CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS TO IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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ABSTRACT

The demand for improved service delivery requires new approaches and attitudes from local government. Implementation of knowledge sharing practices in local government is one of the critical processes that can help to establish learning organisations. The main purpose of this paper is to investigate how knowledge management systems can be used to improve the knowledge sharing culture among local government employees. The study used an inductive research approach which included a thorough literature review and content analysis. The technology-organisation-environment theory was used as the theoretical foundation of the study. Making use of critical success factors, the study advises how existing knowledge sharing practices can be supported and how new initiatives can be developed, making use of a knowledge management system. The study recommends that local government must ensure that knowledge sharing practices and initiatives are fully supported and promoted by top management.

INTRODUCTION

Service delivery has been one of the major focus areas of organisational transformation and public sector reforms in the South African (SA) government. In these transformed service delivery processes, knowledge has become an essential resource of the government as it is necessary for every step of the transformation process (Badimo and Buckley, 2014:3445).

Implementation of knowledge sharing (KS) practices in local government is one of the critical processes that can help to establish learning organisations. These learning organisations can play an important role in the integration of critical knowledge, expert abilities, and skills to train other employees to be able to accomplish the organisation's complex and innovative work (Zhang, Vogel and Zhou, 2012:1117).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

A lack of institutional capacity in local government is one of the primary reasons why service delivery is still an issue in almost all of SA's provinces. Munzhelele (2012:29) indicates that the implementation of Knowledge Management (KM) is one of the factors that will impact the improvement of service delivery as it will improve institutional capacity. Dikotla, Mahlatji and Makgahlela (2014:849) state that government employees do not share their knowledge and experience in the private sector as their counterparts do.

In order to address this issue, the Knowledge Management Reference Group (KMRG) was formed in 2005 to encourage a shared-learning partnership around KM in SA municipalities to support good governance (Kitchin, Ovens and Turpin, 2013:3). The aim of this initiative was to strengthen competencies among municipalities to identify opportunities for recognising and sharing knowledge in a way that will assist in identifying, harnessing, and managing their knowledge assets.

Knowledge sharing has been found to be limited in local government and staff members find it difficult to share their knowledge with their colleagues. Therefore, the problem is that while there is evidence of Knowledge Management Systems (KMS) being introduced and implemented to improve knowledge transfer in SA municipalities, there are, however, no clear or visible benefits or progress thereof.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The main purpose of this paper is to investigate which factors can improve the KS in SA local government. The focus of this paper is on KS within municipalities as the general area of research. Knowledge sharing is critical in local government because of its contribution to knowledge application, innovation, and competitive advantage (Wang, Noe and Wang, 2014:979). Therefore, the research objective of this paper is to produce best practices in the form of critical success factors (CSFs) for the improvement of KS among SA local government employees, which will promote a KS culture that will improve service delivery.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge has been recognised as the primary driver of an organisation's growth and competitive advantage (Wang, Lee and Lim, 2009:70). To gain value from knowledge, local government should be able to manage it effectively (Assegaff and Hussin, 2012:130). The formation of knowledge involves the transformation of data into information and information into knowledge, which finally develops into wisdom (Gaffoor and Cloete, 2010:2). Data are objective facts that describe an event without any judgment, perspective, or context, and it becomes information when meaning is added to it (Mohamed, 2014:48). Information is the result of processed and structured data; it can be transferred into knowledge by means of connections, comparison, conversation, and consequences. Knowledge derives from information which is anchored in the beliefs, views, and obligations of its holders, which in this study are local government employees (Ramdhania, 2012:3).

There are three types of knowledge: tacit, implicit, and explicit. Tacit knowledge is the knowledge that exists in the beliefs of the individual, the culture of people, and experience within the organisation (Chigada, 2014:29). This is internal or interior knowledge which is deeply rooted in one's personal experiences, values and norms, ideas, and emotions. Implicit knowledge can simply be defined as knowledge that is not explicit (Davies, 2015:1826). The management of implicit knowledge involves techniques, tools, and approaches that capture these apparently intangible thought processes and make them more generally available to the organisation. Explicit knowledge is codified knowledge that is easy to communicate, articulate, and transfer between individuals and organisations (Govender, 2010:45). When tacit and explicit knowledge are combined, management can truly capture the essence of organisational knowledge (Shirazi, Mortazavi and Azad, 2011:169).

