to be official records and employees saw themselves as not having a role to play managing records in their organisation.” In spite of that, this study found that the MGECW relies on external OK; senior managers indicated that experts were routinely invited in various fields of services of the MGECW to conduct seminars where records are kept manually for future reference and organisational use even though sometimes these documents are difficult to retrieve. Reference is made to Stenmark (2001, p.19) who found that “web documentation and information organisational retrieval technology can act as a facilitator in the MGECW for OK managing process by leveraging tacit OK on an intra-organisational web.” Thus, there is need for the MGECW to embrace organisational records and organisational KM. According to Nengomasha (2006, p. 429) “integrating the two provides a tool for organisational KM practices through the process of creating, maintaining, accessing, sharing and preservation of OK in the MGECW.”

However, middle management had various responses towards consultations and collaboration with other organisations by the MGECW. This study found that middle management felt that the MGECW does consult and collaborate with other organisations, where OK can be captured

and used for planning purposes. Hari, Egbu and Kumar (2004) found that capturing within and external OK helps with problem solving, managing change, organisational learning, planning and innovation. Similarly, Huber (1991) indicates that through indirect learning and inferential learning, the organisation can gain a lot from others. Considering the results above, there is some evidence from this study to suggest improving the effectiveness of organisational KC in the MGECW. Furthermore, there are clearly critical areas to be addressed around the organisational KC in the MGECW, such as improving OK record management systems and an intervention programme on how to capture OK.

5.2.3 Organisational knowledge acquisition (KA)

The findings of this study showed that 88% of the staff members of the MGECW acquire OK and keep themselves updated with ministerial issues through the website, memos, telephonic discussions and face-to-face consultations such as colloquiums, workshops, and meetings. The respondents felt that visiting the MGECW website and having telephonic discussions would probably save them time to acquire OK considering distances between Head Office and regional offices. Snyder and Wilson (as cited in Wagner, 2006, p.71) argue that “in organisations expert reports contain valuable OK and harvesting employees and external expert OK and making it available is important.” It is also important to take note that in the MGECW, OK was acquired mostly through formal practices such as conferences, workshops and training. This type of OK is very rich and it is from various professionals in specific areas. Dutton and Starbuck (1979) found that face-to-face meetings, workshops and conferences were more effective for organisational KA. Moreover, the findings of this research showed that it was hard to acquire OK from employees across large regional distances due to poor ICT infrastructures. In addition, several authors (Hamel, 1991; Huber, 1991; Matusik & Hill, 1998; O’Dell & Grayson 1998; Powell, 1998; Wagner, 2006) suggest that OK acquisition through conferences,

improve ICT infrastructure, meetings and workshops and a positive organisational KA culture and climate in the organisation would reduce KA bottlenecks.

This study found that age group and work experience decline with regard to organisational document search in the MGECW; it showed that work experience and search for documents in the MGECW decline between the age group of 41-45 and 50 years (59.9%) and 5-10 years' work experience. Employees with 10-15 years of work experience (vast tacit OK) (4.5%) were found to favour interpersonal trust to foster organisational KC compared with those of 1-3 and 5 years of work experience. Fleming and Frenken; Saxenian; von Hippel, (as cited in Ghaznavi, Perry, Toulson & Logan, 2012, p. 182) found that "personal connections and informal interaction between OK workers are a crucial source for OK creation and dissemination." However, Huber (1991); Matusik & Hill (1998); O'Dell & Grayson (1998); Powell (1998); and Wagner (2006) agree that bottlenecks for any organisation to acquire OK are due to the fact that it is time-consuming. Other factors are the unavailability of documents and peripheral sources such as recruitment of new employees, acquisition, associations, acquisition latency, narrow bandwidth and OK inaccuracy and maintenance trap. Ruggles' (1997) found that senior managers perceive themselves doing better compared to middle management employees in terms of transferring OK within the organisation. However, it is important for the MGECW to create platforms for experienced employees to transfer their acquired OK to the newer employees. The importance of experienced employees for OK acquisition is emphasised by Garg (2013, p. 34) who argues that "those employees who have spent a large amount of their working years in an organisation use their experience in getting things done and also in helping newer employees learn on the job better."

The study also discovered that resource allocation for training were quite limited to advance the cause of organisational KA. Respondents suggested that the MGECW should put aside enough resources for local/international conferences and workshops so that its employees can

acquire more OK. In other words, management should prioritise sufficient resource allocation to training, conferences and workshops. Arguably, the process of employees' participating in colloquiums, trainings, symposium and workshops provides continuous professional development of employees and allows them to interact and there is a two-way flow of organisational KA. The process allows employees to communicate with some experts about the topic of interest and acquire OK. Reference is made to Loucks-Horsley; Hewson, Love and Stiles (as cited in Hew & Hara, 2006, p. 297) who found that "OK among professional practitioners was enriched by typically traditional learning approaches such as formal training workshops or seminars." Crawford (2005) and Politis (as cited in Nguyen & Mohamed, 2011) assert that management ought to generate the environments that consent their subordinates to exercise and nurture their OK to add to their own individual OK and that of the organisation's reservoir. Blackman and Henderson (n. d.) identified training needs of individuals and the formulation of plans to achieve these initiatives as significant in organisational KM. Bierly, et al. (2000, p.603) assert that OK is acquired through experience where "education, training, and seasoning of a person can help them along the path to wisdom."

This study found lack of trust as a barrier to OK acquisition. Uzzi (1997) found that trust in the organisation relates to a close relationship as well as creating an organisational culture of trust and sincerity; these are important to the adoption of organisational KA practices. The use of robust bonds in the organisation by middle management employees and their senior managers promotes and creates effective and efficient organisational KA. This process or practice of organisational KA creates the environment where employees ought to lean towards believing in one another. Arguably, a trustworthy OK able employee who tends to offer a considerable chance to another employee to receive and absorb the OK ought to be acquired. A study by Yli-Renko, Autio, Harry and Sapiena (2001) on social capital, knowledge acquisition and knowledge exploitation of a young technology-based organisation also found

that social collaboration and network bonds proportions of social capital are indeed associated with greater success of organisational KA.

The other interesting aspect found in this study is the constraint of organisational KA because of barriers related to organisational culture and lack of online platform interactions with other employees as indicated by a number of scholars (Abdul-Gader & Kozar, 1990; Collins, Green & Draper (as cited in Abdul-Gader & Kozar, 1990); Hamel, 1991; Huber, 1991; Matusik & Hill, 1998; O'Dell & Grayson, 1998; Powell, 1998). Nonaka and Takeuchi (199) emphasise that the platform of OK conversion (SECI model) makes things easier for organisational interaction processes and enriches employees' tacit OK. Furthermore, notable identifiable constraints were evident such as employees' lack of motivation and lack of time as indicated earlier. The findings of this study ought to be attributed to the high engagement on face-to-face where it appears as a much anticipated form of organisational KA and dissemination to leverage OK. This view is supported by Hansen (as cited in Zhou, Siu & Wang, 2009); Hedlund (1994); Lee and Choi (2003); Nelson and Coopriider (1996); and Szulanski (1996) who identified mistrust as a barrier to organisational KA; a high level of trust reduces the risk in OK exchange.

Furthermore, this study also established that middle management agreed that trust and high level professional social networks positively influence the practices or process of organisational KM in the MGECW. Cross and Sproull; Cummings; Zander and Kogut (as cited in Ghaznavi, Perry, Toulson & Logan, 2012, p. 181) found that "social ties among individuals are economic and efficient means of know-how transfer." Handzic and Zhou (2005, p. 37) report that "characteristics of leadership are that of being a catalyst through inspiring, mentoring, setting examples, listening and engendering trust and respect, organisational KM requires individuals and team leaders with a diverse range of skills, attributes and capabilities to manage and motivate change." This view is supported by Hedlund (1994); Nelson and

Coopriider (1996); Szulanski (1996) and Lee and Choi (2003) who found in their studies that mistrust acts as a barrier to OK exchange and creation; a high level of trust reduces the risk in knowledge exchange. The study demonstrates that the majority of middle management respondents indicated that when senior managers understand their employees, that makes them to share their experiences that would benefit organisational KM practices. The results of this study further demonstrated that respondents have adequate understanding that management supports organisational KM practices. The findings of this study ought to be attributed to the high engagement on face-to-face where it appears as a much anticipated form of organisational KA and dissemination to leverage OK and issues such as lack of online platform, organisational culture and lack of trust are barriers to organisational KA.

