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Leading the change to knowledge management in academic libraries: A case study of Constantine's 2 university libraries

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Abstract

The current study intends to identify and examine the relevant abilities as a prerequisite for leading the transition towards knowledge management inspired by ADKAR Model. Constantine 2 University's libraries were selected as a case study because previous research has shown the commitment to implement an honest approach to knowledge management and the employees' willingness to alter the existing organizational culture to one that promotes knowledge management.

The study concluded that most library leaders at Constantine 2 University are fully prepared to implement all the procedures included in the various stages of change toward knowledge management according to the ADKAR model.

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1. *Introduction*

As information and communications technologies have advanced, the sources of knowledge have expanded and diverged, making "knowledge management," a key aspect of modern intellectual advancement, the biggest challenge of our time. In the early 1990s, organizations focused more on the information obtained from individuals within them.

With time and rapid technological and information development, knowledge management has expanded to include more institutions. University libraries serve an academic community expected to produce knowledge and use it in innovation, each according to his specialization, so this management is necessary.

Knowledge management requires radical changes in administrative methods and organizational culture, so effective leadership that manages the change process with a scientific methodology and a well-thought-out strategic plan is needed. This requires special skills. Administrative experts agree that organizations need leaders who understand and can implement change. Leaders alone can establish and consolidate change and push people to do everything it takes. Studies have also shown significant obstacles to the change process, such as the lack of influential leadership, leadership roles, and leader efficiency.

This study discusses and analyzes the skills of the change leader as one requirement for leading change towards knowledge management in academic libraries inspired by the ADKAR Model. It uses Constantine 2 University libraries as a model based on a previous study that showed their readiness to adopt a clear knowledge management policy and their workers' acceptance of changing the organizational culture to support knowledge management.

2. Literature review

Previous scientific research studies support the current study's problem and help place it in context. This study focused on the skills managers must acquire to lead the change process toward knowledge management, unlike previous studies that focused on the role of workers in knowledge management and their readiness to adopt its principles and the infrastructure the university library needs to adopt knowledge management, as well as trying to find a strategic plan.

Evaluating Dr. Ahmed Aroua University Library's readiness to adopt knowledge management: This study assessed Dr. Ahmed Aroua Library's knowledge management capabilities. The library's readiness to adopt knowledge management is above average and close to sound, and its organizational leadership is qualified to direct the library culture toward sharing and teamwork and is compatible with

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knowledge management principles. However, library workers' acceptance of information technology in knowledge sharing is unconvincing and does not indicate its future success. (Lamhanat, 2010)

Knowledge management strategy in university libraries: a future vision and a proposed action plan. This study evaluated the theoretical framework of knowledge management in university libraries. It proposed an action plan to activate knowledge management as a new challenge for Algerian information institutions in the coming decades. This study found that 70% of workers in some university libraries in Algeria are not specialized in library sciences, that many use technology as a civilized aspect without investing in it well, and that 90% of our university libraries and other types do not apply regional or international standards, specification. (Bouafia, 2012)

The contribution of human capital to activating knowledge management in university libraries: A field study in the university libraries of Mohamed Khider University – Biskra. The study sought to determine how much human capital activates knowledge management in Mohamed Khider University-Biskra's university libraries by generating, sharing, educating, training, and motivating people to apply knowledge. This study used quantitative-qualitative methods and descriptive-analytical methods to find relationships between variables. The study found that university libraries' interest in human capital was average because they did not pay enough attention to attracting and maintaining it. Their knowledge management engagement was also average. As all of the study's hypotheses were accepted, human capital plays an effective role in knowledge management's various processes. The study's main recommendations were to attract and retain human capital through material and moral incentives.(sadar, 2022)

2. *Knowledge Management in Academic libraries*

Knowledge management (KM) is becoming more recognized as vital in academic libraries. Libraries offer knowledge-centric services to users within the community. It is a central hub for users to access extensive academic resources and materials. As important organizations that store and disseminate information, academic libraries today place a premium on collection management and constantly look for ways to improve the quality of their services. They have the strategic choice to merge information management with the theory and principles of knowledge management (Al-Kurdi & al., 2020). Optimal information function optimization is now being considered by the relevant libraries, who are no longer satisfied with just collecting, organizing, and providing services. Personalized services are their end goal, so they think

