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The Impact of Knowledge Management on Organizational Performance with the Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment

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Abstract

This study endeavors to evaluate the impact of knowledge management on organizational performance, with psychological empowerment mediating in higher education institutes and universities. The Likert scale questions were adapted to target teachers, administrators, and other staff at Afghanistan's universities and higher education institutes based on the quantitative research method. The result suggests that there is a significant and direct effect of knowledge management on organizational performance in higher education institutes and universities, with psychological empowerment playing the mediating role between knowledge management and organizational performance, suggesting that if employees of higher education institutes and universities are empowered psychologically (in terms of competence, impact, meaning, and trust), there will be a positive impact on the organizational performance of these higher education institutes and universities.

Key Words: Universities; Knowledge management, Organizational performance; Psychological empowerment; Afghanistan.

JEL Classification: C23; E58; G21; G32; G33

Introduction

Based on the knowledge base view (Grant, 1996), knowledge management is essential and vital, especially in higher education institutes and universities. Therefore we are contributing in this area. Our contribution is to know the significant effect of knowledge management (KM) on organizational performance (OP) and the mediating role of psychological empowerment (PE) between KM and OP. In the current situation, organizations face uncertainty, complexity, quick change, and competition between organizations (Obeidat et al., 2016). Based on the knowledge base view (KBV) (Grant, 1996). Knowledge-related resources are significant for best organizational performance and have sustainable and competitive advantages in such situations (Obeidat et al., 2016). KBV suggests that organizations build value on their abilities to create, transfer, and apply knowledge (Landroguez & Carrión, 2016), especially the effort of business services, which is related to successfully managing organizational knowledge (Obeidat et al., 2016). In the first stage, the universities are involved in learning, creating knowledge, developing, preserving, and spreading knowledge by publication, so they have a significant role in the country's development and economic growth and suggesting new ideas (Full Wood and Rowley, 2017; Tan, 2016; Ahmad et al., 2015). Through practical knowledge management, higher education institutes can develop curriculum, research, learning, strategies of administration, and knowledge management (KM) (Ahmad et al., 2015). KM capability is examined and defined by many scholars who refer to knowledge management (Al-Hakim & Hassan, 2016; Gold et al., 2001). KM is related to the structure of an organization, leadership, and incentives that facilitate KM activities (Al-Hakim &

Hassan, 2016; Cho & Korte, 2014; Ho., 2009). Psychological empowerment is essential in higher education institutes (HEIs) and research universities. KM is crucial for implementing organizational change to reach its goals (Al-Kurdi et al., 2018). So, some KM and education research is helping authors find gaps that must be addressed.

As organizations worldwide face a complex, competitive, and intensive business environment, their customers are changing, so they must focus on different environmental factors to achieve better performance and overcome challenges. These organizations need proper knowledge management in higher education universities to extract value from information for better organizational performance (Arefine et al., 2018). Limited research has been done to investigate the link between knowledge management and organizational performance (Iqbal & Latif, 2018). The base paper investigated the impact of knowledge management enablers on knowledge management processes with the mediating effect of intellectual capital and innovation between knowledge management processes and organizational performance (Amjad Iqbal & Fawad Latif, 2018). However, this study is intended to find the direct impact of knowledge management on organizational performance, investigate and incorporate the experiences of knowledge management, and suggest how administrators and employees of higher education institutes and universities can develop psychological empowerment to enhance organizational performance. Based on (Shahzad et al., 2016 & Amjad Iqbal and Fawad Latif, 2018), there are limited studies available to investigate the linkage between knowledge management and organizational performance, especially in developing countries such as Afghanistan, where no study is available to investigate the direct impact of KM on OP with the mediating role of PE. This study investigated the direct impact of KM on OP. It used PE as a mediating variable to see the impact of KM on OP with the mediating role of PE in higher education institutes and universities in Afghanistan.