5.2.4 Organisational knowledge dissemination and transfer

In the MGECW, having access to disseminate and transfer of OK is significant for employees and organisational development. It was found by this study that mostly organisational KT and KD seem to happen in a regular informal conduct and at the same time facing challenges. Findings of this study showed that KD and KT depends upon the number of factors which include, amongst others, individual factors, attitude towards organisational KD and KT and cost and benefits of organisational KD and KT. The study established organisational transfer of TOK among employees in the MGECW through formal discussions conducted in formal and side meetings, seminars and training programmes. This confirms SECI Model which emphasises the importance between employees', face-to-face discussions amongst themselves to create, share and disseminate OK. According to Ipe (as cited in Eaves, n. d., p. 75), "a perception of the power of OK is also a negative predictor, aligning with the assertion that power is a key determinant of motivation to organisational KD and KT." Wang (as cited in Eaves, n. d.) found "negative findings in respect to a perception of individual OK ownership and explicit sharing may be considered through the psychological connection established

between an organisational actor and the OK they create alongside underlying interpretations of the work environment and perceptions of fairness.”

In addition, this study found that inadequate ICT infrastructure necessarily impeded practices of KD and KT in the MGECW. Some issues which emerged from middle management employees include, amongst others, lack of access to or underdeveloped network, lack of ICT skills by some employees and poor internet connectivity. This leads to the situation where MGECW Departments at Head Office and regional offices were found not to be involved in disseminating, transferring and sharing OK documents. Nengomasha (2009) found that in the Public Service in Namibia employees lacked skills and needed training in IT and records management to access documents. Ajuwon and Rhine (as cited in, Ofori-Dwumfuo and Kommey, 2013) found that capacity building is a major problem in ICT usage within some organisations with regard to organisational KD/T. Similarly, a study by Ruggles (as cited Hendriks, 1999, p.93) found three types of ICT barriers. Temporal, physical and social distances barriers hinder the process or practices of organisational KD and KT. Hasanali (2002) emphasises the use of the organisational KM initiatives centre on leadership, culture, structure, ICT and measurements to achieve organisational KM practices.

Similarly, this study found that inadequate ICT infrastructure necessarily impeded practices of KD and KT in the MGECW. One of the issues which emerged from middle management employees was poor internet connectivity; it also appears that the MGECW does not have high tech-speed computer system. However, there was a strong perception from all respondents that ICT helps and enables organisational KM. This all depends on improved infrastructure which enables employees to have access to OK documents when need too. To confirm these findings on ICT, Huysman and Wulf (as cited in Lin (2007) found that the use of ICT and organisational KD are closely associated; ICT facilitates speedy flow, pursuit, access and retrieval of OK among organisational employees. This finding is consistent with Cong and Pandya (2003) who

state that ICT aids the linking of employees with information, and employees with each other, although it is not an organisational solution.

Although ICT caters for the facilitation of organisational KM practices; the findings of this study have shown considerable doubt in middle management respondents who believed that management in the MGECW did not normally makes contribution towards ICT planning. Middle management indicated that managers did not make a contribution towards ICT planning in the MGECW. Moreover, interviewees revealed that some of the subordinates lacked sufficient skills to operate ICT tools. Furthermore, the study established that almost half (51.5%) of the respondents indicated that they did not have access to computers, and most of middle management were without work email addresses. It was further found that the MGECW lacked ICT infrastructure to support organisational KM practices. In this instance, one can conclude that online communication is a big challenge considering that all regional offices of the MGECW are geographically located across Namibia. ICT would enable the practice of organisational KM. Communication barriers to organisational KM have to be solved by acquiring ICT equipment in the MGECW as the literature has suggested. Senior management respondents have the ultimate responsibility to ensure an effective quality ICT planning and systems are in place to achieve the quality objectives for organisational KM in the MGECW. To substantiate the above finding and claims, Ofori-Dwumfuo and Kommey (2013) found that challenges of ICT in many organisations entails the lack of sufficient trained staff on ICT and lack of management support leads to poor ICT planning in many organisations. This leads to the situation in the MGECW Departments at Head Office and regional office which were found not to be involved in disseminating, transferring and sharing OK documents. Ajuwon and Rhine (as cited in, Ofori-Dwumfuo and Kommey, 2013) have found that capacity building is a major problem in ICT usage within some organisations with regard to organisational KD/T.

Furthermore, it was also discovered that all respondents preferred face-to-face contacts to receive organisational knowledge. This study also established that in the MGECW there is a broad communication gap among middle management employees and their senior managers. Senior managers did not provide middle management employees with ample organisational knowledge. Even though time was identified as a constraint in KS, acquisition and capture, all responses from interviews indicate that MGECW management normally creates time for experts in various fields related to transfer and dispense organisational knowledge on considerable time. However, as the issue of trust also emerged highly under this section, it centres on OK dissemination and transfer. Sarker, Sarker, Nicholson and Joshi (2005) found that several characteristics such as the expertise, poor communication strategies and trustworthiness of the individual are important for organisational knowledge transfer and dissemination. Another aspect found in this study was the non-availability of the MGECW publications such as annual reports to be used by its employees, especially at the regional offices. More than half of the respondents indicated not to have received such publications. Durrant (2008) suggests that it is worthy to take note that KD and transfer take place once organisational knowledge forms part of the organisation's process, practices, systems and its underlined activities in the organisation found in its publications. As a result, while some explicit OK in the MGECW was being transferred much still needed to be done with tacit OK. During interview discussions, all senior managers agreed that ICT benefits organisational KM practices in the MGECW. ICT is important in accessing and retrieving OK. There is need to improve the environment of dispensing, sharing, transfer and capture of OK. More than 57.6% of middle management respondents indicated that ICT influences knowledge sharing, acquisition, transfer and dissemination, and 76% of the middle management respondents indicated that sharing, acquisition, transfer and dissemination (organisational KM practices) depends on ICT. Computers are perceived to store vast quantities of data and they are important

ICT facilities that the MGECW ought to have in today's KBS. Ofori-Dwumfuo and Kommey (2013) found that computers assist in storing, creating, sharing and dispensing and retrieval of OK. Handzic and Zhou (2005) emphasise that numerous mechanisms have been developed to help with the facilitation of organisational KM in organisations to help employees communicate and ensure access to OK. The facilities include emails, electronic discussion forums, bulletin boards, and white boards, audio and video conferencing. Thus, without the adequate provision of these facilities, employees experience difficulties to learn and share experiences with other employees. Similarly, Hendriks (1999) points out that ICT makes a provision of accessing and locating stored OK. Dalkir (2005, 2011) argues that it offers connecting professionals across platforms across distance and leveraging best practices in reducing time to talent. ICT aids employees to be connected amongst OK networks of the MGECW.

While it is important to engage the entire organisational Departments in OK transfer for the MGECW, it was found by this study that Departments or Subdivisions hardly share, transfer and dispense OK documents amongst each other. This is against the fact that departmental documents constitute highly textual and considerable OK beneficial to the MGECW as a whole. Stanley (2003); and Handzic and Zhou (2005) argue that documents contain explicit OK which is very important for the organisation's success which is explicitly kept in training manuals and books. This is confirmed by the findings that the MGECW middle management employees and their senior managers have not been very effective in the transferring and dispensing of OK as well in using ICT tools to transfer and dispense OK. This result is similar to prior findings in the study carried out by Chong and Chong (2009); and Chong, Salleh, Ahmand and Sharifuddin (2011) in which they found a favourable margin under the importance of practices and implementation of organisational KM. Furthermore, the study also found a high considerable willingness to belong to a group that entails transfer and dissemination of

OK. To substantiate the prior findings, Davenport and Prusak (1998) make similar comment to that effect; a group amongst employees under the same directorate can discuss a significant aspect that rests on transfer and dissemination of OK. Besides the process and practices such as face-to-face on transfer and dissemination of OK in the MGECW, this study found no evidence on the engagement of other forms such as apprenticeship, building a retention culture and mentoring referred as an explicit OK transfer. It was found, however, that the MGECW heavily relies on informal community practices as ways to create OK. Though there are informal community practices of gathering of OK, there is a risk of not documenting and transferring this OK. The offices of the MGECW are stationed nationwide, the organisation ought to embrace the community of practices. Senior and middle managers have the ultimate responsibility to ensure and understand the importance and efficiency of communities of practice that it can offer to the operations of organisational KM for the MGECW. The benefits of community of practice are emphasised by O'Sullivan and Azeem (2007) who found that for geographically scattered offices of the MGECW, they would profit from community of practice as it assists increasing organisational interface, discussions, OK sharing, dissemination and transfer through ICT. Ghaznavi, Perry, Toulson and Logan (20012, p. 181) argue that "organisational KM highlights that the effective creation and transfer of knowledge can also rely upon extra-organisational channels, such as, informal networks."