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about ways to improve service innovation in knowledge management content. Dissemination is seen as a more important function of the library than collection development, and library patrons tend to be transient and infrequent users due to the elevated mobility of the workforce and the heightened expectation of lifelong learning.(Al-Husseini et al., 2021)

Results from previous surveys show that library employees' tacit knowledge, also known as their practical wisdom and experience, is more valuable than library collections when supporting professional judgments in appraisals and evaluations. Knowledge management aims to acquire, organize, and share this tacit knowledge. When it comes to preserving human memory or global information and knowledge, academic libraries can take the lead with the help of information and communication technologies in terms of creating, organizing, transferring, reproducing, and disseminating (Okunlaya & al., 2022). A KM framework enhances the quality and efficiency of an organisation's operations by creating a space to tap into the staff's collective knowledge and expertise. Speeding up the cycle of linking, leveraging, and learning—shared knowledge—is the main aim of KM. (Oliveira & al., 2021)

Many models and frameworks have been utilized or modified for academic libraries and their knowledge management initiatives. As any KM practitioner can tell you, this is not a straightforward goal. Every model must be tested to see how well it works in practice. Anyone working in academic libraries can benefit from these case studies by learning about the methods used by libraries that have implemented KM initiatives across the board, from public services to research. By incorporating their work-related lessons into their overarching operational goals on KM, each institution has enjoyed the advantages of knowledge-sharing among library staff.(Rezaei & al., 2021)

Along with this realization came the need to regularly assess their policies and procedures to adapt to evolving demands and educate staff and users on the importance of knowledge management (KM) activities. (Di Vaio & al., 2021)The following section highlights the various academic library work areas incorporating KM activities into their practices. The persistent problem of transforming established professional norms to support a customer-centric service provision method persists despite prudent investments in technology.(de Bem Machado & al., 2022)

4. Managing the change to knowledge management

Very few academic libraries have started adapting to today's information landscape by integrating management ideas associated with these shifts into their daily operations. These concepts revolve around

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utilizing the library's collective intelligence to achieve goals and provide services. Different names, such as knowledge management, management of intellectual capital, or the era of knowledge known to them. (Rubin & Rubin, 2020) Therefore, this research delves into what knowledge management is, how libraries might change, and what works and what does not.

Academic libraries face many KM implementation challenges. Cultural change occurs when organizational culture and structures change simultaneously. To implement KM, academic libraries must foster knowledge sharing. This change will be difficult because academic librarians have a history of not sharing knowledge. They are quick learners, motivated, and innovative but rarely work well together. They rely on their network, see most of the internal organization, and work as a nuisance or an asset they have little control over. They worry that all changes will hurt their librarianship.(Iqbal, 2021)

Another issue is undertraining in KM concepts and implementation. Lack of knowledge management training and understanding will cause academic librarians to misinterpret KM and limit its implementation. This includes how certain types of knowledge are valued and integrated into work practices, its hidden cost in time and updating multi-skilled staff, and preferred knowledge delivery methods. Focusing on “knowledge mix” values and objectives rather than just knowledge-transfer services may help address training issues like increasing pressures for staff professional development(Roy, 2021).

Inadequate IT infrastructures that cannot support KM activities also limit implementation. Without the right tools for librarians to share knowledge, KM acceptance will slow, and the library's ability to compete will suffer, leaving it on the slippery slope of irrelevance. Knowledge workers will likely stop using a library's tools if they do not automatically transfer knowledge. The KM system fails if employees do not update their employers. Financial constraints or insufficient budgetary allocation may also prevent KM adoption. KM helps reduce costs, gain top-level support for change, create a culture of trust, remove threats, and create facilitation rewards, resistance management, and others. Financial constraints may limit KM. Once senior management has emphasized and launched the driving force of business strategy, it can be used to operationalize changes throughout the firm with regular feedback and progress communication. (Andrikopoulou & al., 2022)

Change and knowledge management are essential components in attaining competitive advantage. Recognizing change and knowledge management is crucial for ensuring sustainable growth and development within an organization. (Leksono & Yulianti, 2022.)The ADKAR model, the most suitable model

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for this purpose, was utilized in this study to assess the preparedness of library leaders for moving to knowledge management. It will be analyzed in further detail afterwards. This model can be employed as a framework to facilitate effective change.