2. Literature Review

Organizational performance is a set of actions and behaviors directly related to organizational goals (Abubakar et al., 2017). Moreover, organizational performance is measured by comparing actual and target performance (Herman & Renz, 1998). For an organization to survive and succeed, performing better is imperative and essential (Richard et al., 2009). An organization has to evaluate all actions and decisions taken by managers and the organization (Asree et al., 2010). Measuring organizational performance helps organizations receive feedback about their effectiveness and efficiency in making the right decisions (Adams, Neely, & Kenerley, 2002). In management, measuring organizational success is based on the most critical variables frequently investigated, especially in knowledge-based institutes. Based on Koohange et al. (2017), the progress and improvement of an organization are indicated by OP. Ngah & Ibrahim (2010) explained that the OP "is to compare planned activities with actual activities, research plan deviations, control employee performance, and see the progress of achieving objectives" (p. 503). Akhavane et al. (2014) discussed that the organization's objectives must be met while measuring and examining OP within the research universities to reach a better OP. We need to know about factors affecting organizational performance, such as customer service management, cost, quality, productivity management, performance management, and asset management. These factors might be objective or subjective. The objective measures of an organization's performance are market share, return on investment and equity, cash flow, and profit margin. The subject measures are earning value, the price of the stock, and market value (Richard et al., 2009).

Recently, there have been more developments in organizations, so organizational performance should be measured from multidimensional perspectives (Lpoes Nicloas & Merono Cerdan, 2011). Knowledge management can improve organizational performance and reduce obstacles to organizational operations (Arora, 2002). KM helps in better decision-making for the successful performance of an organization, and KM is considered a performance indicator of organizational performance (Skyrme, 2007). Some scholars argue that it is difficult to analyze and measure the impact of KM on organizational performance because many other factors have an impact, such as organizational culture, communication, and behavior (Nanoka & Teece, 2001). Based on Spritzer (1995, 1997, and 2008), psychological empowerment positively affects organizational performance. Those people and environments that are psychologically empowered perform better than those organizations that are less empowered psychologically. As the current century is known as the knowledge century, it is regarded as an essential resource and asset for organizations. (Obeidate et al., 2016). Knowledge means information, ideas, insights, skills, experience, and expertise; they discuss and argue that only these cannot guarantee success, sustainable organizations, and competitive advantages without effective knowledge management in a well-designed system (Shahzad et al., 2016). KM is a management tool, a set of standards with practices, methods, and techniques aimed at introducing principles and aiming for creating, converting, disseminating, and utilizing knowledge (Palacios et al., 2009, p.292). KM is based on those approaches, which involve formalizing knowledge, expertise, and experience to generate new competencies toward the OP. (Gloet & Terziovski, 2004; Gold et al., 2001). Ramachandran et al. (2013) define KM as being powered by strategic enablers for organizing and implementing knowledge practices.

There are some factors in organizations that facilitate knowledge management activities (Alaarj et al., 2016). In KM, leadership is configuring an organization's KM behavior and strategies, finding opportunities, and promoting organizational learning (Koochange et al., 2017). For opportunities and career development, universities or institutions must make relationships between knowledge-sharing activities and their colleagues (Fullwood et al., 2013; Chenge et al., 2009). Research universities and other places of higher education are places where people can learn new skills and improve their societies. It is vital to share knowledge in knowledge-based societies. Knowledge is reported in reports, studies, journals, and individual understandings before being spread to others (Zadeh, 2010). Furthermore, knowledge acquisition is required to generate new ideas, knowledge, and skills to enhance organizational knowledge. Knowledge sharing is essential for promoting university research (Tan & Noor., 2013). Knowledge utilization is storing, retrieving, using, and transferring (Gold et al., 2001) and exploiting knowledge for the best OP of a business, services, and products. (Lee et al., 2011). Knowledge utilization is essential to form the best product, services, and customer value, including operations, technology, and social facets (Obediat et al., 2016). Many studies motivate employees to share their knowledge and experiences, learn new knowledge, and utilize what they learn in their jobs (Chen, Huang, & Chen, 2012). Knowledge is essential in a business environment where organizations change quickly for sustainable organizational success and competitive advantages (Masadeh et al., 2016; Shehzad et al., 2016). For better performance, KM is equally important in both research universities and HEIs (Masadeh et al., 2017). To reach the best OP, KBV (Grant, 1996), suggests effective and efficient KM (Mazdeh & Hesamamiri, 2014). Generally, knowledge acquisition, sharing, and utilization improve learning and decision-making inside organizations and innovative and profitable products and services (Chiu & Chen, 2016; Masadeh et al., 2016). Mainly,