5.3 Summary

This chapter has synthesised the study findings from Chapter Four with reference to the literature presented in Chapter Two. The discussion highlighted and demonstrated the understanding of respondents' perspectives on organisational KM in the MGECW. The discussion of findings of organisational KM practices in the MGECW further revealed that OK sharing, acquisition, dissemination, transfer and OK capture should be revamped in the Ministry. The discussion also showed barriers to managing OK and KM. Challenges include lack of motivation, lack of trust, lack of incentives, and lack of online platform and ICT skills, poor records management and ICT infrastructure, excessive bureaucracy, classifying or categorising and collaborating of OK within the MGECW. The findings above show that the SECI Model processes have a more important role to play in the MGECW for organisational KM practices. These conclusions were mainly highlighted in the literature review chapter and these findings generally support SECI Model. However it should be noted that the SECI model is not universal and that it cannot be considered applicable in its entirety. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise the research findings, draw conclusions and make recommendations that can be used to improve organisational KM practices in the MGECW, Namibia. Issues in objectives 3 and 4: to examine the work culture and attitudes of personnel which affect organisational KM and its practices in the MGECW, Namibia; and to examine how management supports organisational KM practices, are integrated with the summary and conclusion addressing objective 2 to avoid repetition. The chapter is divided into three sections: summary, conclusions and recommendations.

6.2 Summary of the findings

This section summarises the findings of organisational KM practices in the MGECW, Namibia. The rationale for undertaking this study was to investigate organisational KM practices in the MGECW, Namibia. The objectives as outlined in Chapter one were to: (a) examine barriers and the enablers to organisational KM in the MGECW, Namibia; (b) examine the work culture and attitudes of personnel which affect organisational KM and its practices in the MGECW, Namibia; (c) examine how management supports organisational KM practices; and (d) draw up recommendations on how the implementation of organisational KM could be enhanced in the MGECW, Namibia.

6.2.1 Organisational Knowledge and Knowledge Management

The study established that all respondents had a little understanding of what entails OK and KM. It was found from all respondents that OK is made of capabilities, skills, experience, know-how, and expert OK which reside in the heads of employees and organisational documents. However, findings of this study point to that the MGECW did not embrace formal

organisational KM in its organisational operations, even though on defining organisational KM, it was described as the process of managing OK in the organisation for the organisation for future reference. The findings also revealed that employees relied considerably on documented information (*explicit OK*), past experiences (*tacit OK*) and consultants (specialists). Furthermore, findings showed that organisational KM was based on use of ICT because OK ought to be dispensed to regional offices using technology.

6.2.2 Organisational knowledge sharing (OKS)

The study established that OKS improves employees' learning ability and through organisational KS they learn new ideas. Findings of the study pointed out that the organisation's organisational KS is a source of new OK, where employees accumulate a massive volume of new skills, understanding and experiences. It was established further that respondents had a general willingness to share their OK and consultations among employees in the MGECW were task oriented. Meeting reports and memos were most used to share OK in the MGECW. Conversely, it was found that sharing OK was most likely to take place more within directorates than across directorates.

6.2.2.1 Organisational Knowledge Sharing Barriers

Findings established that employees' negative attitudes hinder the process of organisational KS and OK was kept for future reference in the MGECW. Results pointed out that organisational structural barriers such as absence of structural procedures to encourage employees to engage into organisational KS was a barrier to organisational KS. It established that non-existence of time among employees and senior managers hindered the process of sharing OK. Ministerial reports and other import information were not copiously available, and poor connection and poor ICT infrastructure were also found to form part of organisational KS barrier. Similarly, findings indicated that middle management were not using any Internet tools to support

organisational KS or to access information and many of the MGECW employees had no work email addresses.

6.2.3 Organisational knowledge capture (KC)

The study revealed that the MGECW does not capture any OK from customers and NGOs and middle management believed that the MGECW normally missed out on OK not captured from regional offices. Both manual and electronic record keeping of OK in the MGECW were not up to date, and there were no electronic records keeping and there was no specialised electronic database. Specific ICT such as electronic databases were considered important for capturing and storing OK for easy access. It was established that it was management's responsibility to determine and foster an environment for KC in the MGECW for operational efficiency.

6.2.3 Organisational knowledge acquisition (KA)

The study established that 88% of respondents acquire and keep themselves updated with ministerial issues by visiting the Ministry's website, memos, telephonic discussions and face-to-face consultation, and on top of that it was found that formal consultation, including attending conference/workshops, were found to be most used by the MGECW to keep employees up-to-date. Conference attendance was seen and highly rated as one platform that provided the opportunity to acquire more and new OK, especially on the international scene, compared to locally organised conferences. In spite of evidence of an "*open-door policy session*", it was found that new employees were not given enough guidance after orientation. Data revealed that those who have accumulated vast experience in the MGECW tended not to favour interpersonal trust such as benevolence and competence as important aspect to attain and share OK, and middle management employees who had worked longer in the MGECW had vast organisational experience which was not utilised.

6.2.4 Organisational knowledge dissemination (OKD) and organisational knowledge transfer (OKT)

It was established that most OKD and OKT practices seemed to happen informally and faced challenges. The study revealed that in the MGECW, community of practices for organisational KD and KT was not in place to facilitate the KD and KT. Furthermore, it was found that there was a very strong preference for the use of old technology such as conferences, workshops, colloquium, meetings as forms of dispensing and transferring of organisational knowledge in the MGECW.

However, findings of this study established that for OKD and OKT to happen, it depends on the following factors: positive individual attitude towards OKD and OKT; and cost and benefits of OKD and OKT to the employees in the MGECW. The inadequate ICT infrastructure was found to impede practices of KD and KT and issues which emerged from middle management which also impede organisational KD and KT include, amongst others, lack of access to or underdeveloped network, no access to computers, lack of ICT skills and poor Internet connectivity (no high tech-speed computer system) in the MGECW. It was reported by middle management that senior managers did not make a contribution towards improving ICT and it's planning in the MGECW. The study also established that in the MGECW there was a broad communication gap among middle management employees and their senior managers. Data also revealed that MGECW did not keep records in electronic form, and hard copies, local disk or manual files and that it did not have a specialised database. There was a general agreement from all senior managers that top management had to show total commitment towards organisational KM for it to succeed in the MGECW. Support of top management greatly influences the applicability of each SECI process.

6.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study on organisational KM practices in the MGECW, this section presents the conclusions of the study. The conclusions are presented according to the research objectives as stated in section 1.3 of Chapter One. . The University of Southern California (USC) (2015) states that a conclusion is not merely a summary of the main topics covered or a re-statement of the research problem, but a synthesis of key points and, where applicable, recommendations on new areas for future research are made.

6.3.1 Conclusions on the understanding of Organisational Knowledge and KM in the MGECW

This study concludes that the status of understanding of OK and organisational KM was fair and its importance to the MGECW functions was recognised. OK is tacit and explicit organisational knowledge which is not formal managed in the MGECW. There were no stipulated practices of organisational KM.

6.3.2 Conclusions on OK Sharing, Knowledge Acquisition, Knowledge Dissemination, Knowledge Transfer and Knowledge Capture in the MGECW, Namibia.