5. Methodology

The researchers uses an objective method to diagnose, measure, understand, treat, The ability of academic library leaders to achieve change towards knowledge management based on the ADKAR model.

It is a five-stage model centred on the individual measurement of change management. In 2000, engineer Jeff Hyett developed a methodology widely used in various industries and types of organizations. This methodology was developed after reviewing change patterns in over 700 organizations. This methodology concentrates on the attainment of results through the management of personal transformations in change contexts. ADKAR is an acronym that denotes five stages that result in tangible outcomes that must be achieved by the individuals involved for change to achieve its intended purpose and be sustained over time.(Picado Argüello & González-Prida, 2024)

Awareness: The first stage of the ADKAR change management model, Awareness, refers to communicating the need for a change to employees. (admin, 2021) This is a crucial step in any change initiative. If individuals do not comprehend the rationale behind the proposed changes, it is highly improbable that they will endorse them and even less likely that they will actively promote them. In knowledge management, it is essential that the justification for a change initiative—precisely the details of new processes and tools, as well as the solutions these systems will offer—be clearly conveyed to all team members. Organizations can employ various strategies to foster awareness of the necessity for change. This encompasses delineating the dynamics within the organization's operational milieu and elucidating how these transformations will render existing methodologies and current knowledge management initiatives obsolete, recognizing opportunities that these new systems can provide – such as enhanced processes and prompt, effective decision-making predicated on superior information – and leveraging these to illustrate the prospective advantages and favourable results of the proposed change; highlighting the deficiencies of outdated knowledge management processes and demonstrating how the existing system fails to address persistent challenges and issues. Specifically, fostering a distaste for the existing condition. (Chebbi & al., 2020)

Desire: The second stage of the ADKAR change management model is Desire. It refers to communicating the benefits of the

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change to the team and creating a desire to change. (admin, 2021) A desire for change will not materialize solely from awareness or comprehension of the necessity for change; an organization must also cultivate a sense of urgency among individuals. Motivation for transformation can be fostered by presenting success narratives and highlighting individuals who will gain from the knowledge assets post-change. Moreover, engaging these prospective adopters in change initiatives—via community narratives or direct participation in project tasks—can further sustain a sense of urgency. Conversely, when individuals are content with the existing state of affairs, instilling a sense of urgency for change is frequently challenging. Furthermore, the aspiration for change must be conveyed through the most effective communication channel to guarantee that individuals perceive and experience the leadership's enthusiasm for the change initiatives. In contrast to other elements of ADKAR, the communication of urgency and the aspiration for change is typically executed top-down. Furthermore, due to its association with emotions, individuals in positions of authority and perceived power are regarded as more credible when conveying the necessity for change. Communication may encompass town hall meetings regarding the new vision and outlining the consequences of inaction. In knowledge management, explicitly presenting success stories and individuals who will directly benefit from the change initiative is an effective method to cultivate a desire for transformation. By engaging a broad spectrum of individuals in change initiatives and motivating them to communicate with others, we facilitate opportunities for organizational members to recognize the prospective advantages.(Nardini & al., 2021)

Knowledge: The third stage of the ADKAR change management model, Knowledge, refers to providing the team with the knowledge on how to change. (admin, 2021) Providing employees with the requisite knowledge, skills, and resources empowers them to embrace and implement change. Knowledge recognizes the necessity of informing employees regarding the change and guiding them in navigating new systems and practices. Continuous training programs and support resources are essential to equip employees with the requisite knowledge to adapt to new systems and procedures. Providing training packages alongside implementing a new database in a school enhanced the successful adoption of the change. A commitment to enabling all employees to fulfil their roles within a new work system is acknowledged as an essential element of change management. This element involves involving employees in system enhancements and acquiring and endorsing new competencies. This consequently enhances the probability of comprehensive employee acceptance and utilization of the new system. Ongoing knowledge

