



# Effects of Knowledge Management on Organizational Performance

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## Abstract:

The main purpose of this paper is to evaluate the impact of knowledge management (KM) on the organizational performance of Microsoft Corporation. The study will also inform global entrepreneurs regarding the importance and application of KM in workplaces. The study will discuss the modification and technological integration that are required to derive desired outcomes from KM. The research will also evaluate the contribution of KM to career development and opportunities for the employees. Modern organizations need to enhance their products and services to continue to be the first choice of customers. The KM has enabled organizations to determine the changing demands and requirements of customers. Therefore, it can be opined that the research aims to analyze the significance of KM in modern organizations, employees, and competitiveness.

**Keywords:** Knowledge management, Organizational Performance, Microsoft Corporation, Career Development

## 1. Introduction

Continuous learning and development are basic attributes of Knowledge Management (KM). The use of KM in workplaces has enhanced the competitive advantages of firms. The KM is a data-driven approach that ensures the continuous flow of information and knowledge in workplaces. As per [19], in modern global organizations, the KM is integrated into major platforms such as Human Resource Management (HRM), IT, business strategy, administration, and public policy. Knowledge management is defined as enabling organizational learning and development. In this research, the impact of KM will be studied in the context of Microsoft Corporation. Microsoft Corporation is one of the largest multinational technology companies in the globe. The company has managed to offer its customers and clients with best products or services by staying updated with current trends and updates. The KM has been an important aspect of Microsoft as it has enabled the company to provide enhanced knowledge and information to its staff. The KM has also improved the overall approaches and strategies of the company. Therefore, knowledge management can be considered effective for Microsoft Corporation. However, in-depth analysis is required to identify the KM strategies and tools and their impacts on the organization.

To sustain the increasing competition, the organizations have intended to recruit skilled employees and updated methods. However, it is not easy for organizations to replace their existing staff and methods; hence, there is a need for strategies that improves efficiencies of available resources. According to [8], knowledge management can be considered as the strategy that contributes to learning and knowledge development. The KM enables employees to stay updated as well as to embrace the new technologies. Therefore, it can be opined that KM not only improves knowledge and information but also helps employees in getting accustomed to changes quickly. However, in order to derive the best benefits from KM, it is important to remain technologically advanced and informed. As opined by [20], The KM will enable employees to share information as well as to contribute to organizational successes. Hence, it can be opined that in the current time, the KM contributes to the career development of employees as well as to the organizational achievements. However, it has been observed that some organizations have failed to implement the knowledge management system or derive benefits due to a lack of information on the required modification and changes. This research will address this problem by describing the benefits of KM and the technological integrations that are important to be considered.

The research objectives are:

- To critically identify the importance of KM in today's organizations
- To critically identify the existing KM strategies followed by Microsoft Corporation
- To critically evaluate the challenges of KM faced by Microsoft Corporation
- To critically analyze the impact of KM on the organizational performance of Microsoft Corporation

The research questions are:

1. What is the importance of KM in today's organizations?
2. What are the existing KM strategies followed by Microsoft Corporation?
3. What are the challenges of KM faced by Microsoft Corporation?
4. How does KM impact the organizational performance of Microsoft Corporation?

To develop a better understanding of knowledge management, it is important to study the relevant theories. Three effective theories are describing the implication of KM such as Ecological KM theory, Techno-centric theory, and Organizational KM theory. According to the ecological KM theory, the flow of knowledge and information is influenced by the interaction between employees and organizational culture (Knowledge Management: Theory & Strategies, 2021). This theory mainly focuses on the relationship between people, external and internal environment that influences the interaction between individuals. These factors encourage people to share knowledge and information. The techno-centric theory focuses on technologies and innovations that are required to implement and derive the best benefits from the knowledge management system (Knowledge Management: Theory & Strategies, 2021). In ensuring the proper flow of knowledge in workplaces, technical integrations are required.

As per [18], the technologies that are required for the implementation of KM are Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Decision Support systems (DSS), Knowledge Visualization, Learning Management systems (LMS), Management Information systems (MIS), and Customer Relationship System (CRS). Lastly, Organizational KM theory is most common and widely used. According to this theory, the flow of knowledge is influenced by organizational structure and culture (Knowledge Management: Theory & Strategies, 2021). For example, the KM works better in a flexible environment where the people could easily communicate and share information. The companies adopt the theories as per their requirements. Regardless of which theory the organizations consider the ultimate result will be the development of employee and organizational performances.

Knowledge is important in making right decisions and selecting effective strategies. Microsoft is a global corporation; thus, the environment in their workplaces is highly competitive. The knowledge management system will enable the employees to enhance their decision-making and problem-solving abilities. On the other hand, the findings of this study will enable leaders of Microsoft to recognize the impacts of KM and its implementation process. The organization will also be able to modify their processes and enhance the technologies that are required to get positive outcomes from knowledge management.

## **2. Literature review**

A detailed review of literature is undertaken in this section to understand the research variables considered in this study and gather extensive knowledge on the concept of knowledge management and its relationship with organizational performance. All related research, articles, and journals in this area of study are discussed to put the current research in its right context. Different typologies of scholarly studies are considered to create a diverse and quality literature review. Inferences and knowledge gained in this section will significantly help in conducting the following steps of the research efficiently and successfully.

According to [12], knowledge management is the creation, sharing, using and management of knowledge and information in the business context. Knowledge management is a multidisciplinary approach that helps organizations to address and achieve organizational targets more efficiently by making use of existing information and knowledge. In other words, knowledge management is a key enabler of organizational learning that facilitates business innovation and success. Making business information and knowledge easily accessible to employees is necessary for optimum functioning. Knowledge management aids and improves this aspect of the business through extensive data mining, operation, and management. [20] identified the five core components of knowledge management, which are culture, structure, technology, processes, and people. Knowledge management is essential for all organizations irrespective of their nature, size, and structure since it improves decision-making abilities and boosts efficiency. Employees having access to important information and overall expertise, or knowledge are capable of working smarter, making quick and informed decisions, and boosting performance standards. Hebib et al. [15] opines that the primary goal of knowledge management is to put the right information in front of the right employees at the right time. This helps in building greater competitive advantage, adopting innovation in business, and keeping pace with changing market trends.

Organizational performance refers to the actual results or outputs of an organization measured in terms of goals, objectives, and expected outcomes. Identifying, assessing, and managing the performance of an organization is vital in today's highly competitive business world. Professionals and experts in this field, therefore, focus majorly on constantly evaluating the performance of their business to assess existing strengths, weaknesses, and loopholes. According to [28], organizational performance corresponds to three areas of business outcomes, which are financial performance, shareholder return, and product market performance. Some of the common dimensions contributing to organizational performance are employee stewardship, social responsibility, customer service, and financial performance.

Existing literature in this field shows that organizational performance may be broken down into multiple categories, such as market-based performance, operational performance, and accounting or financial performance. Measuring organizational performance is essential for all types of corporations since it makes employees more accountable for their job functions, encourages workers to take more challenges and responsibilities, and aids in making efficient and effective use of resources [2, 16]. Measuring performance is therefore necessary for improving productivity in the workplace. Strategic planners and managers working in the legal, finance, and operations department all focus on organizational performance to take tactical and successful business decisions.

The concept of knowledge management emerged only in the early 1990s as a formal scientific discipline. There are three common theories of knowledge management, which are described briefly below.

### **1. Organizational KM theory**

This theory of knowledge management highlights organizational structures and the way organizations are designed hierarchically and culturally to manage different knowledge processes and information [22].

### **2. Ecological KM theory**

This theory focuses on learning communities, relationships, and people. Particular attention is laid on interactions among organizations and individuals, as well as among external and internal factors people often refer to for sharing knowledge.