knowledge sharing helps improve research at research universities (Ismaeel et al., 2015). A large number of studies say that KM has a direct, significant impact on OP (Chiu & Chen, 2016; Ngah et al., 2016; Shehzad et al., 2016), and (Ahmad et al., 2015) that KM and OP have a positive, significant, and direct association between them. So the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. *Knowledge Management has a significant positive and direct effect on organizational performance.*

Psychological Empowerment

The literal definition of empowerment is giving power, authority, permission, strength, and confidence. Employees feel better and give more value to the organization, and we have to psychologically empower them, which leads them to be involved, feel the organization, and work for it (Taghrid et al., 2020). So psychological empowerment leads to employee integration in organizations (Akgunduz & Bardakoglu, 2015). Based on (Eisenbeiss, 2012), a leader's ethical manners make employees feel safe and secure in the workplace, and psychological empowerment involves trust, meaningfulness, efficacy, competency, and autonomy. Based on (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995), psychological empowerment means the following four key points: Autonomy: means to be free and independent in choosing actions to perform duties and jobs. Competency: means the degree of ability to do and perform an action with the required skill. Impact: This means that a person's action has an impact on strategic organizational outcomes, administrative outcomes, and operational outcomes. Meaning: means the individual's interest in the job or how much the job is meaningful to an individual. Trust means how much an individual trusts himself to be treated impartially.

KM has a strong positive impact on psychological empowerment (Zhou, Fan & Son, 2019), job and organizational performance (Change et al., 2017), well-being and flexibility at work, and self-efficacy (Watto et al., 2020). Resources on the job physically, socially, and psychologically help OP and reduce negativity (Agarwale & Farndale, 2017). Employees who are empowered psychologically have higher self-efficacy, reasonable job satisfaction, and higher OP (Erdogan, Ozyilmaze, Bauer, & Emre., 2018). Organizations implementing knowledge management, such as knowledge sharing, utilizing incentives, and rewarding employees, are empowered psychologically. When employees are empowered psychologically, they can use the knowledge in the work and organization they are working in, Spritzer et al. (1995). Empowered employees share knowledge; empowering employees' knowledge is necessary for knowledge management to be feasible (Doll, Dent, & Emtts, 2005). Those psychologically empowered employees use knowledge sharing and obtain knowledge more than those less empowered and competent (Muhammad et al., 2006). Hamadi et al. (2012) several studies found that there is a significant relationship between knowledge management and psychological empowerment.

RH2. *Knowledge management has a positive impact on psychological empowerment.*

According to Spritzer (2008), psychological empowerment is a set of states that an individual requires in order to feel, think, and control their work, and he classified psychological empowerment into four dimensions: the first is fitness, which is the fit of an individual with his or her specific need; the second is competence, which is the individual's belief in which the first one is the fitness of an individual with his or her specific need and it is classified as meaning, (Spritzer, 1995, 2008; Spritzer et al., 1997). Spritzer (1995). Moreover, these four dimensions of PE may lead to better OP. According

to Hall (2008), a person who assigns more meaning to their work is likelier to achieve their goals than someone who assigns less meaning to them. Based on (Gist & Mitchell., 1992), more competent employees perform better than less competent employees. Based on (Spritzer et al., 1997), concerning self-determination, those with more autonomy to determine their work come up with innovative ideas and better solutions to achieve organizational goals with qualitative products and services. (Spritzer et al, 1997). Finally, employees who perceive have more influence over their work, organizational outcomes, and goals than those who do not (Avey et al., 2011). Many researchers suggest that private organization employees who have been empowered psychologically have a positive and significant impact on organizational performance (Seibert et al., 2011; Spritzer et al., 1997)