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management transformation necessitates sustained education and comprehensive cultural change rather than an isolated emphasis on training.(Mikołajczyk, 2021)

Ability: The fourth stage of the ADKAR change management model, Ability, refers to using the knowledge that's acquired from training to execute the change. (admin, 2021) Offering resources and continuous assistance can also be advantageous to individuals experiencing change. Establishing a system that enhances individuals' IT proficiency boosts their confidence in information retrieval and also advantages the organization overall. Given that technology frequently underpins knowledge management systems, training resources and support must be readily accessible to mitigate the fear and anxiety of insufficient IT proficiency. Instilling confidence in employees' ability to access essential information increases the likelihood of adopting the new system. Understanding how to access and utilize the technology will further diminish employee resistance. This is especially significant in light of the research warnings regarding the failure of organizational change thus far.(Institute, 2021)

Reinforcement: The fifth stage of the ADKAR change management model, Reinforcement, refers to sustaining change through celebrating successes and rewarding employees. (admin, 2021) Strengthening Change and Guaranteeing Sustainability. Numerous components are not included in the core aspects but are nonetheless significant. These factors are significant because they concentrate on establishing new skills, behaviours, and attitudes to facilitate the transformation into an enduring culture. In the context of knowledge management, it may refer to an organization that is perpetually learning and enhancing its culture. Sustainability is guaranteed by reinforcement and acceptance. It is possible to ensure that an individual remembers the reasons for their decision once they view themselves in the new situation. (Shahzad & al., 2021)

There are numerous opportunities for reinforcement, including granting recognition and incentives to Individuals who exhibit novel behaviours:

- To guarantee the existence of checks and balances, the organization may implement safeguards within its organizational measures.

-Feedback loops can facilitate ongoing communication.

-It is important to acknowledge that individuals may either progress or regress or choose not to sustain the new state indefinitely.

The organization is capable of continuous improvement. The fundamental principle of reinforcement is that the more attention is directed toward an activity, the more

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significant the reward becomes. This serves as a reminder and contributes to preserving the enthusiasm for the new state. It disrupts the habit of observing how things are done and instead concentrates on the present. They maintain the behaviour and prevent growth. It underscores the significance of possessing the appropriate adaptability to the ever-changing environment and requirements. Workers can indeed be informed of the change through the use of triggers. (Leksono & Yulianti, 2022)

The interview was chosen as the primary data collection method for this study. Closed questions, based on the ADKAR model, were developed to require specific and accurate answers. Additionally, a scale was developed to evaluate the capabilities of library managers at Constantine University. 2—Abdel Hamid Mahri will bring about change to knowledge management.

The geographical scope of this study is restricted to the libraries of Constantine 2 University, which encompass the libraries shown in the table below.

Table 1. Represents the research community

N⁰	Library	Responsible
1	Central Library	Director of University Libraries
2	Library of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Head of University Libraries
3	Library of the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences	Head of University Libraries
4	Library of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences	Head of University Libraries
5	Library of the Faculty of Modern Information and Communication Technologies	Head of University Libraries
6	Library of the Institute of Library Science and Documentation	Head of University Libraries
7	Library of the Institute of Sciences and Technologies of Physical and Sports Activities	Head of University Libraries

Source: Prepared by the authors

The study was conducted from September 2024 to December 2024, beginning with the conceptualization of the subject, the collection of scientific material, the establishment of the general framework of the study, the adjustment of the theoretical aspect, the development of interview questions, the execution of the interviews,

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the subsequent unpacking and analysis of the data, and the determination of the results.