Knowledge management is the approach implemented by organisations to manage their knowledge. Knowledge management is a directed, formal process of defining what information is available in an organisation that can benefit the employees. It is a practice where plans or processes are established to make sure that the information is available and easily accessible by employees (El Aziz, Wahba and El Sagheer, 2013:1355). Therefore, local governments are becoming more interested in implementing KM programmes to manage their knowledge resources by developing strategies that can capture, manage, and control their intellectual capital resources (Ramdhania, 2012:3). This knowledge is then disseminated throughout the organisation to enable employees to retrieve and use it effortlessly (Ramdhania, 2012:3).

According to Gaffoor (2008:37), KM can improve local government performance by means of innovation, quality enhancement, and increased productivity and effectiveness. Making use of KM improves collaboration and decision making in the organisation. Knowledge management assists in restructuring organisational processes and eliminates duplication of work, and, as a result, operational costs are minimised and service delivery is improved. The end result is that the financial worth of an organisation improves when KM processes are in place. Through KM, local government employees can enhance their skills, experience, and performance through collaboration and KS (Gaffoor, 2008:37).

Knowledge sharing involves the transfer or dissemination of knowledge throughout the organisation. As a process, KS involves the contribution of knowledge by the organisation and the collection, application, and assimilation of knowledge by employees (Van der Meer, 2014:14). The value of knowledge grows and increases as it is shared within an organisation. When employees use knowledge, they add more insights to it and refine it further, thereby adding more value.

Knowledge sharing in South African local government

The SA public sector makes use of the sectoral network that was created by the Department of Public Service and Administration. The aim of the sectoral network is to enhance the model of a client-centred public service sector based on the "Batho Pele" principles (Mothamaha and Govender, 2014:2). This ideal of a client-centred public service sector was endorsed by the SA government and resulted in the creation of several initiatives to establish a client-centred philosophy. During the mid-1990s, the international public sector reform policies, which stemmed from the "New Public Management" (NPM) theory, placed emphasis on the SA public sector's performance with regards to financial efficiency and budget parameters (Mothamaha and Govender, 2014:2).

According to SALGA (2015:5), municipalities work in an ever-increasing multifaceted and challenging environment. There is a necessity for efficient local government facilities and services. South African local government organisations have to achieve a delicate balancing act by addressing the disparities of the past, juggling financial sustainability, and delivering services in the face of the growing urban population (SALGA, 2015:5).

Considering the above influences, it is apparent that the SA public sector functions in a business-like style where the central idea of service provision is to respond to the needs of the citizens and to provide inclusive and integrated service delivery (Dikotla et al., 2014:850; Gaffoor and Cloete, 2010:4). This means that they have to adopt the idea of KS as a mechanism of achieving a competitive advantage by making use of human and intellectual resources within their organisations. Dikotla et al. (2014:850) disagree with Gaffoor and Cloete (2010), arguing that although KS has been seen as a mechanism of improving municipal governance, the majority of SA municipalities do not have formal, functional KM programmes in place. Knowledge sharing cultures often exist within departments of one municipality but not across municipalities. Those municipalities that perform well do not share their best practices with the underperforming ones (Dikotla et al., 2014:851).

In South Africa, KM has become a priority within the local government context. Knowledge management has been recognised by South Africa's Department of Provincial and Local Government as a strategic management skill for local government senior management personnel. Gaffoor and Cloete (2010:4) argue that "at local government level, cognisance must be taken of the fact that SA municipalities function in an environment characterised by greater uncertainty and competition than in the past".

Knowledge management systems in local government

Knowledge management and information technology (IT) have common objectives of transforming local government organisations into more agile, innovative, effective, and more responsive forms. The observation of Local Government Authorities (LGA) indicates that they lack integrated IT infrastructures, which make them redundant, inconsistent in generating data, and having inefficient KS and poor service quality and delivery (Ozlen, 2013:117).

Designing a system to share knowledge in local government organisations requires that a combination of people, technology, processes, and information be established (McNabb, 2007:49). In local government, KMS enable organisations to develop and maintain the ability to organise and store invaluable knowledge to be used for business purposes every day. Knowledge management systems support organisations to identify relevant information needed for business processes, and also assist to strengthen interagency collaborations (McNabb, 2007:50).