6.3.2.1 Organisational knowledge sharing (OKS)

This study concludes that in the MGECW organisational KS was found to improve the employees' learning ability and ministerial staff members through organisational KS learnt from new ideas which broadened their organisational knowledge base and it's a source of new OK, accumulating a massive volume of new skills, understanding, expertise and experiences. There was a general willingness to share OK of lessons learned.

6.3.2.2 Organisational knowledge capture (KC)

The state of organisational KC in the MGECW was not in a positive state as the Ministry did not capture any OK from customers and NGOs, and normally misses out on employees OK not captured from regional offices. There was lack of interaction and documentation of best practices for the core skills in respective departments in the MGECW for organisational KC.

6.3.2.3 Organisational knowledge acquisition (KA)

Staff members of the MGECW acquired OK and kept themselves updated with ministerial issues through the website, memos, telephonic discussions and face-to-face consultations such as colloquiums, workshops and meetings. Lack of resources was a barrier to organisational KA especially at regional office level in the MGECW. Furthermore, barriers related to lack of online platform interactions with other employees and lack of trust was found to hinder organisational KA.

6.3.2.4 Organisational knowledge dissemination (OKD) and organisational knowledge transfer (OKT)

OKT and OKD seemed to happen in a regular informal manner and experienced challenges such as negative attitudes and lack of or inadequate resources. Inadequate ICT infrastructure, particularly poor internet connectivity and lack of high tech-speed computer system, appeared to hinder OKD and OKT in the MGECW.

6.4 Conclusions on the work culture and attitudes of personnel which affect organisational KM and its practices in the MGECW, Namibia;

Organisational KM practices were impeded by lack of KM policy, mistrust among employees, lack of employee interactions and lack of an enabling KM practices environment in the MGECW. Issues of attitudes of personnel, lack of motivation or encouragement to share their OK behaviours and processes were concluded as impediments to KM practices in the

organisation. The study concludes that the underlying issue of organisational culture or hierarchical structures of the MGECW were not conducive for KM practices.

6.5 Conclusions on management support for organisational KM practices

MGECW top management was identified as not being supportive enough. Structures to support KM were not in place. There were no efforts from top management to harness OK for the benefit of the entire MGECW. Departments were not given the responsibility for the promotion and implementation of KM practices by top management.

6.6 Recommendations

One of the objectives of the study was: “To draw up recommendations on how the implementation of organisational KM could be enhanced in the MGECW, Namibia”. Findings of this study recommends that the MGECW to adopt formal organisational KM practices. The researcher recommends a framework to improve organisational KM practices in the MGECW. The proposed framework, aimed at improving organisational KM in the MGECW applies the Nonaka and Takeuchi SECI Model of 1995. The SECI model emphasises the importance of organisational knowledge creation through the interaction of tacit and explicit OK. Organisational KM barriers identified are individual employee, organisational, management and leadership commitment and poor ICT infrastructure. Barriers identified by this study and possible solutions are presented in Figure 6.1 below:

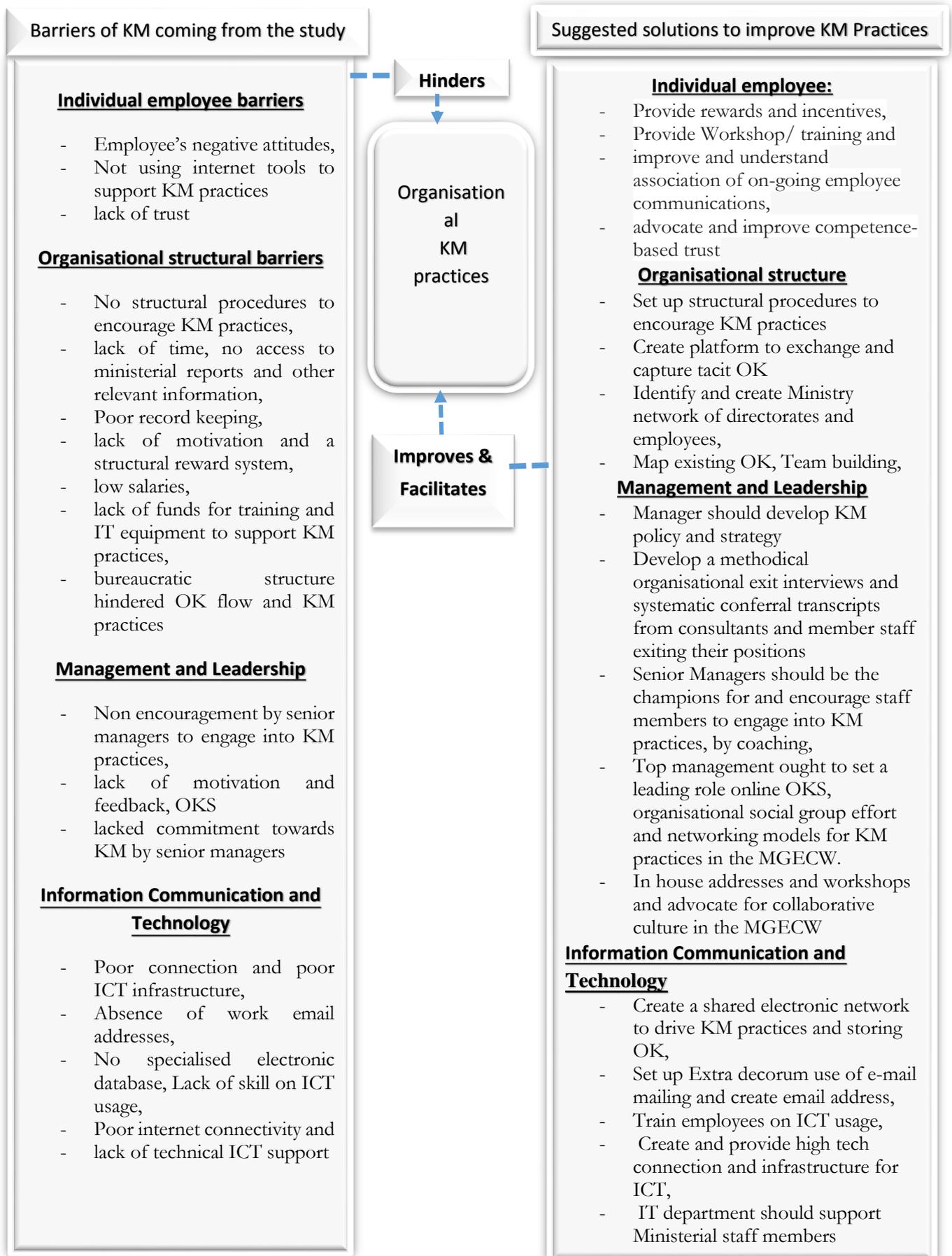


Figure 6.1 Barriers identified by the study and possible solutions to improve KM practices in the MGECW

The framework considers the development of organisational KM policy paving the way for developing organisational KM strategies for the MGECW. The aim for the framework ought to increase the understanding and the benefits of organisational KM in the MGECW. The framework is aimed at capitalising on employee intellects or organisational knowledge-based possessions within the Ministry for the provision of quality service. The framework considers leadership and management as core for organisational KM in the Ministry in embarking on organisational KM and developing a policy and a strategy. Furthermore, the Ministry shall identify and categorise individual employees' OK, at the same time setting up and establishing organisational structures that improve and permit organisational KM practices while using ICT infrastructure for efficient OK sharing, transfer, dissemination, capture and acquisition. Figure 6.1 is explained in section 6.4.1-6.4.6 below

6.4.1 Considering that top management are the core pillar in developing Ministerial policies and plans, It is important for top management of the MGECW to have an understanding and benefits of organisational KM and to drive organisational KM based on the policy subsequent to developing a organisational KM strategy to act as a guideline to effect organisational KM. A KM strategy is multi-faceted; thus there is a need to understand that the effectiveness of KM practices in the MGECW encompasses broad cultural, leadership, ICT and organisational issues to operationalise it efficiently and effectively in the Ministry:

6.4.1.1 Top management should champion and build robust partnerships among directorates aimed at achieving positive outcomes for organisational KM policy and strategy,

6.4.1.2 Top management ought to effect organisational KM policy through continuous sustenance with other senior managers; as their support is critical and a must for harmonious organisational KM in the MGECW