### 3. Techno-centric theory

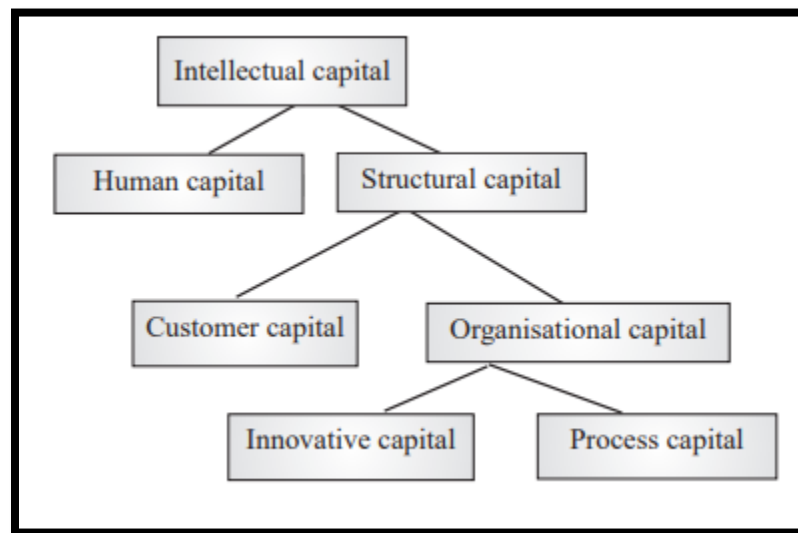
The third KM theory emphasizes on technology and the various processes for designing technology enablers that aid in facilitating the flow and storage of both information and knowledge [22].

Depending on the organizational setting, one of these three KM theories is deployed to ensure employees indulge in constant knowledge sharing. Nevertheless, the impact of knowledge management on business processes, people, and technology remains similar in all cases.

Apart from these basic theories, three essential KM models deserve mention here. These models are described briefly below.

- Intellectual capital

Proposed by Leif Edvinsson, this model postulates that knowledge, in reality, corresponds to a body of intellectual capital that resides alongside traditional business capital or assets. This model assumes that knowledge management and intellectual capital are involved in two categories of structural/organizational capital and human capital, which may be segregated into the process, customer, growth and human elements [6]. The below diagram illustrated the intellectual capital model of KM.



**Figure 1: Intellectual capital model**

(Source: [6])

- SECI, ba and knowledge asset model

This KM model considers knowledge management as a process of knowledge creation and offers a conceptual representation of this concept. Originally, this model was developed as the theory of dynamic organizational knowledge creation [15]. This model consists of three crucial parts, which are the process of knowledge creation and conversion (SECI), the context that enables and improves knowledge creation and conversation (ba), and resource development and use (knowledge asset).

- Leavitt's Diamond organizational model

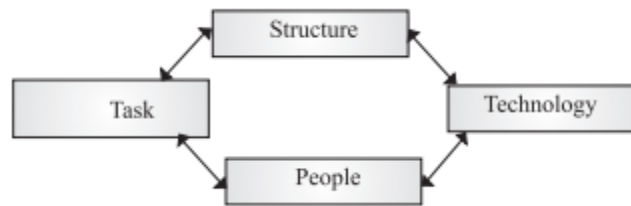
This is most basic model of KM that is adopted in the business context to educate employees about this concept and its importance. Proposed by Leavitt, this model states that organizations are complex systems consisting of four

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critical variables, which are humans, technology, structure, and task [20]. These variables constantly interact with each other to initiate necessary business changes.



**Figure 2: Leavitt's Diamond Organizational Model**

(Source: [20])

Academics and scholars in the business field undertook extensive studies and found that there is no single model of organizational performance that is suitable for all kinds of organizations. Accordingly, they found four major approaches or models of organizational performance, which are described briefly below.

### **1. Goal approach**

This approach is the most extensively used model of organizational performance that emphasizes on business outputs to assess crucial operating objectives like innovation, profit, and product quality [26]. This model follows two sets of assumptions. The first set of assumptions is that general agreement must be reached on organizational goals, and that all employees must feel committed to these goals. The second set of assumption is that number of goals is limited, and that indispensable resources are required to meet these goals. The goal approach proves beneficial only if these assumptions or conditions are met.

### **2. System resource approach**

The second approach or model of organizational performance focuses on resource inputs. This model addresses organizational performance by considering the ability of a company to accrue required resources from the immediate external environment [28]. However, this model applies only when a definite relationship exists between resources acquired by a firm and the goods and services it offers to customers. This model encourages managers to view the organization as a part of a larger whole.

### **3. Strategic constituency approach**

This model or approach of organizational performance deals with the impact of the organization on all major stakeholder groups and their interests [26]. Performance in this context corresponds to the satisfaction of all essential constituencies of business.

### **4. Internal process approach**

The fourth approach or model highlights on the transformation process to evaluate the extent to which resources are used to produce goods and services. High performance in this context indicates that the organization is internally healthy and utilizes efficient internal procedures and processes.

## **2.1 Previous Studies**

### **2.1.1 Theme 1: Common Knowledge Management Strategies**

According to [31], knowledge management means the discipline of enabling teams, individuals, and entire business organizations to develop, share, and apply the knowledge that can help in attaining the organizational objectives systematically and collectively. The main knowledge management strategies followed by the business organizations are an investment in organization structure, culture, and knowledge strategies. The firms also adopt the policy of

managing core competencies and external networks. Verma et al. [31] also stated that it is important to provide the targeted users with rewards and incentives to allow knowledge-related actions. The first step will be an organization and management of change programs to align the values and culture of the business to knowledge management. The means of encouraging or motivating the employees involve interacting with them, implementing the standard objectives, and monitoring and recording the progress against organizational objectives. As opined by [17], the traditional knowledge management strategies were driven by the principle of situational approach. However, the modern knowledge management strategy mainly focuses on network development. A basic way for the knowledge to be distributed is through direct communication and contact among people. Communicating with other people who can help and can attain an advantage from knowledge sharing is one of the effective ways to leverage individual knowledge. Thus, communicating across the organizational silos must be considered a good way to exchange ideas among the team members who might be unaware of each other. As stated by [21], two main strategies focus on knowledge management. The first strategy is Information and Communication Technology (ICT) related that serves to control and manage knowledge across a business organization with the help of information and communication technology. The second knowledge management strategy is based on interpersonal relationships. By the help of this strategy, knowledge can be managed with tools focusing on people and their communication rather than on ICT.

