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Enhancing Local Economic Development Through Knowledge Sharing: Barriers, Practices, and Strategic Implications in Kwazulu-Natal

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Abstract: Objectives: This paper aims to explore and identify the barriers to knowledge sharing in Local Economic Development (LED) practices in KwaZulu-Natal. Understanding these barriers is crucial for improving LED implementation, which is vital for job creation and poverty reduction. **Prior Work:** The research builds on existing studies that emphasize the importance of collaborative governance and information flow in LED. It contributes to the broader discourse on knowledge management in public sector development initiatives. **Approach:** A mixed-methods approach was employed. Quantitative data were collected through questionnaires administered to 86 government employees involved in LED, while qualitative insights were gathered from interviews with 22 senior government managers. Triangulation was used to integrate and validate findings from both data sets. **Results:** Findings reveal that critical LED-related information is often siloed, stored on personal devices, and only shared during formal meetings or upon request. This limits transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making among stakeholders. **Implications:** The lack of a centralized information-sharing platform hinders investor confidence and leads to duplication of efforts. A coordinated system is needed to enhance accessibility and reliability of LED data. **Value:** This paper offers a unique contribution by highlighting the practical knowledge-sharing gaps in LED and proposing systemic solutions to improve intergovernmental collaboration and economic planning.

Keywords: Local Economic Development (LED); Knowledge Sharing Barriers; Intergovernmental Collaboration

JEL Classification: O18, O20, D83, H83

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1. Introduction

The need for a more robust and integrated knowledge discovery environment within data discovery centres has become increasingly evident, particularly in contexts where informed decision-making is essential for development (Majola, 2019). In South Africa, Local Economic Development (LED) is a strategic initiative aimed at promoting economic growth and improving livelihoods at regional and local levels. LED recognizes that collaborative efforts among government departments, businesses, and civil society are critical to restructuring local economies in ways that stimulate job creation and reduce poverty (DPLG, 2006–2011). The focus of LED in South Africa has increasingly shifted toward addressing socio-economic inequalities. Achieving this goal requires coordinated action and sustained partnerships among diverse stakeholders to ensure the success and sustainability of LED initiatives (Rogerson, 2010; DPLG, 2006–2011). Despite the varying definitions of LED, the South African LED Network (SALGA, 2011) identifies two core principles: it is an ongoing process, and it is driven by local actors across all sectors of society. These principles underscore the importance of shared responsibility and collaboration between the public sector, private enterprises, and civil society in fostering inclusive and sustainable local economic development.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Understanding Local Economic Development (LED)

Local Economic Development (LED) is a multifaceted and evolving concept, interpreted in various ways across disciplines and contexts. At its core, LED refers to the capacity of a local economy to stimulate growth and generate employment by leveraging local resources (Leigh & Blakey, 2016). It also emphasizes collaborative partnerships among local governments, civil society, and the private sector to manage resources and promote economic development within a defined area (Rogerson, 2010; Blakey & Leigh, 2010). The World Bank and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA, 2011) define LED as a process of building economic capacity to improve the quality of life for residents. The South African National Framework for LED (DPLG, 2006–2011) further positions LED as a platform for stakeholder engagement in strategy and program implementation. Despite its broad application, LED lacks a unified theoretical framework and draws

from diverse disciplines such as economics, geography, and regional science (Rowe, 2012; 2016).

LED is typically assessed using indicators like GDP per capita, industrial output, and urbanization rates, which reflect the impact of macroeconomic strategies on local development (Li et al., 2021). In South Africa, LED is a pro-poor, integrated approach aimed at poverty alleviation and the inclusion of the informal economy into the mainstream economy (Ramukumba et al., 2012).

Effective LED strategies often include:

- Reducing economic leakages by promoting local resource use
- Encouraging local procurement and financial recycling
- Adding value to local products before export
- Building stakeholder networks and local marketing alliances
- Attracting external investment, skills, and technology
- Promoting local identity through branding
- Facilitating direct sales via local markets and events (Novelli, Schmitz & Spencer, 2006).

These strategies aim to enhance local competitiveness, support marginal enterprises, and influence investment decisions that yield broader socio-economic benefits (Vaturi, Portnov & Gradus, 2011).