For better job performance of an employee, the psychological empowerment of individuals is essential (Spritzer., 1995), and when employees share knowledge in between, they feel that they are psychologically empowered. Those employees who are empowered are sharing the knowledge they got at work. Knowledge sharing and innovation of knowledge are not possible without the psychological empowerment of employees (Doll, Deng, & Metts, 2005). For maintaining knowledge management acquisition, sharing, transfer, and utilization), trust is the foundation for these activities (Paliszkievicz, 2017). According to (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), creativity establishes a link between KM and OP, and many studies suggest a positive relationship between KM and OP. The mediating role of psychological empowerment is suggested by (Pieterse et al., 2010). Studies have shown that psychological empowerment positively affects employees' behavior at work. High psychological empowerment eliminates obstacles and increases creative ideas' implementation (Hemline et al., 2006). People interaction makes knowledge a competitive advantage, which makes connections between individuals and work entities to perform better tasks and activities (Argote & Fahrenkopf, 2016).

Furthermore, specific methodologies of knowledge management lead to organizational performance (Yildiz, 2014), and knowledge in organizations leads to organizational efficiency, advantages, and creativity that result in organizational performance (Hennekam & Bennett, 2017). The more knowledge management in the organization, the more it gives confidence to the employees, and the more it enhances psychological empowerment, the more they will work hard. Therefore, this significant relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance, which previous studies have already supported, is proposed to be mediated by psychological empowerment.

RH3. *Psychological empowerment has a significant positive impact on organizational performance.*

RH4. *Psychological empowerment has a mediating effect on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance.*

Underpinning Theory

This study follows the theoretical base of the knowledge base view (KBV) from Gold et al.'s (2001) KBV, which was initially taken from the resource base view of organizations. A firm is considered to know a valuable resource that cannot be copied and is very rare (Grant, 1996). KBV suggests that knowledge is a valuable asset that is not depreciable and has competitive advantages for organizations (Seleim & Khalil, 2007; Grant, 1996). KBV is the most frequently cited in the KM literature, and (Gold et al., 2001) proposed knowledge infrastructure and capability. (Cho & Korte, 2014; Chang & Chuang, 2011; Ho, 2009) proposed that the KM capability model suggests influencing not only the

effectiveness of an organization but also providing an environment and helping to support the OP. So, those organizations reach their goals and perform better when they manage their knowledge effectively and efficiently (Zack et al., 2009). Based on the theoretical perspective, this study suggests using a joint model to examine the relationship between KM, PE, and OP (Iqbal et al., 2018).

3. Research Methodology

Preliminary Data Gathering Procedure

The title of this study is "The Impact of Knowledge Management on Organizational Performance with the Mediating Rule of Psychological Empowerment in Higher Education Institutes and Universities in Afghanistan. The data is distributed online using Google Forms and sent to the teachers and employees of higher education universities and institutes. The questionnaire is based on a five-point Likert scale, and the population has selected one of the five options. After filling out the questionnaire, all respondents submitted it online. The data is downloaded from Google forms and analyzed using SPSS software for further discussion.

Research Approach and Design

Since this study is quantitative, we used a deductive approach. This study aims to find out how directly knowledge management affects organizational performance and how psychological empowerment affects the relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance in universities and colleges in Afghanistan. As this is a quantitative study, the data is collected from the respondents' questionnaires by the employees of higher education institutes and universities, and SPSS and other statistical tools analyze the collected data. This study is quantitative, in which a cross-sectional study is used in which the researcher takes responses from the respondents or collects data at a single point in time and uses it for more analysis later on using different analysis tools.

Population of the Study

According to the website of the ministry of higher education in Afghanistan, there are 39 governmental and 128 private universities, where around 10000 employees work. Based on RaoSoft's website for sample size, if we take the margin of error as 6%, the confidence level as 94%, and the total population as 10000 employees, responses from the distributed questionnaire form are 50%, so we took 240 as the sample size for this study.