### **2.1.2 Theme 2: Relationship between Knowledge Management and Organizational Performance**

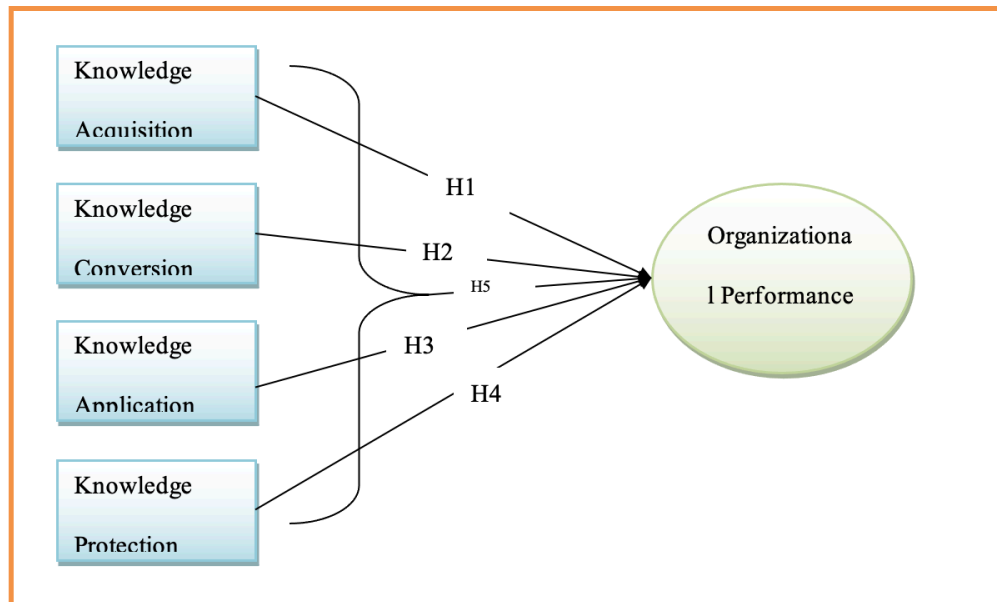
According to [3], there is a positive impact of knowledge application, knowledge acquisition, knowledge protection, and knowledge conversion on organizational performance. Knowledge transfer, creation, and application are important to ensure the survival of a business organization. The absence of knowledge management may cause organizational failure in terms of higher employee turnover, particularly in case of the service industry where the deliverable is inseparable and customized solution is required in response to an issue. Knowledge attained by the organizational employees and used in their routine business activities leads to creativity those results in service or product innovation. As opined by [1], knowledge creation takes place via participation, market or new knowledge that are important to upgrade and reactivate knowledge. Business organizations should have an adequate prior market and technological knowledge as it is important to improve organizational performance. Thus, learning can impact how much knowledge should be used or applied in the exploitative chances and how much knowledge can be applied to the new services and products. Such view enabled the authors to conclude that learning has a huge effect on the knowledge creation process and organizational performance. Demir *et al.* [10] also stated that there is a positive relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance. Knowledge management plays a key role in improving organizational performance as it increases the effectiveness of organizational decision-making. In ensuring that all the workers have sufficient access to the overall expertise held within the workplace, a smarter and more efficient workforce is developed, and they are more capable to make informed and quick decisions that can benefit the business organizations. As per the opinion of [29], the significance of knowledge management is improving each year in the context of improved organizational performance. Business organizations implement the knowledge management system for different reasons. An acquisition or merger can spur the requirement to codify knowledge and motivate the team members to share their idea and expertise. The imminent retirement of experienced and key workers can demonstrate the importance to capture their idea and knowledge. Knowledge management works as an enabler of improved organizational performance by ensuring better communication and collaboration among the organizational people, process view of the business, and motivation of the organizational people. [19] stated that effect knowledge management improves organizational performance by decreasing operational cost and improving productivity. Effective knowledge management enables organizations to spend less time in recreating the existing knowledge. When the data and information is accurate and easy to access, it decreases the need for employees to interrupt each other with chats and emails. Thus, the support teams and employees spend minimum time in answering the repetitive queries and they get more time to focus on more profitable and important works. Thus, knowledge management ensures improved productivity that in turn results in improved organizational performance.

### **2.1.3 Theme 3: Common Challenges of Knowledge Management**

As stated by [4] the main challenge of knowledge management includes the initial resistance to change in the organizational process. In addition to that, business organizations face difficulty in getting and keeping employees motivated. The employees feel comfortable with how they are used to do the organizational activities. Getting the team members encouraged to share their ideas and knowledge is a key to organizational success. An efficient way to

get the employees on same page is to implement a culture of improving, sharing, learning, and change. According to Hackman et al. [13], lack of standard work processes must be considered a key challenge of knowledge management. The significant acquisition and merger activities have transformed several organizations and the main implication is that the firms have inherited such new processes. Several organizations are now suffering from having several different processes and approaches to perform the similar tasks or activities. Thus, the lack of systematic and standard processes, along with poor awareness of future advantages and significance of knowledge management causes the requirement for a more structured and coherent approach to manage and apply different forms of knowledge within the organizations. Other key challenges of knowledge management are poorly available knowledge management systems, poor leadership support, poor awareness of knowledge management systems, and employee resistance. On the other hand, [23] shed light on the challenges of knowledge management in the cloud computing model. [23] stated that business organizations often loss control over knowledge management and they lack the understanding of knowledge management. It becomes difficult for companies to keep up with the ever-changing technology. The issues, such as poor design and organization of the internal processes, lack of structured process, and lack of sufficient technology hinder the success of knowledge management system within an organization.

Based on the review of literature, the below conceptual framework has been developed for the current research.



**Figure 3: Conceptual Framework**

**Source: (self-developed)**

The research hypotheses are listed below:

H1: Knowledge acquisition has a positive impact on organizational performance.

H2: Knowledge conversion has a positive impact on organizational performance.

H3: Knowledge application has a positive impact on organizational performance.

H4: Knowledge protection has a positive impact on organizational performance.

H5: Knowledge management has a positive impact on organizational performance.

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The practice of knowledge management can be considered a recent phenomenon in the technology industry. Limited research has been conducted in the technology sector. As per the knowledge of the researchers, there is no study conducted on the area of knowledge management when it comes to multinational technology corporations. In this context, the current research aims to study the impact of knowledge management on the organizational performance of selected American Multinational corporations, such as Microsoft. The analysis of knowledge management has become significant since it offers reference to direct the companies to improve their competitiveness and performance. This research paper offers as an assessment tool that assists the firms in assessing their knowledge management abilities and identify the possible gaps to improve organizational performance.

### **3. Research methodology**

This section defines and justifies the research trajectory utilized to gather valid and reliable data in this study. The specific research tools, techniques, approaches, and methods used are discussed along with appropriate justifications for choice. The proper selection of research philosophy is important to determine the accurate path for research. As per Ryan [24], the research philosophies are mainly of four types such as post-positivism, interpretivism, positivism, and realism. In the context of this research, the positivism philosophy is applicable. The positivism philosophy is suitable because it helps in understanding the topic through scientific principles. Therefore, in this research, the application of positivism philosophy will allow in analyzing the effects of knowledge management on the organizational performance of Microsoft Corporation through scientific explanations and principles.

In this research, the descriptive research design and deductive research approach have been chosen to carry out the research properly and ensure the reliability of findings. As mentioned by [25], the descriptive design is applicable in research where survey is necessary. It helps in describing certain characteristics of group or population. This design mainly rather focuses of 'what' questions other than addressing 'why' questions. On other hand, the deductive research approach helps the researcher to explore theories and models associated with the topic. As opined by & [32] approach has enabled research to justify the objectives and hypotheses with proper reasoning. Thus, the descriptive design and deductive approach are suitable for this research. As per [5], the validity and reliability of outcomes are determined by the data used in theses; hence, it is important to select a suitable data collection method. There are several data collection methods; however, the most popular are quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method is adopted to conduct survey and the qualitative method is adopted to conduct an interview. In this research, the quantitative data collection method has been chosen. Therefore, the data will be collected through a survey. As stated by [5], the quantitative data are more reliable at it gathered directly from the sources or individuals who are affected either positively or negatively by the issues.

As discussed by [11], the proper selection of sample size is important to ensure data relevancy. In this research, the sample size will be 50. The employees of Microsoft Corporation will be participating in the survey. There are different sampling techniques for distinct data collection methods. According to [11], in case of the quantitative method, the Simple Random Sampling Technique is suitable. The simple random sampling method has enabled the researcher to select 50 employees randomly from large employee population of Microsoft Corporation. The proper selection of research instruments is essential to derive desired results by overcoming all the shortcomings. In this research, the Likert Scale has been chosen as a suitable instrument. As opined by Chyung *et al.* [9], the Likert Scale has helped the researcher to develop questionnaires properly as well as reduced the chances of biased responses.