- 6.4.1.3 Increase awareness and understanding of organisational KM concepts particular the importance of sharing tacit organisational knowledge amongst senior, middle managers and employees in the MGECW
- 6.4.2 To understand OK and organisational KM within the MGECW, there is a need to conduct OK audit to identify OK gaps and opportunities in place. Liebowitz, Rubenstein-Montano, McCaw, Buchwalter, Browning and Rebeck (2000, p. 3) emphasises that “OK audit access potential stores of OK in the MGECW, it is also a first part of any organisational KM strategy which helps to discover what OK is possessed by the Ministry and effective method of storage and disseminate OK.”
- 6.4.3 The MGECW ought to understand that it is important for top management and employees to change their attitude or the mind-set towards organisational KM in the MGECW. Top management should offer full support to all the directorates in relation to organisational KM practices by establishing platforms which encourage OK sharing culture to certify applicability of OK when it is transmitted proficiently to where it is needed,
- 6.4.4 The MGECW needs to seriously consider improving ICT infrastructure and make it a prerequisite for organisational KM practices, technologies and methods such as intranet, databanks, brainstorming sessions, PowerPoint presentations and storytelling and internet portals should be adopted to facilitate organisational knowledge dissemination or sharing of experiences (organisational KM practices). ICT plays a pivotal role in application of organisational KM practices, because OK will be more easily accessible and available amongst employees at regional level looking at geographical split offices. The following sub-recommendation will drive ICT in the MGECW:
- 6.4.4.1 Ascertain important spaces using ICT where organisational sharing of knowledge such as community of practices enhance organisational KM practices effectiveness;

- 6.4.4.2 Develop the ICT systems required to enhance and enable organisational KM practices and information.
- 6.4.4.3 The Ministry ought to make sure that quality and ease of access of Internet connections, and encourage technology use for the purpose of leveraging OK. ICT will facilitate collaboration between head office and regional office which are geographically dispersed across Namibia. This facilitates organisational KM practices activities over the systematisation of OK striving for abreast interactive.
- 6.4.5 The MGECW ought to cultivate a robust understanding of the importance of OK holders for organisational KM to effect a structural technique to motivate organisational KM practices among employees through reward and incentive mechanisms.
- 6.4.6 The introduction of OK responsive repository is imperative. OK should be collected, codified and stored using ICT for future retrieval and use in the MGECW.

Figure 6.2 below shows the steps to follow to address the barriers identified. It emphasises the collaboration for organisational KM practices in the MGECW.

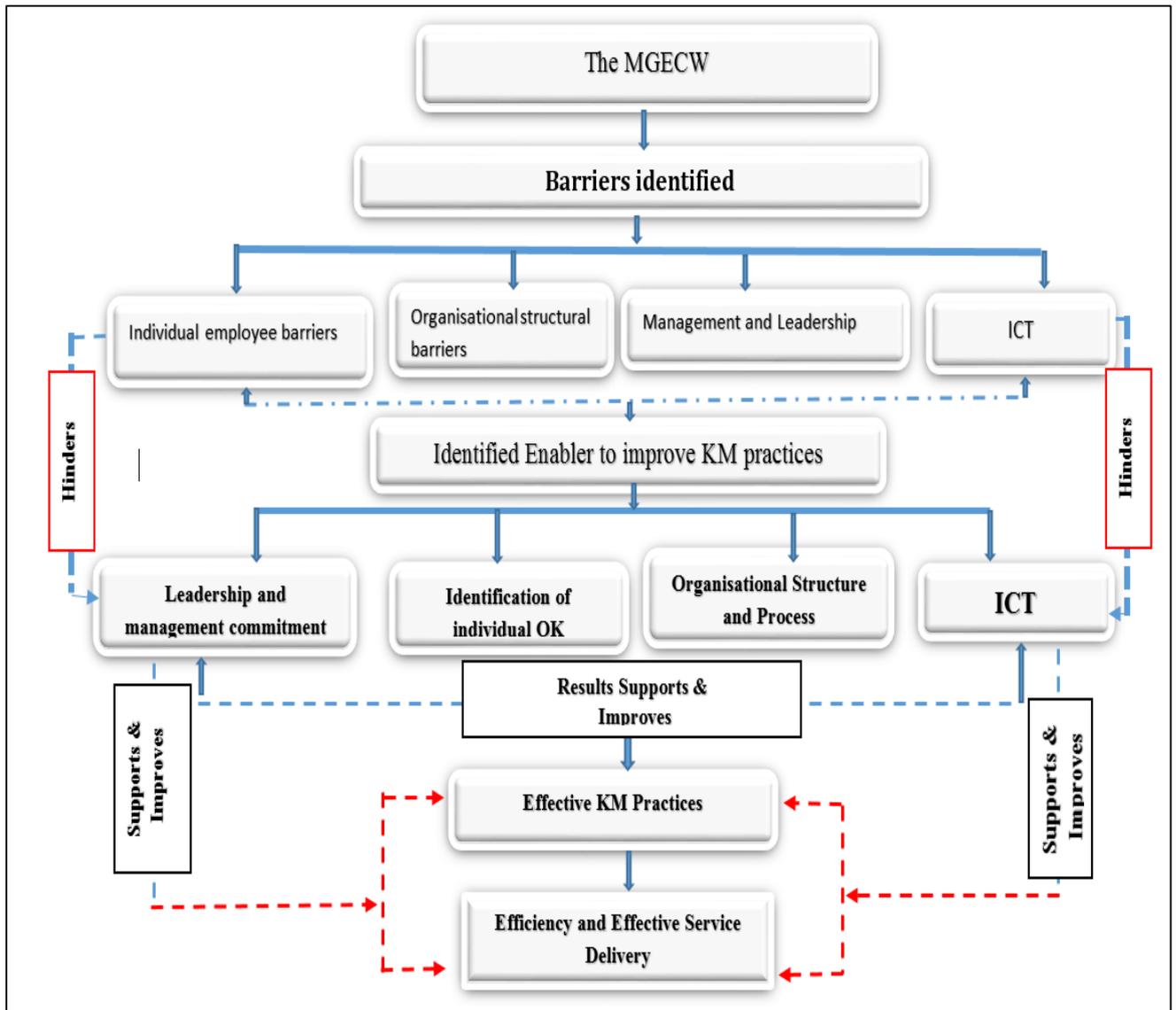


Figure 6.2 The MGECW proposed organisational KM practices framework

The study was a case study of a single Ministry, thus it serves as a starting point to try to understand organisational KM practices in Namibia's public service. Thus, the framework rests on developing organisational KM strategies which embrace and recognise the guidelines on managing organisational KM undertakings in the MGECW. These strategies will go a long way towards creating a positive organisational work culture for KM in the MGECW. It should be understood that there is no start and no end to these four enablers of organisational KM practices; they happen in circular and reverse manner as explained in chapter two. Figure 6.2 is explained in sections 6.5.1-6.5.4 below.

6.6.1 Leadership and Management Commitment

Senior manager's leadership and commitment will be of great importance to drive organisational KM and KM practices in the MGECW in a particular setting up organisational KM policy consequent to developing organisational KM strategy. The phase not only looks at identifying and encouraging employees to give their views on certain KM practices inventiveness which will serve possible employees understanding of take ownership of KM practice, but also generates notable momentum of a practical innovation making the MGECW an open organisation using organisational KM. Under this phase, top management establish and provide structural time for the networking of employees to champion organisational KS and communicate the importance of organisational KM and KM practices to the Ministry in order to formulate the MGECW's organisational KM priorities going forward.

6.6.2 Organisational Structural Knowledge

The MGECW and its top management and employees ought to create robust trust systems, through coaching and organisational rituals. Perceptible signs of advocated positive values towards organisational KM practices in the MGECW. Thus, fostering trust and regular contacts within the Ministry and OK reservoir that OK is used for benefits of the MGECW makes employees to perceive ownership of the process. It should be understood that employees would refuse to engage in organisational KM practices in particular organisational KS progression for fear of losing that power due lack of reward, thus the Ministry ought to introduce structure rewards, formalisation, centralisation, and integration of work responsibilities into KM strategy and do away with bureaucratic tradition for betterment of organisational KM practices. It is significant for top management to encourage and motivate their employees to transfer their tacit OK for the benefits of the MGECW, for its classification, storage, processing and dispensation for MGECW, although this process takes time to effect and for employees to understand and buy into the process. This will combine stimulating and mutable employees

‘attitudes of organisational KS, and the MGECW structural rewards for organisational KS will signal senior management’s pledge to support the effective sharing of tacit OK within the organisation.