Sampling Procedure

On the website of the ministry of higher education in Afghanistan, there are 39 governmental and 128 private universities. The government and most private universities are closed now, thus compromising data availability. Because of this, it is generally assumed that there are 10,000 employees, and a sample size of 6,000 with a 94% confidence level is chosen, which means that the sample size is 240. The data is also collected from teachers and other employees at universities and institutes of higher education. For this research, a nonprobability convenient sampling method is used. The employees (teachers and other staff) are chosen from different private higher education universities and institutes, and the questionnaires are taken from relevant articles and changed for this research. A Google Form is made from the questionnaires and sent to the employees (teachers and other staff) of higher education universities and institutes in different provinces of Afghanistan, mainly in Kabul and Nangarhar, who collected their

responses online. SPSS software and different procedures are then used to analyze the data.

Operationalization of Variables

This study has three variables: knowledge management is the independent variable, organizational performance is the dependent variable, and psychological empowerment is the mediating variable. We used different techniques and functions of SPSS software to measure the variable. The correlation function measures the relationship between variables and hypothesis testing. The regression analysis tests the mediation effect of a mediator (psychological empowerment) between knowledge management and organizational performance. Based on skewness and kurtosis, the reliability function in SPSS tests the data's normality, and the Cronbach Alpha value tests the reliability.

Table 1: Variables and Items Resources

No	Variable	Items	Sources
1	Knowledge Management	4	Alge, B. (2006). "Information Privacy in Organizations: Empowering Creative and Extrarole Performance," <i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i> , 91, 221-232.
2	Psychological Empowerment	3	Spreitzer, G.M. (1995). Psychological empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation, <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> , 1442-1465.
3	Organizational Performance	5	Drew, S. (1997). From knowledge to action: The impact of benchmarking on organizational performance. <i>Long Range Planning</i> , 30, 427-441. Deshpande, R., U. Jarley, & F. Webster (1993). Corporate culture, customer orientation, and innovativeness in Japanese firms: A quadrant analysis., <i>Journal of Marketing</i> , pp. 57, 23-37

Source: Authors compilation

For this study, we adapted the questionnaire and made a google form. The link to google forms was shared with the employees of higher education universities and institutes in different private and governmental institutes in Afghanistan through their emails, WhatsApp, and other online sites. In the response, 240 reverted with complete responses.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

Demographics of the Study

A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed to employees of higher education institutes and universities in Afghanistan, and the study's response rate for the questionnaire was 80%. The total male respondents' percentage is 83.7%, and the total female respondents' percentage is 16.3%. The number of respondents whose age is below 20 years is 4. Those aged between 20 and 30 are 76, 31 and 40 are 134, 41 and 50 are 24, and above 50 are 2. Six have a high school diploma, 100 have a bachelor's degree, 126 have a master's degree, and 8 have a Ph.D. Of these respondents, 23.8% have 1-5 years of experience, 46.7% have 6-10 years of experience, 20.8% have 11-15 years of experience, and 8.8% have 16 years or more of experience.

Data Reliability Test

The primary data is collected from people and tested for reliability "Cronbach's alpha) to see whether the data is reliable or not. There are three variables in this study, but the overall reliability test is shown in the table below, and the Cronbach Alpha is 0.906. Based on the Uma Sekaran, the Cronbach Alpha value range is between zero and one. For the data to be reliable, the minimum value of the Cronbach Alpha must be higher than 0.6,

and as long as the Cronbach Alpha is near 1, the data will be reliable. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha is near one, which means the data is reliable.

Table 2: Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.906	12

Source: Data output from SPSS

Furthermore, the table below shows each variable's Cronbach Alpha value. The first variable is knowledge management. It has four items, and Cronbach Alpha is 0.882, which means the data related to the knowledge management variable is reliable. The second variable is psychological empowerment, and this variable has three items. The value of Cronbach Alpha is 0.787, so this variable-related data is also reliable. The third variable is organizational performance, and this variable has five items, the value of Cronbach Alpha is 0.882, which is more significant than 0.6. Hence, data related to this variable is also reliable.