The proper selection of analysis method is important to evaluate the gathered data. As per [27], the statistical analysis method has gained major popularity in recent time due to its reliability and accuracy. In this research, the MS Excel has been used to carry out the statistical analysis method. The data gathered from the survey has been analyzed by descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression. These methods have also enabled the researcher to carryout in-depth analysis on the survey responses. Thus, it can be justified that the selection of descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression is suitable for this paper. As opined by [7], ethical considerations are important to enhance the validity and reliability of a thesis paper. The consideration of ethics also influences the proper involvement of participants in the research. In this research, the Data Protection Act of 1998 has been considered to protect the personal information and data of participants from leakage. The identities of participants have been hidden and the data has been kept secured in password-protected software to mitigate the threat of data breach. The

researcher has also provided equal chances to both genders to participate in the survey. The research has taken consents from employees and managers of Microsoft Corporation before conducting the survey.

The identification and evaluation of limitations are important to avoid them in future research. Firstly, the inadequate budget and time are major limitations of research. Due to limited budget, the research has not been able to access the paid websites and limited time has restricted the in-depth analysis of the issue. Secondly, due to current pandemic situation, the researcher has not been able to conduct the face-to-face survey. The online survey has affected understanding and communication between researcher and participants. Thirdly, some participants have provided biased responses. These biased responses have significant impacts on the survey findings and final research outcomes. Lastly, the ethical consideration has restricted the researcher's ability to share the data and information without consent from participants.

#### 4. Findings and analysis

Nowadays, knowledge is recognized as an essential element in a business organization. Thus, several organizations are trying to implement the knowledge management system to improve their organizational performance. The data for this research was collected using survey questionnaire depending on four independent variables (knowledge acquisition, knowledge conversion, knowledge application, and knowledge protection) and one dependent variable (organizational performance). In line with the research purpose and conceptual framework presented in the previous section, the findings and analysis section presents the results of statistical analysis for data gathered. Thus, the data analysis includes a description of the descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis used for statistically analysing the survey data.

##### 4.1 Survey findings

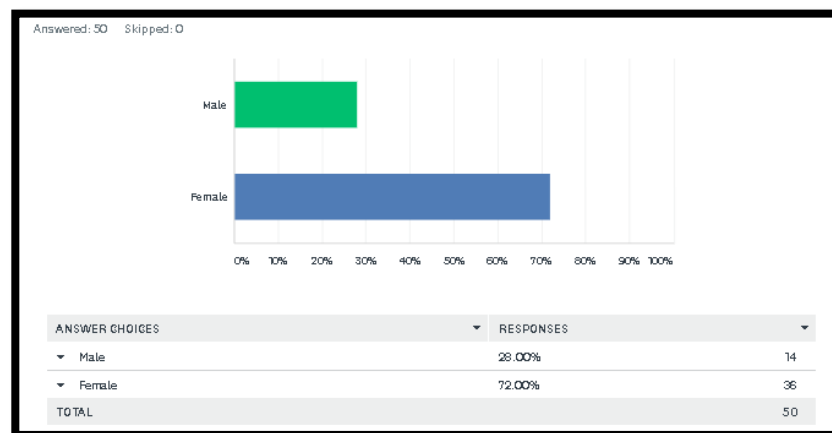


Figure 1: Survey Responses: Q1. What is your gender?

**Analysis:** Findings reveal that a maximum number of employees participating in this study were females, and only 14 out of 50 were males. Microsoft Corporation does not discriminate candidates based on gender, rather hires people with advanced skill sets, knowledge, and experience. The participation of both male and female employees helped in improving the quality of research data.

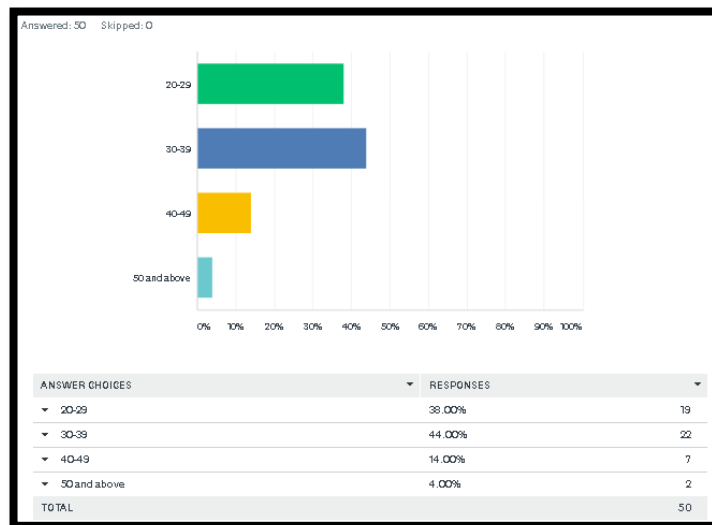


Figure 2: Survey Responses: Q2. What is your age?

**Analysis:** Employees from varying age groups took part in the survey, starting from young candidates belonging to the age group 20-29 years to senior and experienced employees aged 50 years and above. Considering a wide age spectrum also improved the credibility of this research.

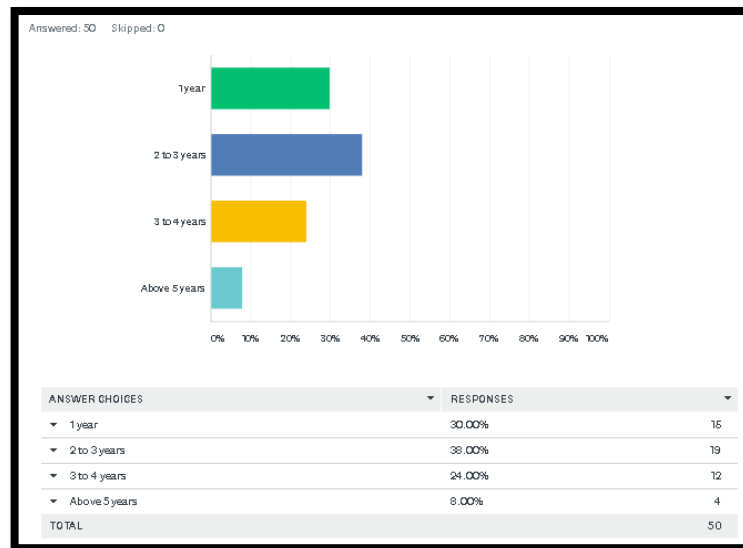
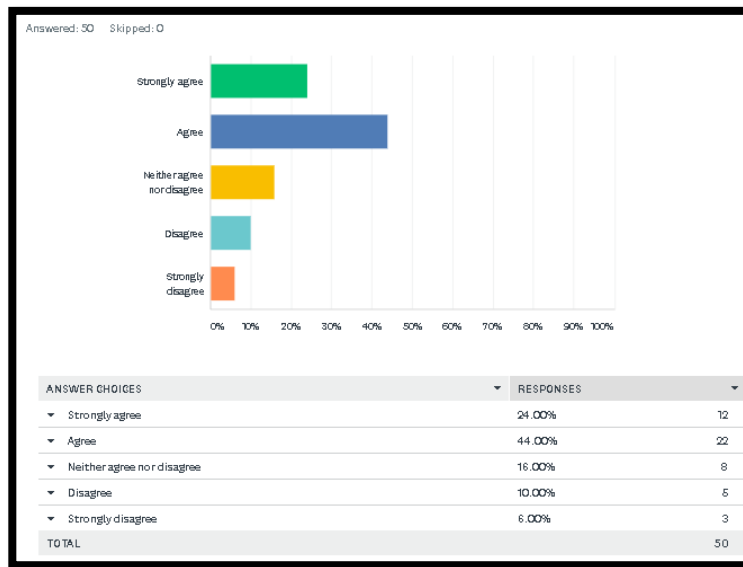