6.6.3 Organisational Structure/process

This phase comes after organisational KM policy and strategy have been developed, thus the phase encourages active participation, developing incentive and rewards policy and system, which require adequate support from top management, and positive and abreast organisational structure which respond to organisational KM and KM practices.

6.6.4 Information Communication and Technology

This phase looks at the adoption and implementation of organisational KM and the resource provision plan for ICT in the MGECW. During this phase, a model system of organisational KM and ICT systems is developed and the testing of the feasibility of the ICT system for organisational KM structural design within the MGECW is also done. Training should be provided, and the MGECW should create an electronic database with access rights for employees.

6.7 Areas for further research

In establishing a strategy for organisational KM practices, the support of the whole Namibia Public Service is important to make KM practices strategy a success. Thus, a recommendation is made to conduct a comparative study on the role of KM practices in the Public Service from other Ministries considering the nature of the public service’s organisational culture.

6.8. Implications for practice

The proposed organisational KM framework is designed to improve organisational KM practices for the MGECW and can be a useful framework for future organisational KM studies or KM audits.

6.9 Final Conclusion

This study has achieved its aim of investigating organisational KM practices in the MGECW, Namibia. It has shown the understanding of OK and KM from a middle and senior manager's perspective. The study demonstrated barriers and enablers to organisational KM in the MGECW, Namibia are related to workplace culture and negative attitudes of personnel towards organisational KM and how management supports organisational KM practices; and draw up framework and recommendations on how the implementation of organisational KM could be enhanced in the MGECW, Namibia.

Analyses of data collected from middle and senior managers at Head Office and regional offices of the MGECW around the country do not permit generalisation and do not reflect the total representation of all public service employees since the MGECW forms part of the Public Service of Namibia. Thus, results drawn from this study cannot be generalised outside the MGECW, Namibia, but can be replicated to other Ministries. Maxwell and Patton (as cited in Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005) states that a small sample size does not allow for the generalisability of results due to that participants are chosen based on information rich.

This case study employed a mixed methods approach using survey questionnaire and interviews as data collection methods. The study established that most respondents had an understanding of OK and KM as the literature showed in Chapter Five. However the MGECW did not embrace organisational KM in their organisational operations. The study found that a substantial proportion of middle management and senior manager agreed that KS improves learning

Challenges were discovered in relation to organisational KM practices. These include a lack of motivation and structural reward system; a lack of commitment towards organisational KS; lack of time; negative attitudes; lack of or poor of ICT infrastructures and organisational

culture. The study also found that respondents did not capture OK, generally they miss out on OK from its employees who leave the organisation. The MGECW does not keep records in electronic form, and hard copies, local disk or manual files and that it does not have a specialised database. There was a general agreement from all respondents that top management has to show total commitment towards organisational KM for it to succeed in the MGECW. Study provides recommendations on how to improve organisational KM practices in the MGECW, Namibia including a framework for organisational KM.

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Appendices

Appendix A: letter of introduction and approval



P.O. Box 99522
Windhoek
Namibia

17 June 2013

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH ON KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (KM) PRACTICES IN THE MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD WELFARE IN NAMIBIA

We wish to introduce Mr Mitchell Mubuyaeta, a Masters student conducting research on the knowledge management (KM) practices in the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare in Namibia. The research will involve interviewing some members of staff and requesting others to complete a questionnaire.

Although the study is in fulfilment of the requirements of an MA in Information Science at the University of Namibia, there is no doubt that the findings of the study will go a long way towards enhancing the practice of knowledge management in your Ministry.

We therefore seek your assistance with this study in one form or other but most importantly, by taking part in the study as a respondent.

We can assure you that as part of the University's ethical requirements, all information will be confidentially treated.

If you need further clarification please contact the undersigned, who is the student's main supervisor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully

Dr C T. Nengomasha
Senior Lecturer and Student's Research Supervisor, Dept. of Information and Communication Studies
Tel: 2063641, Fax 2063806, cell 0812787617, e-mail cnengomasha@unam.na

Appendix B: Internal memo/letter of request from the permanent secretary



MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD WELFARE

INTERNAL MEMO

To : Directors
Deputy Directors
Head of Divisions

From : 
Mr. Eyastus I. Negonga
Permanent Secretary

Date : 25 July 2013

RE: REQUEST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH ON KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (KM) PRACTICES IN THE MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILD WELFARE

Mr. Mitchell Mubuyaeta employed by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare as Gender Liaison Officer based in Erongo region, is currently doing his Masters in Information Science with the University of Namibia. His research thesis entails exploring the extent of Knowledge Management (KM) in the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) in Namibia, through an investigation of KM practices. One of the activities of his research involves interviewing managers (Directors, Deputies and Chiefs) within the Ministry.

It is against this background that Mr. Mubuyaeta is seeking our corporation during 13th of August and 13th September 2013, when he will be conducting interviews which are expected not to last longer than 30 minutes of your time, for that reason your participation will be highly appreciated in this regard.

I thank you.

Appendix C: Informed consent form

Informed Consent Form for Interviews

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study conducted by Mitchell Mubuyaeta, which will take place from July 1 to August 30th 2013. This form details the purpose of the study and seeks your consent as a research participant.

The objective of the study:

The study is to explore the extent of Knowledge Management (KM) in the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) in Namibia, through an investigation of KM practices.

Participant’s Understandings:

- I agree to one-on-one interview,
- I agree to participate in this study that I understand will be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters Degree in Information Science at the University of Namibia,
- I agree for our discussion or the interview to be audio taped and if I feel uncomfortable with being audio taped I may ask for it to be turned off at any time.
- My participation in this study is voluntary and I fully understand that there will be no remuneration or reward whatsoever that will be paid for my participation.
- I can withdraw from or discontinue my participation at any time without repercussions and all information provided by me will not be part of the study in any form in the final report.
- I understand that during the discussions I may be uncomfortable with some questions and I have the right not to answer such questions.
- I fully understand that the researcher will not identify me by my name in any reports and that my privacy as a research participant in this study will remain secure.
- I have read and understand the content; thus, I consent voluntarily and agree to participate in this study and that there are no risks associated with participating.
- I acknowledge that I have been given a copy of this consent form. And If I have any question or concerns regarding the study, I will contact the researcher or Researcher’s Supervisor/s.

By signing this consent form I certify that I, agree to the terms of this agreement.

Research Participant’s Signature..... **Date**.....

Researcher’s Signature **Date**.....

Appendix D: Informed consent form

Informed Consent Form for Survey Participants

I hereby volunteer to partake in this study conducted by Mitchell Mubuyaeta from the University of Namibia. I fully understand that the study is designed to gather information on Knowledge Management (KM) practices in the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare in Namibia. The study will take place from June 24th - July 1-30th 2013.

Participant's Understandings:

- I agree to participant in this study that I understand will be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Masters Degree in Information Science at the University of Namibia,
- My participation in this study is voluntarily. I fully understand that there will be no remuneration or reward whatsoever that will be paid for my participation. I can withdraw from or discontinue my participation at any time without repercussions and all information provided by me will not be part of the study in any form in the final report.
- I understand that when completing the questionnaire completion I may be uncomfortable with some questions and I have the right to skip or decline to answer such questions.
- I fully understand that the researcher will not identify me by my name in any reports that my privacy as a research participant in this study is guaranteed.
- I have read and understand the content; thus, I consent voluntarily and agree to participant in this study and that there are no risks associated with participating.
- If I have any question or concerns regarding the study, I will contact the researcher or Researcher's Supervisor/s.

By signing this consent form I certify that I agree to the terms of this agreement.

Research Participant's Signature..... **Date**.....

Researcher's Signature **Date**.....