According to Ozlen (2013:114), there is a growing number of KMS that are used in local government to facilitate KS. Knowledge management systems support local government KM activities by providing KS platforms, repositories, and expert directories. In a study of eThekwini Municipality's intranet for enhancing KS, Averweg (2012:5) found that the intranet seems to be at a medium maturity level. The study revealed that although there is information sharing in eThekwini Municipality, the intranet does not seem to be effective as a KS structure. The results indicate that there seems to be an opportunity for the development of the content on the intranet. Averweg (2012:5) argues that intranet technology plays a key role in the municipality by supporting the effective acquisition, presentation, and sharing of knowledge. Averweg (2012:5) further argues that the intranet must be well managed to readily enhance KS in the organisational context of local government organisations in South Africa.

A study conducted by Gaffoor and Cloete (2010:2) on Stellenbosch Municipality surveyed how local government organisations were capable of successfully implementing KM processes as tactical tools to achieve operational goals and enable service delivery. The study assessed how KM enablers impacted the municipality's KM efforts. These enablers are IT, human resources, organisational culture, organisational structure, strategy, and leadership. The study revealed that the municipality had many IT systems in place but employed several systems in different departments and that there was no single system traversing the entire municipality. Due to a lack of integration in the systems, information sharing was hindered and access to information resources was inadequate. The study recommended that for Stellenbosch Municipality to become a knowledge-based organisation and realise organisational efficiency, it had to develop a clear KM strategy. The municipality needed to identify the main characteristics of the enablers that must be established in order to make them more valuable to KM efforts (Gaffoor and Cloete, 2010:5).

Systems that enable knowledge sharing

The KS process in local government can be supported by the Internet as it has the ability to provide users with access to any information anywhere and anytime (Canzano and Grimaldi, 2012:241). Chigada (2014:61) acknowledges that KS systems enable organisations "to integrate vast assortments of disparate application interfaces, controls and data sets, thus enabling information sharing and centralised management of information and knowledge across the organisation". Furthermore, intranets also facilitate KS in organisations. Web portals are also used for KS as they provide links to other sites and offer opportunities to search other pieces of information (Canzano and Grimaldi, 2012:241). According to Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2010:64), systems that facilitate knowledge exchange are groupware, web-based access to data and databases, and repositories that include Best Practices databases and Lessons Learned systems. For KS, SA municipalities make use of the following platforms provided in the toolkit (Kitchin et al., 2013:24).

TABLE 1
PLATFORMS FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Platform	Usage
Communities of Practice	Enable experts to collaborate in sharing experiences, practices, and tools that are relevant to a specific topic.
Conferences and seminars	Provide an opportunity for employees to network, learn, and interact with other employees working in similar fields.
Directory of experts	Helps employees to find who has expertise or knowledge for a particular project or task. Helps employees to seek guidance from other employees in other organisations.
Publications	Used to share knowledge around events, practices, and information.
Social media	Used to encourage KS and networking through collaborative and social tools. Facilitates self-directed, informal, and social learning using online web-based resources. Municipality customers, stakeholders, and partners can connect and communicate using social media.
Story telling	Used by municipalities to share values, knowledge, and organisational culture. Commitment and trust are developed through story telling. Used to capture past knowledge that can be adapted to the present and future.

(Kitchin et al., 2013:28-42)

Factors affecting knowledge sharing in local government

Amayah (2013:456) investigated the factors that affect KS in public sector organisations. Her study revealed that individual benefits and normative and community-related considerations were the motivators that contributed to the variance of KS. Social interaction, organisational support, and rewards were found to be the main enablers that affect KS in organisations. Shirazi et al. (2011:168) argue that the development of KS initiatives in local government organisations encounter several personnel, structural, and managerial barriers. They further argue that the reason why many organisations have failed to embrace KS strategies is because they do not pay proper attention to potential problems and obstacles. Shirazi et al. (2011:170) argue that the local government's individual and organisational readiness to accept and support the KS initiatives is fundamental to any KS strategy.