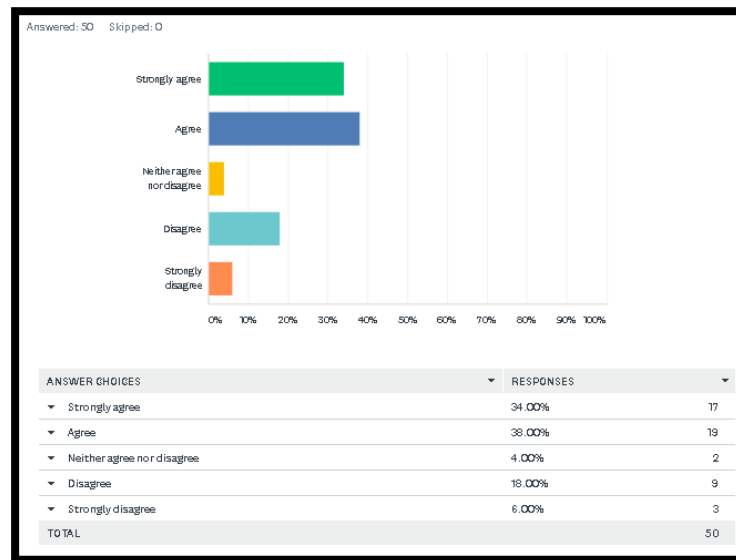
Figure 3: Survey Responses: Q3. How long you have been working in Microsoft Corporation?

**Analysis:** All employees participating in this survey had the adequate experience of working in Microsoft Corporation. 15 respondents had 1 year of experience, a maximum of 19 out of 50 respondents had 2-3 years of experience, 12 others had 3-4 years of experience and another two employees had 5 years and above experience. All employees were quite familiar with the business processes and strategies of Microsoft Corporation.



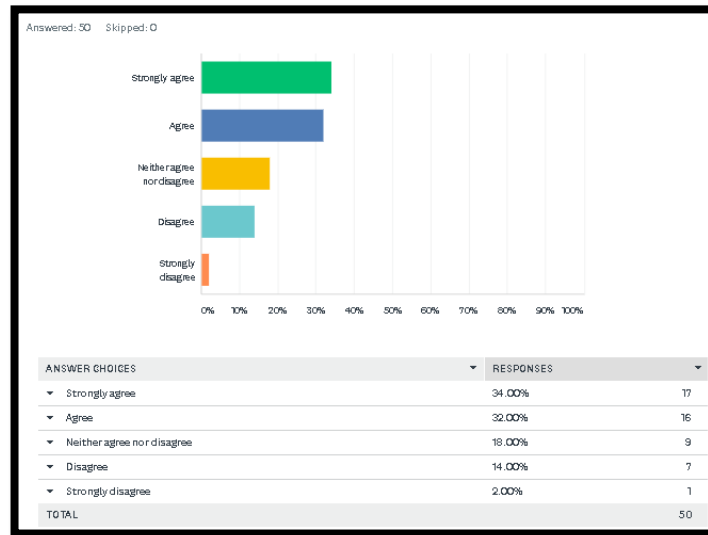
**Figure 4: Survey Responses: Q4. Do you agree that your organization acquires knowledge about customers and suppliers?**

**Analysis:** Most respondents or 34 out of 50 employees gave positive responses against this survey question, while very few gave negative and neutral answers. Such findings reveal that Microsoft Corporation does gather information about its customers and suppliers.



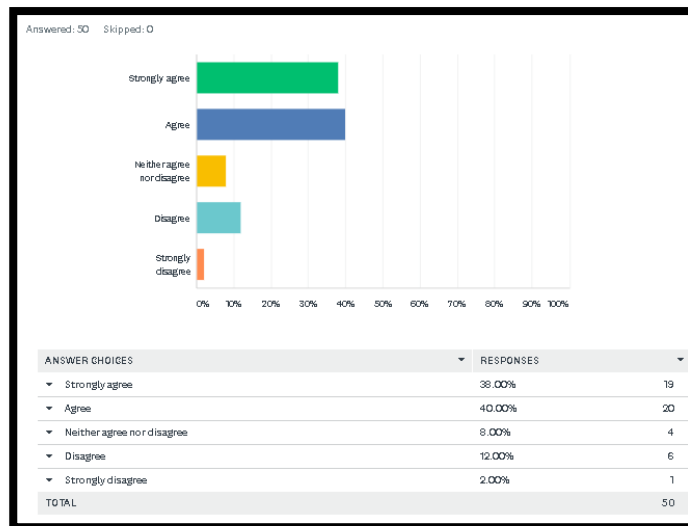
**Figure 5: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that your organization generates new knowledge from existing knowledge?**

**Analysis:** 36 out of 50 respondents agreed and strongly agreed that their organization constantly generates new knowledge from existing knowledge. Only 12 employees disagreed and strongly disagreed in this case and 2 remained neutral. Such inferences suggest that Microsoft Corporation focuses adequately on knowledge acquisition, storage, and management.



**Figure 6: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that your organization convert knowledge into effective service design?**

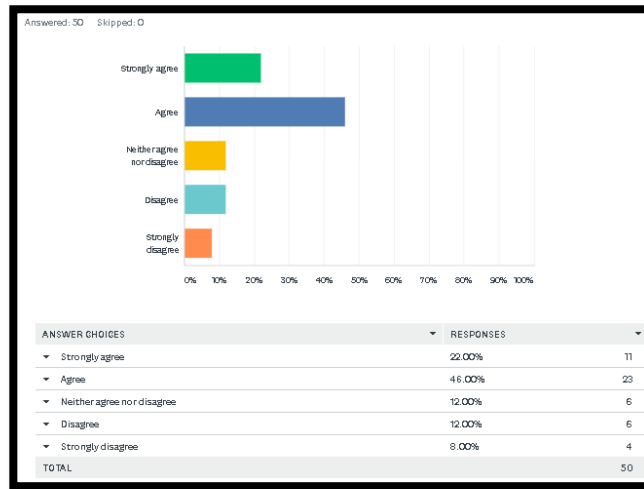
**Analysis:** Maximum employees said that their organization does convert knowledge into effective service design. Very few or 8 respondents disapproved and 9 remained neutral. Clearly, apart from some employees who do not have any idea regarding Microsoft Corporation’s knowledge management strategies, most respondents gave positive answers, indicating that the selected company relies heavily on knowledge management to offer services to customers.



**Figure 7: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that your organization integrates different types of knowledge from different sources?**

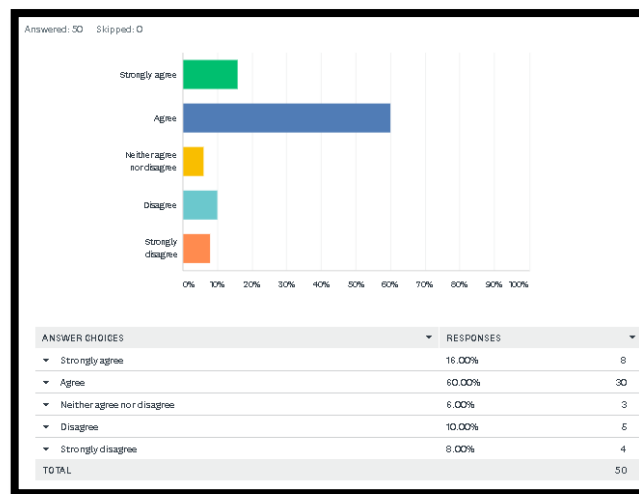
**Analysis:** 39 out of 50 employees agreed and strongly agreed that Microsoft Corporation integrates knowledge derived from various sources. Only 7 employees disagreed, and 4 others remained neutral. Such survey findings

reveal that Microsoft Corporation relies majorly on knowledge management to facilitate business processes and improve product and service quality.