6. Results & discussion

Awareness: It is imperative to possess awareness to initiate the ADKAR model's first step and lead effective change. The entire work team must comprehend and concur with the change's rationale to be aware. The leader must inform his team of the significance of implementing knowledge management as an administrative strategy by utilizing personal anecdotes and successful examples of libraries that have successfully implemented knowledge management. This is necessary because the objective is to transition to knowledge management. This may entail demonstrating presentations about those experiences, scheduling regular meetings to facilitate brainstorming and discuss the effectiveness of various strategies, emphasizing the advantages of knowledge management and allowing librarians to voice their opinions, as change is implemented rather than imposed, and utilizing questionnaires and observation to assess the awareness-raising process. Four of the seven library leaders in the study indicated their readiness to implement the various procedures necessitated by awareness as the initial step in the change model. Simultaneously, the remaining participants harboured reservations regarding specific procedures, including brainstorming and demonstrating presentations. They rationalized their apprehensions by asserting that these activities are uncommon among the work team, which could indicate their initial resistance to acting as leaders of change.

Desire: Without the "awareness" step, "desire" to implement new processes will be very difficult. Implementing change may prove challenging or unfeasible if the team is unwilling to accept it, regardless of the library's effective integration of change management. Leaders must consistently articulate the advantages of change to librarians to motivate their adoption. This phase also entails acknowledging and responding to opposing viewpoints. The team must perceive that their opinions are acknowledged and valued. Studies indicate that engaging with employees enhances their propensity to embrace change. Consequently, the change leader should avoid hastiness and instead focus on initially cultivating a desire for change. Library leaders must cultivate a desire among work teams to embrace knowledge management. This can be accomplished through various strategies, primarily by emphasizing the significance of the human element in knowledge management and recognizing the work team as intellectual capital. It is essential to remind them that the tacit knowledge inherent in each individual constitutes the latent power critical to successfully implementing knowledge management.

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Additionally, leveraging successful experiences from other libraries in adopting knowledge management can serve as a motivational tool, thereby bolstering librarians' self-confidence and reinforcing their understanding that they are fundamental to the success of their move towards knowledge management. Five of the seven library leaders studied indicated their readiness to adopt all measures promoting librarians' inclination towards knowledge management. At the same time, two expressed reservations, citing that fostering such desire is challenging in a team lacking the essential conditions for an adequate work environment.

Knowledge: In theory, it is defined as preparing the work team with the necessary knowledge regarding change. However, in practice, it can be seen as the stage of action and movement necessary to implement change. The knowledge, skills, and resources provided to employees are sufficient to facilitate their acceptance of the change and subsequent actions. The success of this stage is contingent upon the significance of informing employees about the change and the appropriate course of action. This is realized through continuous training programs and support resources that equip employees with the requisite knowledge, including a database that contains all the information necessary for the work team to comprehend the change process adequately. This stage necessitates that library leaders provide all the requisite sources and resources to comprehend the process of transformation into knowledge management, such as organizing seminars and forums that address the topic of knowledge management in libraries, providing sources of information and studies on mechanisms for transforming tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge and establishing an organizational culture that supports knowledge management based on knowledge sharing and mutual trust in the capabilities of librarians, as this is related to the move to knowledge management. The library leaders in the study expressed their willingness to implement all of the procedures mentioned, particularly those related to organizing seminars and forums and providing training courses. This is a reliable indicator of the leaders' readiness to implement change, provided its procedures and stages are well-defined.

Ability: This means ensuring that all team members can perform their assigned roles within the new system and, in this case, ensuring that librarians can implement the various procedures and stages of knowledge management. During this phase, the degree to which librarians endorse the transition to knowledge management is determined. Librarians' comprehension and assimilation of knowledge management instructions and information do not necessarily equate to

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their practical application. Consequently, library leaders must guarantee that librarians can implement knowledge management procedures effectively. This can be exemplified by fostering a culture of questioning with the leader and among them and removing the shame of ignorance by initiating discussions about various details, regardless of how trivial they may appear.