2.2. South African LED Experiences

In South Africa, LED has been a key policy tool for addressing post-apartheid socio-economic disparities. Over the past two decades, the state has led LED initiatives to promote inclusive development and economic redress (Nel & Rogerson, 2015). Local stakeholders collaborate to mobilize resources and maximize economic potential (Wekwete & Chancellor, 2014). The South African LED Framework (2006–2011) emphasizes improving community access to economic opportunities, enhancing program coordination, and fostering partnerships between government and non-government actors (SALGA, 2011). However, challenges persist. These include:

- Unclear policy roles and fragmented implementation (Turok, 2010)

- Weak institutional support and knowledge-sharing systems (Malefane, 2009; Majola, 2020)
- Limited financial and human resources, poor coordination with the private sector, and inadequate internal controls (Carrim, 2011)

Moreover, the absence of standardized monitoring tools has hindered municipalities from learning from past experiences (Majola, 2020). In some cases, shared knowledge is outdated or insufficient, further impeding progress. The adoption of digital innovations, such as smart city frameworks, is proposed as a means to enhance LED outcomes and improve service delivery (Majola, 2020).

2.2.1. Knowledge and Its Importance in Economic Development

Knowledge is an intangible yet vital asset that complements other organizational resources such as financial and physical capital to build capabilities and drive performance (Grant, 2013). It is broadly categorized into two types: **tacit** and **codified** (or explicit) knowledge.

- **Tacit knowledge** is deeply personal, context-specific, and difficult to formalize. It encompasses individual skills, experiences, and insights that are often transferred through social interaction and shared practice (Caballero-Anthony et al., 2021).
- **Codified knowledge**, by contrast, is structured, formalized, and easily communicated or stored in formats such as documents, databases, and manuals (Chen et al., 2024; Caballero-Anthony, Cook & Chen, 2021; Woo, Jang & Kim, 2015).

These two forms of knowledge are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Effective knowledge utilization often requires a dynamic interplay between tacit understanding and codified information (Massingham, 2014). Knowledge plays a pivotal role in economic development by enhancing productivity, fostering innovation, and enabling technological advancement. The table below outlines various perspectives on how knowledge contributes to economic growth:

Table 1. Knowledge as a Critical Factor in Economic Development

Perspective	Description and Author(s)
Historical Perspective	Classical economists such as Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Joseph Schumpeter emphasized the role of knowledge in economic growth through skill, technology, and innovation (Shapira et al., 2006).

Modern Economy	In the contemporary global economy, knowledge is a cornerstone of competitiveness. The “knowledge economy” underscores the value of intangible assets like information and expertise (Shapira et al., 2006; Little & Green, 2009).
Technological Progress	Knowledge fuels technological innovation, a key driver of economic development in both classical and endogenous growth theories (Liu, Ji & Ge, 2024).
Organizational Knowledge	Within firms, knowledge is a strategic resource that underpins competitive advantage and long-term sustainability (Valmohammadi & Amidi, 2020).
Innovation	Innovation is rooted in knowledge creation and application, enabling the development of new products, services, and processes that stimulate economic growth (Szopik-Depczyńska et al., 2020; McCarthy & Aalbers, 2022).
Strategic Resource	Knowledge is increasingly recognized as a strategic economic asset, essential for unlocking value from other resources and enhancing operational efficiency (Wu, 2009; Maravilhas & Martins, 2019).

Therefore, knowledge is indispensable to economic development. It drives innovation, supports technological progress, and sustains competitive advantage in an increasingly knowledge-driven global economy.

Knowledge as a Product The concept of knowledge as a product has gained increasing attention across various disciplines, reflecting its multifaceted nature and strategic value in modern economies. Knowledge is not only a critical input in product development but also a standalone product that can be created, managed, and commercialized. Knowledge—both tacit and explicit, plays a central role in driving innovation and enhancing product performance. Tacit knowledge, embedded in individual expertise and experience, complements explicit knowledge, which is codified and easily transferable. Together, they form the foundation for knowledge-based innovation (Xu & Bernard, 2011; Faria-Silva & Baião, 2023; Chang, 2017). The production of knowledge products involves several interconnected processes, including creation, validation, dissemination, and consumption. These processes are

shaped by interactions among institutions, individuals, and systems, which collectively establish routines, practices, and methodologies for knowledge generation and use (Ernst & Preston, 2020). In organisational contexts, knowledge is a strategic asset that supports decision-making, improves performance, and sustains competitiveness. Effective knowledge management particularly the integration and sharing of tacit and explicit knowledge is essential for leveraging its full potential (Akbar, Malik & Warraich, 2023). As such, knowledge as a product is not only a driver of innovation but also a key determinant of market success and organizational resilience.