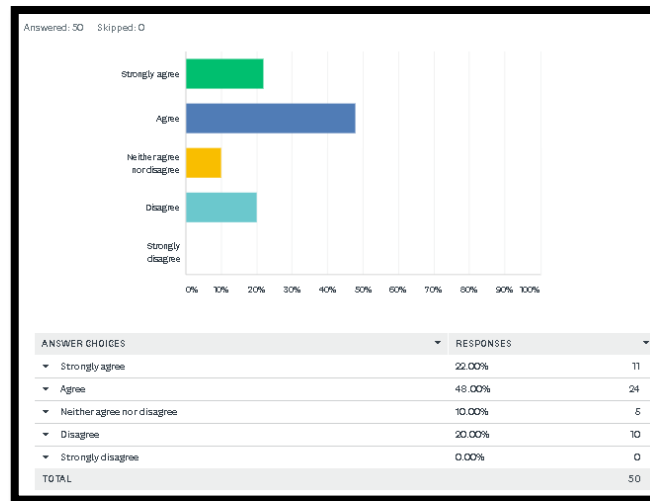
**Figure 8: Survey Responses: Do you agree that Microsoft applies knowledge learned from experiences and mistakes?**

**Analysis:** Apart from 10 employees who disagreed and strongly disagreed, and another 6 who gave neutral replies, maximum participants mentioned that their company considers knowledge gained from past mistakes and experiences. Microsoft Corporation follows an effective knowledge management strategy that allows the firm to make necessary improvements in business processes and product/service design based on information gathered from past incidents.



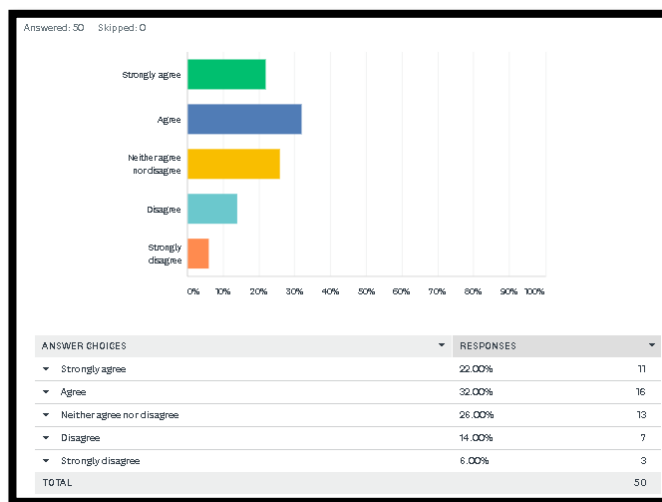
**Figure 9: Survey Responses: Do you agree that your organization makes knowledge accessible for employees who need it?**

**Analysis:** 38 out of 50 employees agreed and strongly agreed that Microsoft Corporation makes relevant information and knowledge accessible to all employees who need it. Very few respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, whereas 3 others remained neutral.



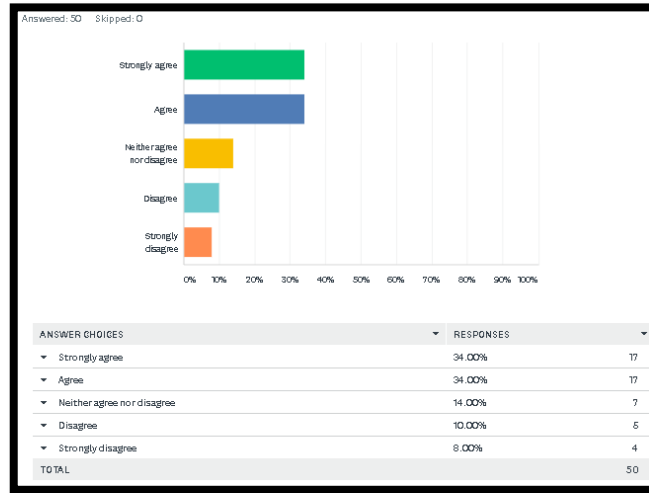
**Figure 10: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that Microsoft has undertaken initiatives to encourage knowledge protection?**

**Analysis:** 35 survey participants gave positive responses and mentioned that their company adopts suitable strategies to ensure and encourage knowledge protection. Only 10 out of 50 employees disagreed here and 5 others gave neutral replies, indicating that Microsoft Corporation does focus considerably on protecting information gathered from different sources.



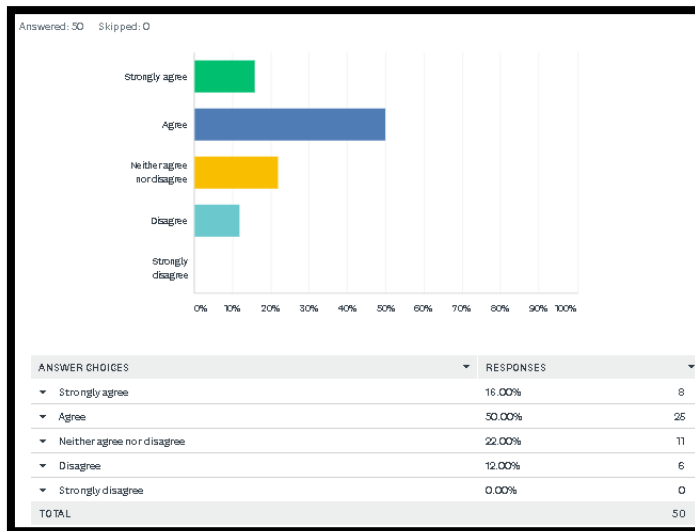
**Figure 11: Survey Responses: Do you agree that your organization protects the leakage of knowledge?**

**Analysis:** Knowledge or information leak is a common problem in today’s business world. Survey findings show that according to maximum employees, Microsoft Corporation protects leakage of knowledge. 13 employees gave neutral replies, indicating that the strategies adopted to prevent information leakage is not commonly discussed or shared with all employees. 10 participants also gave negative responses, thereby suggesting that improvements are required in this field.



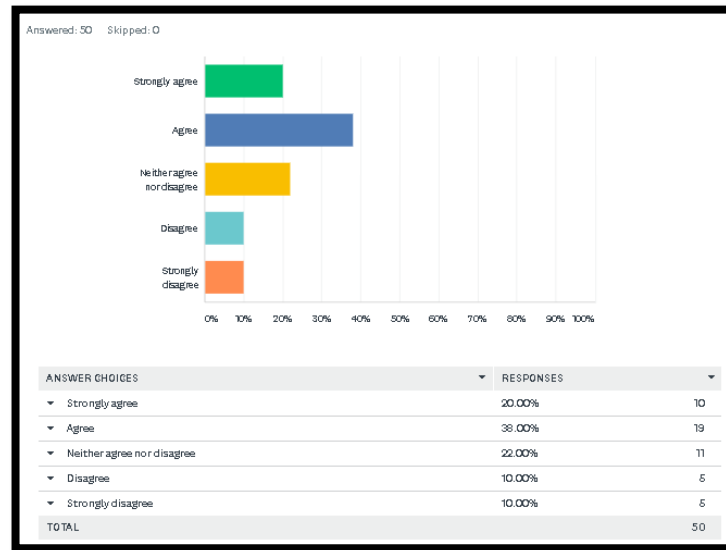
**Figure 12: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that knowledge management has enabled Microsoft to achieve higher customer satisfaction?**

**Analysis:** Maximum employees or 34 out of 50 opined that knowledge management has helped their company to improve customer satisfaction. Only seven respondents remained neutral and another 9 disagreed and strongly disagreed.