Literature on factors influencing local government employees' intentions to share knowledge reveals that the most influential factors include self-efficacy, motivation, attitudes, organisational climate, structure and culture, top management support, trust, and the quality of information systems (Hong, Suh and Koo, 2011:14419; Lee and Hong, 2014:150; Mohamed, 2014:60-61; Shanshan, 2013:67). These factors are discussed in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2
FACTORS AFFECTING KNOWLEDGE SHARING

	Factor	Influence
Individual Factors	Self-efficacy	Self-efficacy positively influences the intention to share knowledge on a KS platform. It is the practice of self-evaluation that influences decisions about behaviour (Perik, 2014:16). Self-efficacy in local government involves employees' judgement with regards to their capability to provide and organise knowledge that has value to the municipality in realising service delivery (Tan and Noor, 2013:253).
	Motivation	Motivation has a positive impact on employees' intention to share knowledge (Shanshan, 2013:71). Dube and Ngulube (2012:74) contend that the underlying motivation to share knowledge is fundamentally different, depending on the field. Motivation to share knowledge is affected by whether the decision to share is mainly seen as economic and inspired by self-absorption, or non-economic and inspired by community interest and moral obligation.
	Trust	Trust has been recognised to be the best cost-effective method that improves KS in local government organisations. When there is trust among employees in an organisation, there is a propensity of more collaboration and obligation. Employees will be inspired to share their knowledge when they recognise the beneficiaries to be reliable, trustworthy, and honest (Okyere-Kwakye and Nor, 2011:69).
	Reciprocity	Reciprocity is mutual and fair sharing of information and knowledge (Tamjidyamcholo, Bin Baba, Tamjid and Gholipour, 2013:225). In communities of practice, KS is improved through reciprocal behaviour presented by employees. The contributor of knowledge will choose whether the beneficiary is likely to give back a positive result. Employees assess others' competencies before they reveal certain behaviour (Okyere-Kwakye and Nor, 2011:70).
Organisational Factors	Top management support	The lack of top management support in local government affects the employees' attitudes towards KS. If employees have top management support, their attitudes toward KS will be more positive and they will feel more confident to share knowledge (Shanshan, 2013:69). Therefore, top management support has a positive influence on employees' attitude towards KS.
	Organisational culture	Organisational culture plays a significant role in facilitating learning, sharing, and creation of knowledge. Culture in organisations can act as an impediment and an enabler of KS (Ondari-Okemwa and Smith, 2009:35). Organisational culture provides employees with organisational identity, it encourages social system stability, facilitates collective commitment, and forms behaviour by helping employees to make sense of their surroundings (Mannie et al., 2013:3).
	Organisational structure	The nature of coordination among local government employees, which is decided by control mechanisms, influences KS (Islam et al., 2015:71). The hierarchical structures in local government organisations have an impact on employees with whom each individual normally interacts and from or to whom the individual is likely to transfer knowledge (Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal, 2010:312).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was exploratory in nature and reviewed literature from previous studies such as articles from academic journals, books in both print and electronic formats, conference proceedings, relevant websites, and theories relating to this study. Electronic databases such as ACM Digital Library, Sage Online Journals, Science Direct, Springer Link, and Sabinet Reference were used to find relevant literature. Research study keywords such as 'knowledge management', 'knowledge sharing', 'knowledge management systems', and 'local government' were used as search terms. The philosophy used in this qualitative study was interpretivism. Inductive reasoning was used to analyse the literature. The scope of the study only included local government employees in South Africa.

BARRIERS TO KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

To define factors that were identified during the literature review that may affect KS in local government, this paper relied on the technology-organisation-environment (TOE) framework suggested by Tornatzky and Fleischer in 1990. According to Wang et al. (2009:71), the TOE framework suggests investigating the effects of technology itself, organisational characteristics, and the external environment on adoption and implementation of technological innovation. The barriers that have been identified in the literature will be aligned to the three different contexts of the TOE framework.

Technological context

The technological context defines both external and internal technologies that are relevant to the municipality (Leung et al., 2015:393). External technologies refer to the set of technologies available on the market, while internal technologies relate to the practices and technologies which have been implemented by municipalities. In assessing the readiness for the application of KM in local governments, Gaffoor (2008:48) interviewed the information and communications technology (ICT) managers of Stellenbosch Municipality. In terms of awareness and culture pertaining to KM in the ICT department, he discovered that senior managers were not familiar with the concept of KM. Gaffoor (2008:49) also found that the ICT department had not grown in relation to the municipality's growth in general. Its ICT infrastructure lagged behind in many areas, especially in terms of KM.