Prof C. T Nengomasha – Main Supervisor

Tel: 061 206 3641

Dr C. M Beukes-Amiss- Co-Supervisor

Tel: 061 206 3001

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Appendix E: Interview guide

Interview Guide for Senior Managers

Thank you for your interest in this study. You are invited to participate in the study on Knowledge Management (KM) practices in the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW) in Namibia. The study uses interviews to collect primary data from management and should last for less than 40 minutes. I would like to seek your permission to use a tape recorder during the interview.

The study is conducted in partial fulfilment of a Master's Degree in Information Science of the University of Namibia. If you agree to be part of this study, please fill in the consent form as a part of ethical requirement of this study.

Background questions

What is your position in the MGECW?
.....

Briefly what is organisational knowledge?
.....

Have you heard of the term "Knowledge Management" (KM)? *Briefly explain.*
.....

Does your organization adopt or/and apply KM?
.....

Does the MGECW recognise knowledge as a part of the Ministry's asset base?
.....

Does the ministry supports KM practices? *Briefly explain*
.....

What do your employees rely on in solving or embarking project/s? *Probing – the use of Tacit and explicitly knowledge*
.....
.....

1. Knowledge Sharing/ Exchange, transfer

1.1 What are the general communication channels within the organization?

1.2 Can you please explain how employees communicate within and with regional staffs? *Explain.*

1.3 Briefly explain how knowledge is spread throughout the Ministry?

1.4 Please indicate how much resource/s is dedicated for training purposes.

1.5 What do you think the Ministry can do in order to promote the dissemination or transfer of knowledge internally?

2. Management support to Knowledge Management

2.1 From your experience, how would you describe the current level of collaboration of division within your directorate in terms of knowledge management practices?

2.2 How do you support directorate employees on Knowledge Management practices?

Probing questions

How is the relationship between Head Quarters and Regional Office staffs?

What is your role as a manager in supporting KM in your directorate?

What are the major advantages that support the use of KM practices in your organisation?

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.3 As a Manager how would you create social enabling environments that facilitate the process of conversation and sharing of knowledge with your employees?(*Please Explain*)

2.4 What method/s or mechanisms are in place to support and encourage knowledge sharing, transfer and capture in your organisation?

2.5 What are your views towards teamwork and community of practice in your organisation?

2.6 Briefly describe the reward process within your directorate and ministry in general.

2.7 Is there any systematic process for gathering, organizing, exploiting and protecting key knowledge assets MGECW?

2.8 Please, tell me more about your relationship with your subordinates at HQ and Regional Office in relations to Knowledge Sharing, Knowledge Acquisition, Knowledge Dissemination, Knowledge Transfer and Knowledge Capture in the MGECW.

2.9 How do you gain commitment of senior executives to support a learning environment in MGECW?

2.10 Are the MGECW's employees actively aware of the importance of proactively managing knowledge assets?

2.11 How would you foster an environment where employees have a trust that their knowledge is valued in your Department

2.12 Among knowledge management practices i.e. creation, dissemination, sharing, acquisition and transfer, where do you see problems and in which area is your department particularly strong at? Please explain

2.13 How do you see KM practice, would it affect your employee/s performance?
Probing: How do you see the adoption of KM would it improve employees' performance i.e. enhancing capacity and skills)

2.14 How do you feel about the commitment conveyed by the ministry's leadership towards knowledge sharing, dissemination, capture, acquisition and transfer?

3. Knowledge Documentation/ Capture, Acquisition

3.1 How do you encourage employees to capture and document knowledge internally?

.....
.....
.....
.....

3.2 Briefly explain the process of searching for a knowledge document/s in the ministry.

3.3 Briefly give examples on how using knowledge documentation will help to better understand in MGECW

3.4 Do you have any documented best practices for the core skills in your department?

4. Knowledge Management Challenges and Enablers

4.1 What are the factors that enable or hamper knowledge management practices within your directorate and the ministry in general?

Probing: - People, Technology, Leadership and Organisational Culture

4.2 Briefly explain if the use of technology will benefit your organisation in KM practices?

4.3 Do you think the MGECW's employees are skilled enough to use technology?

4.4 Are there any guidelines and standards in place, in order to manage existing knowledge?

Probing:

Support to knowledge distribution

Consideration of practical work teams and its setup

4.5 In your view, what are barriers of knowledge creation, sharing and dissemination in the MGECW

Probing

How do you or the organisation overcome these barriers?

And how do you support them to overcome these barriers?

4.6 Do you find it easy when engaging your subordinates in teambuilding

4.7 What do you think of this statement: “everyone in the MGECW has the responsibility to contribute towards a better knowledge management practices for better learning and efficient service delivery”

.....

4.8 What are some of the advices will give to other line ministries regarding Knowledge Management practices?

Thank you very much for your participation!!!

Appendix F: Questionnaire

Middle management respondents Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to collect primary data on knowledge management practices from middle level employees of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare (MGECW).

The study is conducted in partial fulfilment of a Master's Degree in Information science of the University of Namibia.

For further question (s) on the study contact the following people:

1. **Mitchell Mubuyaeta: Researcher**
Email: nsala.meshach@gmail.com
2. **Dr CT Nengomasha: Main Supervisor**
Email: cnengomasha@unam.na
Tel: +264 61 206 3641
3. **Dr C M. Beukes-Amiss Co-Supervisor**
Tel: +264 61 206 3001
Email: cmbeukes@unam.na

Instructions for the questionnaire

Please answer all questions. Do not indicate your name as all the responses are private and confidential:

This questionnaire is allocated into two parts, precisely in sections as follows:

1. Section A: comprises of demographics questions
2. Section B: comprises of question on:
 - 2.1 Knowledge Sharing
 - 3.1 Knowledge Capture
 - 4.1 Knowledge Dissemination,
 - 5.1 Knowledge Acquisition, and
 - 6.1 Knowledge Transfer;
 - 7.1 Barriers and enablers to KM.

**Section A:
Demographic Questions:**

Please choose by ticking ✓ Yes or No and add comments where indicated.

1. Please indicate your Age group

18-20 Yrs	
21-25 Yrs	
26-30 Yrs	
31-35 Yrs	
36-40 Yrs	
41-45 Yrs	
50 and Above	

2. Please tick ✓ your highest qualification)

Standard 10 or Grade 12 certificate	
Diploma	
B. A Degree	
B. A Degree Hons	
Master's Degree	
PhD	
Other/s	

3. How long have you worked for the MGECW?

0-12Months	
1-3 years	
4- 5 years	
5-10 years	
10-15 years	
Others	

4. Please tick ✓ the Directorate you work for and indicate the region your office is located.

		Region
General Service Administration		
Child Welfare		
Gender Equality		
Community Development		
Others.....		

Section B

2. Knowledge Sharing (KS)

KS entails the process involving the contribution of knowledge by an organisation or its people, and the collection, assimilation and application of knowledge by an organisation or its people

Please choose by ticking Yes or No and add comments where indicated.		Yes	No
<p>2.1 I am aware that knowledge sharing improves my learning ability.</p> <p>If you answered yes in question 2.1, please explain.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>			
<p>2.2 In the MGECW we have a general willingness to share knowledge or lessons learned among ourselves.</p> <p>If you answered YES or NO in question 2.2, Please explain?</p> <p>.....</p>			
<p>2.3 In our organisation, we are encouraged to share good and bad experiences of our undertakings with colleagues and with other directorates including regional staffs.</p> <p>If you answered Yes explain how.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>If you answered NO explain why.</p> <p>.....</p>			
<p>2.4 I am currently using internet tools to support sharing of knowledge with my co-workers.</p> <p>If you answered YES or NO please explain and mention tools and how you use them.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>			
<p>2.5 In our organisation we're encouraged to work in groups and have social networks which facilitate sharing of knowledge within and around directorates.</p>			
<p>2.6 I always feel comfortable when engaging in knowledge sharing when it is beneficial to me and my work.</p>			
<p>2.7 I always feel reluctant to share my experience or knowledge with my colleagues.</p> <p>Please explain your answer in question 2.7.....</p> <p>.....</p>			

3. **Knowledge Capture (KC)**

KC is a process by which the expert's thoughts and experiences are captured for referencing in the organisation for future use.