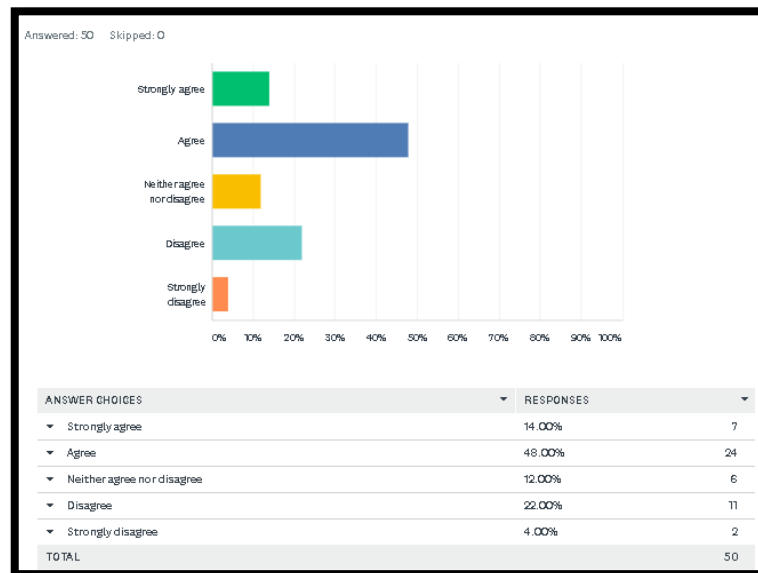
**Figure 13: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that KM has enabled the organization to use the resources efficiently?**

**Analysis:** Apart from 16 employees who disagreed and remained neutral, maximum respondents agreed and strongly agreed that knowledge management has helped Microsoft Corporation to use all resources efficiently and fruitfully.



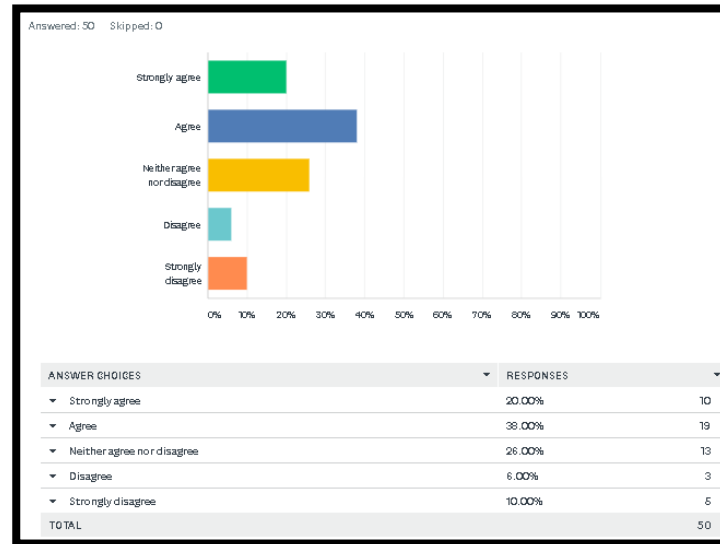
**Figure 14: Survey Responses: Do you agree that KM ensures high service quality?**

**Analysis:** 29 out of 50 respondents said that knowledge management does lead to higher service quality. However, 11 employees gave neutral replies, and 10 others gave negative replies to this survey question.



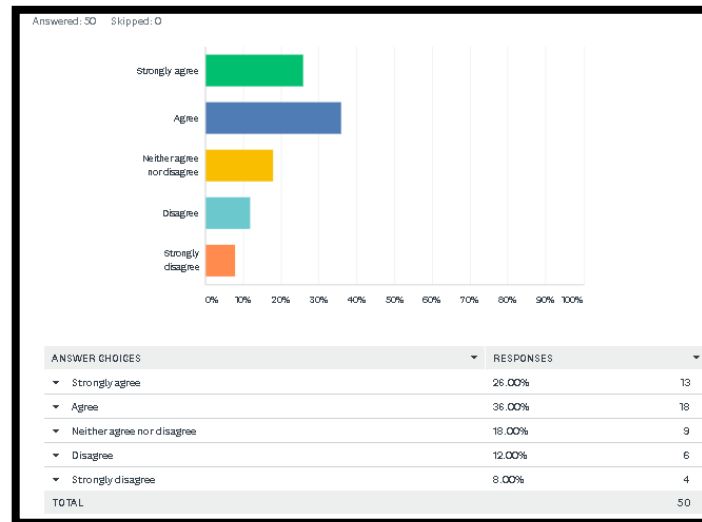
**Figure 15: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that KM has enabled Microsoft to grow faster as compared to competitors?**

**Analysis:** More than 50% of the sample population considered in this study gave positive responses to this question and agreed that knowledge management has helped Microsoft Corporation to grow and develop faster. Nevertheless, some respondents did disagree with this claim and 6 others remained neutral.



**Figure 16: Survey Responses: Do you agree that effective KM ensures organization profitability?**

**Analysis:** Maximum respondents opined that proper knowledge management leads to enhanced business profitability. Very few disagreed and remained neutral in this case, thus highlighting the link between knowledge management and business success.



**Figure 17: Survey Responses: How far do you agree that KM enhanced the supply chain management of Microsoft?**

**Analysis:** Apart from 10 employees who gave negative responses and 9 others who stayed neutral, all other employees agreed and strongly agreed that knowledge management has helped Microsoft Corporation to improve its supply chain management, thereby leading to higher returns.

4.2 Statistical Analysis

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

<i>Knowledge Acquisition</i>		<i>Knowledge Conversion</i>		<i>Knowledge Application</i>		<i>Knowledge Protection</i>		<i>Organization al Performance</i>	
Mean	2.27	Mean	2.09	Mean	2.36	Mean	2.39	Mean	2.41
Standard Error	0.13187	Standard Error	0.129118	Standard Error	0.130962	Standard Error	0.112749	Standard Error	0.095386
Median	2	Median	2	Median	2	Median	2.5	Median	2.5
Mode	2	Mode	1.5	Mode	2	Mode	2	Mode	2.166667
Standard Deviation	0.932464	Standard Deviation	0.913001	Standard Deviation	0.926041	Standard Deviation	0.797253	Standard Deviation	0.674478
Sample Variance	0.86949	Sample Variance	0.833571	Sample Variance	0.857551	Sample Variance	0.635612	Sample Variance	0.454921
Kurtosis	1.32149	Kurtosis	1.128387	Kurtosis	-0.34496	Kurtosis	-0.32104	Kurtosis	0.309644
Skewness	0.927692	Skewness	1.021244	Skewness	0.549731	Skewness	0.250423	Skewness	-0.14726
Range	4	Range	4	Range	3.5	Range	3	Range	3
Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1
Maximum	5	Maximum	5	Maximum	4.5	Maximum	4	Maximum	4
Sum	113.5	Sum	104.5	Sum	118	Sum	119.5	Sum	120.6667
Count	50	Count	50	Count	50	Count	50	Count	50
Confidence Level(95.0% )	0.265003	Confidence Level(95.0% )	0.259472	Confidence Level(95.0% )	0.263178	Confidence Level(95.0% )	0.226577	Confidence Level(95.0% )	0.191685

4.2.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

	<i>Knowledge Acquisition</i>	<i>Knowledge Conversion</i>	<i>Knowledge Application</i>	<i>Knowledge Protection</i>	<i>Organizational Performance</i>
<i>Knowledge Acquisition</i>	1				
<i>Knowledge Conversion</i>	0.228571	1			
<i>Knowledge Application</i>	0.410999	0.154001	1		
<i>Knowledge Protection</i>	0.020177	0.252196	0.172213	1	
<i>Organizational Performance</i>	0.359753	0.327764	0.546532	0.222275	1