The Stellenbosch Municipality's ICT infrastructure was found not to be supporting KS and KM within the municipality. Although the municipality has various information systems in place, there was no single database which served as a central information repository (Gaffoor, 2008:49). The Stellenbosch Municipality also did not use innovative information systems such as expert systems, decision support systems (DSS), and management information systems (MIS).

The results of a study by Averweg (2002:5) on eThekwini Municipality suggested that the management of knowledge and KS using the intranet were limited. The study concluded that if eThekwini Municipality's intellectual capital is aligned to the organisational strategy, the intranet can provide a sound framework to facilitate the management of knowledge and KS.

Organisational context

The organisational context encompasses the local government's top management support, innovativeness, organisational culture, size, and the quality of human resources. Organisational culture is associated with the municipality's core values, its sense of identity, set of shared assumptions, and its primary ways of working (Micheni, 2015:39). A study by Ondari-Okemwa and Smith (2009:36) revealed that a culture of sharing knowledge and information among local government employees is still lacking. They argue that in sub-Saharan Africa, traditional cultures discourage information and knowledge sharing. The Stellenbosch Municipality was found by Gaffoor and Cloete (2010:5) to have an organisational culture that demonstrates the potential for emerging into a successful culture that can withstand the application and running of KS efforts.

Cultural differences within an organisation have a negative impact on KS. A study by Dikotla et al. (2014:851) provides a relevant example, which used Limpopo province individuals from different ethnic groups employed in the government sector. Employees found it impossible to share knowledge they possessed due to cultural differences. Dikotla et al. (2014:851) also cited a Northern Sotho expression, *"kgomo ga e ntšhe boloko ka moka"*, meaning one should not or cannot share with others his or her entire knowledge. This relates to what Mothamaha and Govender (2014:3) found among City of Johannesburg employees. The city is still far away from reaching the culture of KS since the older generation employees are still reluctant to share their knowledge, subscribing to the notion that "knowledge is power".

The lack of top management support in local government affects employees' attitudes towards KS. If employees have top management support, their attitudes toward KS will be more positive and they will feel more confident to share knowledge (Shanshan, 2013:69). Therefore, top management support has a positive influence on attitude towards KS. Gaffoor and Cloete (2010:6) found that in Stellenbosch Municipality, the ultimate challenge to KM was the approval of the idea by leadership, composed of top management and council members.

Reporting relationships influence the flow of data and information and the nature of groups who make decisions together. As a result, the creation and sharing of knowledge may be positively or negatively affected. In more decentralised organisations with larger groups of employees, KS is more likely to occur (Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal, 2010:45). Gaffoor and Cloete (2010:5) found that Stellenbosch Municipality has a top-down, hierarchical organisational structure which is not the most favourable to KM efforts. The structure was bureaucratic in nature and not responsive to changes being implemented. It was also found that the structure restrained horizontal communication flows.

Environmental context

The environmental context includes factors of the municipality's surroundings, consisting of the government, stakeholders such as sponsors, the community, and competitive pressure. These can affect how the municipality understands the need for innovation, its ability to secure resources for pursuing innovation, and its capability of actually deploying them. Government regulations can force resources to be allocated for compliance (Micheni, 2015:40).

Research conducted on IT development within SA municipalities indicates that over 80% of municipalities do not have master system plan (MSP) documents for IT (Kaselowski, Von Solms and Von Solms, 2010:338). The reasons for the lack of MSPs were attributed to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the IT sector and the lack of skilled human resources within municipalities' IT function. Therefore, the operation of the IT function in municipalities seems to be very technically orientated and focused on the day-to-day operations of networking, computer hardware, Internet, and e-mail (Kaselowski et al., 2010:338).

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Critical success factors (CSFs) are the practices and activities that organisations should address to ensure successful implementation of KS. If these practices already exist within the organisation, they need to be nurtured. If they are not in place, they need to be developed (Crnjar and Dlacic, 2014:979). The CSFs discussed below are critical to ensuring that the environment and culture within local government support KS.

CSF 1: Develop a culture to promote knowledge sharing

A collaborative culture is an essential condition for KS to occur between individuals and groups. This is due to the fact that KS requires employees to come together to interact, exchange ideas, and share knowledge with one another (Wong, 2005:269). South African local government organisations need to foster an innovative culture in which employees are continually stimulated to generate new ideas,

solutions, and knowledge (Ncoyini and Cilliers, 2016:7). Knowledge management systems that support collaboration include intranet infrastructures which offer basic functionality for communication, exchange, storage, searching, as well as retrieval of data and documents. Groupware systems enhance collaboration by supporting discussions, time management, meetings, and creative workshops.