Please choose by ticking Yes or No and add comments where indicated.					Yes	NO
3.1 In our organisation, knowledge is easily captured from customers and NGOs through suggestion box, meetings and seminars.						
3.2 Interaction is routinely done within and with other directorates including NGOs and other stakeholders to know what they want and we keep records.						
3.3 Our organisation values regional staff insights and solicit ideas to include in planning and decision making process.						
3.4 We keep records of all information shared through electronic, memory stick/s, hard copies, local disk and manual file/s.						
If you answered Yes , please indicate which tool you mostly use						
(a) Memory stick		(b) Hard Copies		(c) Local Disk		(d) Other
3.5 We have a database for specialised field of experts of the MGECCW, where records are kept.						
If you answered Yes, please indicate which tool is mostly used						
(a) Audio		(b) Video		(c) Computer files		(d) Notes
					(e) Other	
3.6 Experts are routinely invited by MGECCW in different fields of services of the organisation to conduct seminars where records are kept for future reference and organisational use						
3.7 MGECCW has a system that makes sure that knowledge is harnessed from current workers so that knowledge is retained within the Ministry.						
If you answered YES in question 3.7, Please explain how knowledge is harnessed?						
.....						
.....						
3.8 Our organisation captures and uses knowledge through research done by other research institutions, NGOs and stakeholders for planning purposes.						
3.9 We regularly work and consult with NGOs and other stakeholders and take part in their undertaking so that we can capture new knowledge.						

4. Knowledge dissemination (KD)

KD the process of dispensing knowledge so that it reaches the intended recipients in the MGECW

Please choose by ticking Yes or No and add comments where indicated.						Yes	No
4.1 I have internet access in my office which allows me to disseminate and share information through emails with all colleagues and stakeholders.							
4.2 Frequently used channels of communication in our organisation is:							
(a) Face to face	(b) Phone	(c) Fax	(d) Conferences or workshops	(e) None of the mentioned			
4.3 Have not seen any of the Ministry's publications?							
4.4 In our organisation, internet is mostly used tool as a medium of communication in dispensing knowledge.							
4.5 In the MGECW, knowledge is made available to fellow colleagues within considerable time through trainings, newsletters, emails and reports.							
4.6 Our organisation mostly uses emails than hard copies in dispensing knowledge to colleagues.							
4.7 Management (directors, deputies and chiefs) always share their knowledge during workshops and send electronic documents or hard copies to regional and head office staffs.							
4.8 My colleagues are so assisting during work related tasks.							
4.9 In our organisation knowledge dissemination is highly considered as an important act among staffs. Please motivate your answer							
4.10 In my view knowledge dissemination important. Please explain answer.....							
4.11 I find myself strongly fit into a group which disseminate knowledge. Please explain your answer							
4.12 I find it more comfortable that my colleagues communicate online compared to face to face interaction.							

5. Knowledge Acquisition (KA)

KA is a process of inducing, gathering, analysing and certifying of knowledge for organisational use.

Please choose by ticking Yes or No and add comments where indicated.		Yes	No
5.1 I keep myself updated with issues pertaining to the Ministry.			
Please explain your answer			
5.2 I specifically prepare myself for any undertakings i.e. workshops, meetings, seminars and conferences by reading previous reports.			
Please explain your answer			
5.3 I contact and consult with my fellow staff for assistance and guidance on work activities that I have no previous experience or knowledge on.			
5.4 I have noticed that the MGECW acquires enough information for the planning of its activities.			
5.5 I have access to the ministerial website, where I acquire new information about other departments and learn from them.			
5.6 I research for documents pertaining to knowledge related to my work at the resource centre.			
5.7 I regard interpersonal trust as a tool to foster the acquiring of knowledge in the MGECW by experienced and new employees as an important aspect to attain knowledge.			
5.8 In the MGECW it's much easier to locate information or who has knowledge among colleagues and from the resource centre (library), when needed.			

6. Knowledge Transfer (KT)

KT considered a process of conveying knowledge from one employee to another or from head office to the regional office, including both planned, institutionalised transfer as well as spontaneous knowledge exchange.

Please choose by ticking Yes or No and add comments where indicated.		Yes	No
6.1 In our organisation we receive newsletters or annual reports and I read them to learn the happenings of the MGECW			
6.2 I have not received any newsletter or a ministerial annual report whether electronic or hard copy.			
Please explain your answer			
6.3 Our organisation allows knowledge to be transferred among employees.			
Please explain your answer?			
6.4 The MGECW normally organises workshops and seminars for its employees to update their knowledge on issues facing the organisation.			
6.5 The MGECW's printed materials such as conference, workshop, meeting reports are available at HQ and regional offices.			
6.6 I learn easily in groups or team when discussing work related issues affecting my work and the Ministry in general.			
6.7 Many employees are simply willing to help others without expecting anything in return. That includes freely sharing what they know and what they have learned.			
6.8 In our organisation directly we work together to accomplish tasks at hand.			
6.9 Normally I learn comprehensively through face-to-face discussions.			
6.10 In our Ministry we normally do documents exchange to learn from.			
6.11 Our Directorate and the Ministry in general carve out time for experts to share knowledge			

7. Enablers and Barriers of Knowledge Management in the MGECW

KM refers to the practices by which the organization systematically generates knowledge wealth from its intellectual or knowledge-based assets to be more efficient and effective organisational work.

Please choose by ticking Yes or No and add comments where indicated.		
	Yes	No
7.1 I have a computer in my office, access to internet and a work email address		
7.2 Lack of motivation and reward system, discourages employees to create, share, and use knowledge in the organisation. Please explain your answer		
7.3 I can't remember of being acknowledged by my supervisor for job well-done on any achieved work.		
7.4 Our ICT infrastructure positively influences employees in Sharing, Acquiring, Transferring, and Create and dispense of knowledge among each other.		
7.5 Knowledge sharing, transfer, acquisition and dissemination cannot happen in our organization without ICT infrastructure.		
7.6 In the MGECW we have a high speed computer system that/which transmits knowledge fast to recipients.		
7.7 I believe that technology is the most important part to improve and advance knowledge management in the MGECW		
7.8 I think the lack of top management commitment to incorporate knowledge management practices in the MGECW brings the lack of creativity among employees.		
7.9 Ministerial managers in the MGECW always creates enabling environment for social collaboration which helps us to share, transfer, disseminate and capture precise knowledge.		
7.10 It is management responsibility to make sure that knowledge management practices in the MGECW works. Please explain your answer		
7.11 In my opinion, for knowledge management practices to happen in the MGECW it takes managers and subordinates to work together.		
7.12 In our Ministry, knowledge is transferred to respective employee/s and divisions without problems.		
7.13 I normally have a fear of losing my expertise when sharing knowledge.		
7.14 I believe that departmental collaboration contributes significantly to the MGECW success.		

7.15 In our organisation indexing and search systems offer a rapid access to stored knowledge in database and repository.		
7.16 I find that bureaucratic structure hinders the flow of knowledge, hence it should be discouraged.		
7.17 Lack of motivation and reward system is also a barrier because it discourages people to create, share, and use knowledge. Please explain your answer		

8. MGECW's management support for Knowledge Management

Please choose by ticking Yes or No and add comments where indicated.		
	Yes	No
8.1 The Ministry provides opportunities for the employees to attend local and international training in work related fields.		
8.2 MGECW encourages innovation and willingness to try new undertakings among employees.		
8.3 I am positive that the high level of trust among employees towards management positively influences knowledge management practices in MGECW.		
8.4 I am of the opinion that, with the high level of social networks among employees and managers, this positively influences knowledge management practices in the MGECW.		
8.5 It would be beneficial if the MGECW understands its employees better on what makes us share our experiences. Please explain your answer.		
8.6 I have realised that our senior staffs are fully occupied, thus they don't have time to reflect on their past work experiences and share them with us.		
8.7 Systematically creating, sharing, acquiring, transferring and dissemination of knowledge are part of the MGECW's routine.		
8.8 I am positive that management actions and support could have a great influence on swelling workers engagement and mark knowledge sharing, creation, transfer, acquisition and dissemination a culture within the MGECW.		
8.9 Top management frequently makes contribution to information technology planning for knowledge management activities in our organisation.		

Thank you for taking part in this study!