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## 4.2.2 Regression Analysis

Table 3: Regression Analysis

<i>Regression Statistics</i>	
Multiple R	0.614735
R Square	0.377899
Adjusted R Square	0.322601
Standard Error	0.555124
Observations	50

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	4	8.42378	2.105945	6.833869	0.000219
Residual	45	13.86733	0.308163		
Total	49	22.29111			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	0.933989	0.337295	2.769054	0.008137	0.254641	1.613337	0.254641	1.613337
<i>Knowledge Acquisition</i>	0.091805	0.095414	0.962176	0.341103	-0.10037	0.283978	-0.10037	0.283978
<i>Knowledge Conversion</i>	0.152997	0.092281	1.657945	0.104285	-0.03287	0.338861	-0.03287	0.338861
<i>Knowledge Application</i>	0.325487	0.09552	3.407511	0.001391	0.133099	0.517874	0.133099	0.517874
<i>Knowledge Protection</i>	0.076584	0.104368	0.733784	0.466886	-0.13362	0.286792	-0.13362	0.286792

As per the analysis, the correlation coefficient between knowledge acquisition and organizational performance is 0.35. Other coefficients are 0.32, 0.32, 0.55, and 0.22. It interprets there is a positive relationship between all the independent variables and dependent variables. As per the regression analysis, the p-value is 0.00 for knowledge application. It means we reject the null hypothesis. The statistical analysis shows that we should accept all the hypotheses. Moreover, knowledge management has a positive and significant impact on organizational performance.

The research finding shows that there is a positive impact of knowledge acquisition on the organizational performance of Microsoft Corporation. Knowledge acquisition refers to the process of collecting, structuring, and organizing knowledge from one source. Moreover, the result shows that knowledge acquired by the organizational employees and their application in daily business activities ensures creativity that in turn results in service and product innovation. This finding is in agreement with research conducted by [1] that interprets that knowledge acquisition improves operational activities of a business in several ways, such as decreasing the lead time, design cycle time, cost, and improving the product and service quality. Another major finding of the current research indicates a positive relationship between knowledge conversion and organizational performance. Knowledge conversion has a positive impact on the organizational performance of Microsoft Corporation as it allows the employees to convert their idea and knowledge into the design of new services and products that can meet the

market trend and customer demands. This finding is supported by [4] who found that knowledge conversion enables the employees to apply their knowledge to the design of new products, and such participation results in less frustration. The employees can access important data and information themselves and there is no necessity to depend on the availability of other people. On the other hand, the current research also shows that knowledge application has a positive impact on the organizational performance of Microsoft. Knowledge application means applying better knowledge learned from experiences and mistakes and applying that knowledge in the production of new services and products. In support of this finding, [29] and [30] stated that knowledge application is positively associated with organizational productivity and performance as the employees get a chance to solve new issues using the knowledge gained from experiences and their mistakes and it also ensures knowledge accessible to those who need it. Finally, the current research finding indicates a positive relationship between knowledge protection and organizational performance. Knowledge protection ensures that the employees are provided with sufficient incentives, which promote adequate protection of knowledge. The responsible managers of Microsoft implement the knowledge protection process to protect the knowledge leakage outside and inside the organization. However, Demir *et al.* [10] argued that knowledge protection can harm organizational performance as it is too much expensive to undertake. In addition to that, knowledge protection takes time and due to this, the experts may feel reluctant to participate in knowledge protection as some companies do not sufficiently reward them.

## **5. Conclusion**

The research finding shows that knowledge management (knowledge acquisition, knowledge conversion, knowledge application, and knowledge protection) has a positive impact on organizational performance. Proper knowledge acquisition enables the organizational employees to use them in the design of services and products that can meet the customers' demand and result in customer satisfaction. Knowledge management also decreases the service and product cost by improving the operational flow and decreasing wasteful activities. In addition to that, implementation of the knowledge management activities allows a business organization like Microsoft Corporation to attain a competitive advantage in terms of superior service and product quality. Effective management of knowledge also benefits the firms by allowing them to respond to environmental changes. Thus, the companies can retail both existing and new customers by providing them with frequently innovative services and products. It will lead to more financial gains and loyal customers. The finding also shows that the implementation of knowledge management motivates the employees. It means the knowledge staffs have the freedom and flexibility to perform the organizational activities in line with their own initiative, experience, and intelligence. They also get the opportunity to support each other by information and technology infrastructure that benefits both themselves and the organization.

The research finding demonstrates that knowledge management practices improve the performance of an organization. Thus, business organizations need to promote awareness among the senior managers regarding the significance of knowledge management. Knowledge management is important for suppliers and customers as they are basically responsible for providing the later group with adequate resources that can allow a company to attain excellence and also a competitive advantage. The finding also shows that business organizations should adopt flexible knowledge management strategies that can be easily adapted to the external business environment and must be consistent with the internal business activities. However, the main issues of knowledge management are poor leadership and inadequate support from the top management. Therefore, organizational leaders should be motivated to examine and understand the dimensions and characteristics of effective knowledge management. It will allow the companies to attain improved organizational performance level and growth.

### **5.1 Linking findings with research objectives**

*Research objective 1: What is the importance of KM in today's organizations?*

This objective was addressed in survey questions 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. Inferences gathered in this context show that effective knowledge management helps organizations in innumerable ways to improve business returns and augment performance and profitability. Microsoft Corporation is a successful and high revenue generating firm today owing to their effective knowledge and information management tactics.

*Research objective 2: What are the existing KM strategies followed by Microsoft Corporation?*

This objective was addressed in survey questions 5, 6, 7, 8, and 16. Accordingly, findings show that Microsoft Corporation follows very strategic and advanced knowledge management strategies that allow the company to create new knowledge from existing knowledge, convert knowledge into effective service design, integrate various type of knowledge together to create valuable content and learn from past experiences.

*Research objective 3: What are the challenges of KM faced by Microsoft Corporation?*

This objective was addressed in survey questions 9, 10 and 11. Information security and knowledge protection challenges are very common problems in today's business world. Microsoft Corporation is well aware of these challenges and adopts strategic initiatives, and measures to ensure valuable knowledge is accessible by all employees and protected from all angles.

*Research objective 4: How does KM impact organizational performance of Microsoft Corporation?*

This objective was addressed in survey questions 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. Results gathered in this context show that effective knowledge management leads to better business operations and functioning. Knowledge management helps companies to improve product and service quality, augment customer satisfaction, use resources more efficiently, save costs, grow at an unprecedented rate, deal with complications and competition better and improve supply chain operations. All these benefits directly and positively impact on overall performance.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on findings gathered in this research, some recommendations are enlisted below for Microsoft Corporation.

- This organization must share all KM tactics and strategies with employees to ensure they are well aware and adept in this field and capable of acquiring, storing, and managing knowledge themselves.
- Microsoft Corporation should train and educate employees on all safety and precautionary measures to ensure complete knowledge and information protection. Information leakage may take place from different sources. Employees should be aware of all these sources to ensure they contribute towards successful knowledge protection.
- Lastly, the company should host regular training sessions to educate and encourage employees to take an active part in knowledge management.

## **5.3 Future Scope**

The current research suffers from limited resources in addition to that, it has some limitations. For example, the current study adopted the simple random sampling technique that led to a lower response rate. Thus, the future study should focus on coming up with a larger response rate so that it can ensure a more effective generalization of the research finding. In addition to that, this research only sampled the employees of Microsoft Corporation. Further research must attempt the exploration of the impact of different attributes on different sectors or industries to ensure information extensiveness. It will ensure analysis of good attributes on the impact of knowledge management on different sectors. The current research depended only on the survey method to collect data. The future study may consider mixing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure the validity and reliability of the research.

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