2.3. Barriers to Knowledge Sharing

Despite its value, the sharing of knowledge is often hindered by various barriers, which can significantly limit its impact. These barriers are typically categorized into two levels: individual and organisational (Hong et al., 2011). Knowledge sharing is essential for fostering organizational learning, enhancing intellectual capital, and improving competitive advantage (Gil-Garcia & Sayogo, 2016). Overcoming these barriers requires a deliberate strategy that promotes a culture of openness, trust, and collaboration. Recognising knowledge as a product and addressing the barriers to its sharing are both critical for organizations aiming to thrive in knowledge-intensive environments.

2.3.1. Individual and Organizational Barriers to Knowledge Sharing

Individual barriers refer to the internal factors that hinder a person's willingness or ability to share knowledge with others. These barriers often stem from psychological, motivational, or perceptual issues (Hong et al., 2011). Key individual-level obstacles include:

- **Lack of trust:** When individuals do not trust their colleagues, they may withhold knowledge out of fear it will be misused or unacknowledged.
- **Low motivation:** Without clear incentives or recognition, individuals may not see the value in sharing what they know.
- **Limited awareness:** If employees are unaware of new or relevant knowledge, they are unlikely to seek it out or share it.
- **Language and jargon:** The use of unfamiliar terminology or departmental jargon can create communication barriers, making knowledge inaccessible to others.

On the organizational level, several structural and cultural factors can impede knowledge sharing:

- Resistance to change: Organizations that are risk-averse may avoid adopting new knowledge or practices, preferring to stick with familiar routines.
- Bureaucracy: Excessive formal procedures and hierarchical structures can slow down or block the flow of knowledge.
- Geographical dispersion: Teams working on the same project but located in different regions may struggle to share knowledge effectively, especially when face-to-face interaction is limited (Hong et al., 2011).

These barriers, summarised, highlight the importance of fostering a culture of trust, openness, and collaboration to enable effective knowledge sharing. Addressing both individual and organizational obstacles is essential for building intellectual capital and enhancing overall performance.

2.4. The Importance of Knowledge Sharing in Local Economic Development

Knowledge sharing plays a pivotal role in strengthening local economies by fostering innovation, enhancing competitiveness, and supporting sustainable development. Collaboration between industry and educational institutions is particularly impactful, as it enables the pooling of research resources, the incubation of new businesses, and the development of region-specific solutions (Muthusamy et al., 2023). In the context of a knowledge-based economy, economic growth is increasingly driven by knowledge-intensive activities. These activities have reshaped innovation policy and regional development strategies. However, local governments often face challenges in cultivating competitive regions through innovation (Wenjuan & Zhao, 2024). The economic success of cities is closely tied to their ability to generate and commercialize new knowledge, attract skilled talent, and support innovative enterprises (Carvalho, Santos & van Winden, 2014).

Moreover, knowledge sharing is essential for achieving broader development goals, including improvements in the Human Development Index (HDI) and progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite this, the capacity of local communities to generate and exchange knowledge is frequently underestimated. Integrating local knowledge, especially in data-scarce environments can enrich scientific understanding, fill critical information gaps, and enhance the

relevance and credibility of development initiatives (Vasileiou et al., 2022). Effective local economic development also depends on robust regional support networks. The Triple Helix model which emphasizes collaboration among universities, industry, and government has been foundational in regional innovation systems. Expanding this to a Quadruple Helix model, which includes civil society and local communities, further strengthens the innovation ecosystem by grounding it in local realities and needs (Alizadeh, 2010). Knowledge is also recognized as a public good non-rivalrous and non-exclusive making its widespread dissemination essential for economic and technological advancement. However, market mechanisms alone may not ensure its optimal distribution. Strategic government intervention is often necessary to support the creation, diffusion, and equitable access to knowledge products (Xu et al., 2024). Knowledge sharing is a cornerstone of local economic development. It drives innovation, supports entrepreneurship, and fosters inclusive and sustainable growth. Realising its full potential requires cross-sector collaboration, investment in local knowledge systems, and policies that recognize knowledge as both a strategic asset and a public good.