Table 3: Cronbach Alpha value

S. N	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Deleted Items	N of Items
1	Knowledge Management	0.88	0	4
2	Psychological Empowerment	0.78	0	3
3	Organizational Performance	0.88	0	5
4	Total Items			12

Source: Data output from SPSS

Descriptive Statistics Analysis and Findings

We did a descriptive analysis to see and have information about all of our data. The mean of the data, the standard deviation, the minimum and maximum numbers, and the skewness and kurtosis of the data are shown in the table below. The below table shows us how many people respond to each variable and what the mean and standard deviation are. Based on the responses and as shown in the table, the skewness and kurtosis are between +1 and -1, so the data related to all mentioned variables are normal.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Data

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						S	Std. E	S	Std. E
KM	240	1.00	4.00	2.27	.82	.41	.15	-.43	.31
PE	240	1.00	4.33	1.82	.66	.68	.15	.40	.31
OP	240	1.00	4.60	2.16	.81	.69	.15	.28	.31
V	240								

Source: Data output from SPSS

Based on the 4 table, each variable normality is discussed. For knowledge management, the mean is 2.3, meaning that respondents are almost in agreement, and the data spread around the mean is 0.82. The skewness range is between +- 1, and the kurtosis value is also between +- 1, so the data for the KM variable is normal. For psychological empowerment, the mean is 1.8, meaning that respondents are almost in agreement, and the data spread around the mean is 0.67.

The skewness range is between +- 1, and the kurtosis value is also between +- 1, so the data for the PE variable is normal. For organizational performance, the mean is 2.1, which means that respondents almost agree, and the data spread around the mean is 0.81. The skewness range is between +-1, and the kurtosis value is also between +- 1, so the data for the OP variable is normal.

Correlations

For the level of correlation, which must be between +1 and -1, if the Pearson correlation is near 1, a high level of correlation is available; if the Pearson correlation is near or equal to 0.5, there is a moderate level of correlation between variables; and if the Pearson correlation is less than 0.5, there is a low level of correlation available. We have to look at the table below for the significance, whether the two variables are significant. If the significance value is less than 0.05, one variable significantly affects another variable, and the null hypothesis is rejected. If the significance value is more than 0.05, the two variables have an insignificant impact.

Based on the above calculation and analysis, if we look at the table below, the correlation between KM and PE is a positive and moderately significant relationship because the Pearson correlation is 0.5, and the P value is 0.000. The correlation between KM and OP is above a moderately significant level because the Pearson correlation is 0.61, and the significance value is 0.000. The correlation between PE and is a moderately significant positive relationship because the Pearson correlation =0.5 and the significance value is 0.000. So, based on the above analysis and the table below, all three hypotheses are accepted.

Table 5: Correlations

		Knowledge Management	Psychological Empowerment	Organizational Performance
Knowledge Management	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (1-tailed)			
	N	240		
Psychological Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.474**	1	
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		
	N	240	240	
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	.610**	.479**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	240	240	240

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).*

Source: Data output from SPSS

Regression and Mediation Analysis

The following table shows the variable type, the abbreviation used for each variable, and the sample size.

Table 6: Regression Model

Y	Organizational Performance
X	Knowledge Management
M	Psychological Empowerment
Sample Size 240	

Source: Data output from SPSS

Outcome Variable: Psychological Empowerment

As shown in the table below, the value of R-square is 0.225, which means that the independent variable (knowledge management) has a 23% significant effect on the mediating variable (psychological empowerment), and the p-value is 0, which shows that there is a significant effect between KM and OP.

Table 7: Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	Df1	Df2	p
0.4744	0.2251	0.3451	69.1189	1.000	238.00	0.0000

Source: Data output from SPSS

From the table below, the direct effect of the independent variable (KM) on the dependent variable (OP) is 0.4916, which means that there is a 49% significant effect between KM and OP, as the P value is 0.000, below 0.05. It also shows the direct significance effect between KM and OP.