CSF 2: Support and promotion of the knowledge sharing concept by top management

Top management support is one of the critical factors in the implementation of KS. Top management in local government organisations can play an important role by ensuring that KS is successfully implemented. Managers should demonstrate a willingness to offer and freely share their knowledge with other employees, and search for and learn new knowledge and ideas (Wong, 2005:267). Therefore, it is the responsibility of municipal top managers to support KS activities and projects by ensuring that sufficient resources are allocated in terms of money to acquire IT infrastructure, skilled labour, and time for using KS platforms (Ansari, Youshanlouei and Mood, 2012:217).

CSF 3: Alignment of knowledge management with organisational strategy

Local government KS activities are exposed to many challenges. These activities need to be directed toward real efforts that are based on clear organisational strategies (Ansari et al., 2012:216). Hence, for SA local government organisations to succeed in their KS efforts, they need to form official KM strategies throughout the organisation. Knowledge management activities must be aligned with organisational strategy such that top management creates and shares a vision on KS and continually plans on realising the agreed upon KS objectives.

CSF 4: Ensure flexible and informal organisational structures to facilitate knowledge sharing

Local government organisational structures must be flexible enough to increase knowledge distribution and cooperation from traditional borders of the organisation towards knowledge creative borders (Ansari et al., 2012:215). Municipal managers must recognise the shortcomings of bureaucratic structures, namely that they slow down processes and limit information flow. The reporting procedures in current structures consume an excessive amount of time in order for knowledge to filter through every level of the organisation. Knowledge sharing succeeds with structures that support ease of information flow with fewer boundaries between divisions (Ncoyini and Cilliers, 2016:8).

CSF 5: Motivate employees to contribute knowledge

Motivation is one of the factors that affect employees' intentions to share knowledge. Local government organisations' most valuable intellectual resources are entrenched in the minds of their employees; KS can be achieved only through passion that stimulates the deepest parts of employees' minds (Egbu, Wood and Egbu, 2010:853). Therefore, if local government employees are not motivated to share their knowledge, there is no amount of investment, infrastructure, and technological intervention that can make KS effective.

CSF 6: Ensure availability of effective information technology infrastructure

Local government organisations should invest in comprehensive technological infrastructure such as communication systems and IT for the purpose of KS. Technologies such as chat rooms, telephones, and video conferences can be used to transfer tacit knowledge (Sedighi and Zand, 2012:4). Factors such as ease of use, simplicity of technology, connection with knowledge content, standardisation of a knowledge structure, and adaptability to the needs of users have to be considered when municipalities develop KMS (Margilaj and Bello, 2015:19). The key for local government organisations is to understand how technology is developed and how is it aligned to organisational strategy and knowledge processes. This can play a critical role in managing and supporting local governments' KS activities.

CSF 7: Provide training for all employees

Training is critical for effective KS among local government employees. Through training, employees will have a better understanding of the concept of KS. Local government employees need to be educated in using KMS and any other technological tool that can be useful in sharing of knowledge. This will be crucial in ensuring that employees utilise the full potential and capabilities offered by KMS (Wong, 2005:272). Employees should be trained to understand their roles in performing knowledge-related responsibilities. Training will equip employees with skills that foster innovation, creativity, and KS.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The success of KS initiatives can be influenced by CSFs. CSFs are the practices and activities that local government organisations must address to ensure that KS is successfully implemented. If these practices already exist within the municipality, they need to be nurtured. If they are not in place, they need to be developed. Therefore, to solve the research problem, CSFs were identified as best practices to improve KS in SA local government.

The CSFs guide how existing KS practices can be supported and how new initiatives can be developed. The study advises that a culture that promotes KS within SA local government organisations should be developed. Employees should be encouraged to collaborate. Knowledge management systems that will ensure that this collaboration is realised are intranets and groupware systems.

The study, through CSFs, further advises that local government organisations must ensure that KS practices and initiatives are fully supported and promoted by top management. This will ensure that sufficient resources to support KS are allocated. To solve KS problems, KM must be aligned with organisational strategy. Official KM strategies must be developed and aligned to organisational strategies to ensure that top management creates and shares a vision on KS and continually plans on realising the agreed upon KS objectives.

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