Additionally, it is important to provide opportunities for continuous self-learning and organized training and to address the challenges that librarians may encounter, particularly in modern technologies that are frequently the focus of knowledge management and necessitate specific skills to operate. This necessitates that library leaders adopt all solutions that would reduce the fear and anxiety associated with the limited capabilities of some librarians to use modern technologies. Five of the seven library leaders in the study expressed their complete readiness to provide their work team with the necessary skills and intellectual abilities needed to implement the change toward knowledge management on the ground. However, two of them expressed worries about how far they could take the leader's ability to embody the aforementioned procedures in light of the university library's subordination to the supervisory administration, the university directorate, and the limited decision-making powers when it comes to change. This can be interpreted as negligence by the leaders, as the university directorate is a mature administration that does not intend to restrict the university library's ambition to change for the greater good.

Reinforcement: This phase entails the leader's taking advantage of reinforcement to guarantee the sustainability of the change. Change is inherently slow to become natural, but it necessitates consistent effort to prevent reverting to the pre-change state. Continuous endeavours to cultivate a culture of knowledge sharing and learning are necessary to sustain the shift toward knowledge management in libraries. Leaders can accomplish this in various ways, but the most effective method is to consistently commend librarians for their indispensable role in implementing change. Additionally, they should be reminded of the benefits of change and encouraged to maintain it, whether through incentives or other methods. The leader must comprehend that change is a process that will undergo a series of ups and downs and cannot be sustained eternally. Consequently, the most valuable reward must be the successful implementation of change to sustain librarians' desires. Placing posters with motivational phrases on the necessity of sharing knowledge, adopting backgrounds on computers or screen savers that carry the meanings of the organizational culture that supports knowledge management and making it a

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routine in the librarian's work are among the motivational measures that can be used to ensure the sustainability of the change toward knowledge management. The librarian is reminded of the sustainability of the change by these measures, despite their simplicity. Five of the seven library leaders in the study showed their commitment to implementing all necessary measures to sustain the move to knowledge management. In contrast, two leaders expressed reservations, citing their temporary status as a barrier to ensuring the continuity of change, which reflects their shortsightedness and limited leadership experience. Effective leadership necessitates foresight and strategic planning to maintain system continuity in the absence of its leader, a competency these two leaders currently lack.

The study concluded:

1. Regarding awareness as the first step towards change, the majority of libraries leaders in the study expressed their readiness to implement all the procedures required by this stage. Most of the leaders studied indicated their readiness to adopt all measures promoting librarians' desire towards knowledge management.

2. The leaders of the libraries examined also embraced desire, recognizing it as a crucial component in the second phase of change toward knowledge management.

3. Providing the team with the necessary knowledge about the change towards knowledge management was the stage in which all leaders agreed on their readiness to implement all the procedures included in this stage.

4. Providing the requisite knowledge alone is insufficient for implementing change; it necessitates ensuring the practical application of this knowledge in real-world contexts. Consequently, most leaders were ready to execute all necessary procedures to enable their teams to apply the acquired knowledge effectively.

Most leaders stressed the importance of this stage to achieve change sustainability by expressing their commitment to implementing all procedures that ensure the preservation of change, no matter how simple these measures are.

7. *CONCLUSION*

The change to knowledge management in libraries, particularly academic libraries, has become an essential requirement. Academic librarians' implicit knowledge and underlying experiences are anticipated to improve the library's role in the educational process and increase the quality of services offered by higher education libraries, especially in the context of ongoing technological

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advancements that threaten the university library's existence and stability.

This study assigns the responsibility of leading change in knowledge management to the academic library leaders, recognizing that change is one of the most challenging processes an organization can encounter. The ADKAR model for change management was employed to assess the degree of these leaders' preparedness to undertake this responsibility. It examined the leaders of the libraries at Constantine 2 University regarding their acceptance of the various procedures encompassed in each stage of this structured and explicit approach to leading change. The model suggests leading change according to five basic stages that begin with awareness and conclude with ensuring the sustainability of change. The model provides some ideas about the procedures that each stage may include, and these procedures were fed with what knowledge management requires.

The leaders in the study sample mostly expressed their gratitude for the model that revealed many of the unclear procedures in the change process, and the majority of them confirmed their desire to adopt the model practically in the change process towards knowledge management. The response of the leaders was largely positive towards the various procedures that were presented, as most of them confirmed that all the procedures refer to are realistic and applicable on the ground.

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