Table 8: Indirect effect (s) of X on Y:

	Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
Psychological Empowerment	0.1154	0.0313	0.0614	0.1855

Source: Data output from SPSS

The below table is the conclusion about the accepting or rejecting of the hypotheses:

Table 9: Hypothesis

SN	Hypothesis	Status
1	RH1. Knowledge Management has significant, positive, and direct effects on organizational performance	Accepted
2	RH2. Knowledge management has a significant positive impact on psychological empowerment.	Accepted
3	RH3. Psychological empowerment has a significant positive impact on organizational performance.	Accepted
4	RH4. Psychological empowerment has a mediating effect on the relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance.	Accepted

Source: Authors compilation

Discussions

The base paper discussed knowledge management, and in knowledge management, they divided knowledge into knowledge management enablers. That study proved that knowledge management significantly impacts the knowledge management process. In this study, general knowledge management is explained and discussed; in the base paper, they have taken two mediators, innovation and intellectual capital; in this study, psychological empowerment is taken as a mediator, and it is proved that there is a significant effect of psychological empowerment between knowledge management and organizational performance, which is also suggested by Iqbal et al. (2018). Knowledge management is taken in both studies as a dependent variable. It is proved in the base paper that knowledge management enablers have a positive and significant effect on the knowledge management process.

The knowledge management process has a significant and direct effect on organizational performance. It is also proved that innovation and intellectual capital mediate between knowledge management process and organizational performance. This study also revealed after analyzing the data that knowledge management has a significant positive direct impact on organizational performance, and psychological empowerment plays the mediating role between knowledge management and organizational performance. This study investigated that by testing mediation, hypotheses, and regression analysis. We concluded that psychological empowerment plays a mediating role between knowledge management and organizational performance. To know whether we achieved the research objectives and answered the research questions or not, we will discuss it as follows:

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Knowledge management is essential, and many studies have been done in this field. It is also imperative to manage knowledge in higher education institutions such as universities and institutes, so this study is aimed at examining the direct impact of KM on OP and the mediating role of PE between KM and OP. Knowledge management is enhanced by a KM-friendly culture (norms, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors) (Valaei et al., 2017). Organizations whose cultures have collaboration, openness, trust, and learning will improve the exchange and creation of knowledge (Lee & Choi, 2003), leading to KM's success (Change & Chuang, 2011). This research shows that effective knowledge management leads to student satisfaction, curricula development, responsiveness, and research productivity for environmental challenges. This study's findings provide empirical evidence of the importance of KM's indirect, significant impact on OP through the mediating role of PE in higher education universities in Afghanistan. This study provides evidence that not only IC and I lead to better organizational performance, but psychological empowerment also leads to superior OP.

Recommendations

Knowledge management is essential for development, especially in developing countries, and knowledge management in higher education institutes is necessary. We must work more in this area and convince others to do so because universities and higher education institutes are places to train talents and spread knowledge. With some practical and theoretical implications, some limitations can be considered in future research. The first is about the population size for the present study; future research may be conducted for a large population from different universities and higher education institutes around the country. As this study is conducted on general knowledge management, for future study, it is suggested that a specific area of knowledge management, such as knowledge sharing, knowledge utilization, and resource management. Further work is needed on specific areas of psychological empowerment, such as trust and self-efficacy. Future researchers can evaluate separately for private higher education universities and institutes and public or governmental higher education universities and institutes because both are different. Finally, this research can be done in other developing countries because the education system and culture differ.

Implications

The findings of this study lead to productivity in research, the satisfaction of students, and the development of curricula (Iqbal et al., 2018). This study validates the KBV in higher education universities and institutes through adequate knowledge management resources to reach better organizational performance. This research also highlights the importance of knowledge management in higher education universities (Ahmad et al., 2015), supporting (Shahzad et al., 2016) that effective KM implementation is an essential source of better organizational performance and competitive advantages. In conclusion, this study contributes that applying sufficient knowledge in higher education institutions such as universities and institutes enhances organizational performance. Higher psychological empowerment increases individual performance, leading to superior organizational performance. A complete strategic plan and a separate team for knowledge management activities should exist. Other researchers suggest that HEU and institutes can be fostered by openness, communication, recognition (Yasir et al., 2017), and other tasks, such as training, workshops, and gathering activities (Tan, 2016). Previous research has shown the relationship between KM and OP performance (e.g., Ahmed et

al., 2015). However, psychological empowerment is neglected, so this study investigates, and KBV shows that KM contributes to OP through the mediating role of PE.

Authors Contributions

The authors confirm their contribution to the paper as follows: study conception, data collection, model evaluation, analysis, and design: ZM; interpretation of results and draft manuscript preparation: SG. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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