2.5. Knowledge Management Theory

Knowledge Management (KM) is a multidisciplinary approach focused on the systematic creation, sharing, utilization, and retention of knowledge within organizations to enhance sustainability, innovation, and competitive advantage (Hossain et al., 2022; Barrantes-Briceño, Almada Santos & Nagano, 2024). The theory of KM is grounded in the understanding that knowledge is a strategic organizational resource, essential for improving efficiency, adaptability, and long-term success.

Key Components of Knowledge Management:

- Knowledge Creation and Acquisition-involves generating new knowledge through innovation and learning, and acquiring existing knowledge from both internal and external sources.
- Knowledge Dissemination- refers to the effective sharing and distribution of knowledge within the organization to ensure timely access to relevant information.
- Knowledge Utilisation - focuses on applying knowledge to enhance decision-making, solve problems, improve processes, and support strategic goals.

- Knowledge Management Lifecycle- the KM process typically follows four stages: creation, acquisition, dissemination and utilization.

2.6. Strategic Importance of Knowledge Management

Includes competitive advantage where a well-managed knowledge can serve as a unique and inimitable asset, offering a sustainable competitive edge in a globalized and innovation-driven economy (Matzler et al., 2008; Martínez-Pérez, Elche & García-Villaverde, 2021). While, in terms of organisational performance, KM practices are directly linked to improved innovation capacity, operational efficiency, and the achievement of strategic goals (Martínez-Pérez, Elche & García-Villaverde, 2021).

2.6.1. Challenges and Considerations

Technology Integration relates to the use of Knowledge Management Systems (KMS) as an essential for capturing, storing, and disseminating knowledge, particularly in large organizations (Caballero-Anthony, Cook & Chen, 2021; Sardjono, Retnowardhani & Kristin, 2024). While large enterprises often struggle with the complexity of KM implementation, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) may have greater awareness of internal knowledge flows but often lack the resources to formalize KM systems (Wielgórka, 2023). Knowledge Management Theory underscores the strategic value of knowledge as a core organizational asset. By outlining key processes-creation, dissemination, and utilisation it provides a framework for organizations to harness knowledge effectively. Whether through advanced systems in large enterprises or informal practices in SMEs, KM remains essential for fostering innovation, improving performance, and sustaining competitive advantage.

2.6.2. Nonaka's SECI Model

The SECI model, developed by Nonaka, outlines four dynamic phases of knowledge conversion within organizations:

1. Socialization – Sharing tacit knowledge through shared experiences.
2. Externalization – Converting tacit knowledge into explicit concepts.
3. Combination – Integrating different bodies of explicit knowledge.

4. Internalization – Embedding explicit knowledge into individuals’ tacit knowledge through learning and practice.

A key element of the model is the concept of Ba, which refers to the shared space or context that enables knowledge creation and exchange. While the SECI model is widely supported by empirical research, its effectiveness can vary across different cultural and business contexts, suggesting the need for contextual adaptation (Samuel et al., 2011; Canonico et al., 2020; Hakmaoui et al., 2022).

3. Methodology

This research employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research problem through triangulation (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The integration of these methods allowed for a more robust analysis by capturing both numerical trends and contextual insights.

3.1. Data Collection

Data were collected from various government departments in the KwaZulu-Natal province, recognising that Local Economic Development (LED) is a cross-cutting initiative involving multiple sectors. The paper targeted departments actively engaged in LED practices.

- Quantitative data were gathered through a structured questionnaire administered to 86 participants.
- Qualitative data were obtained via semi-structured interviews with 22 senior managers, who are key decision-makers in LED implementation.

A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that participants had relevant experience and involvement in LED activities.

3.2. Data Analysis

- Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. Statistical techniques such as Chi-square tests and Pearson correlation were employed to assess the strength and significance of relationships between dependent and independent

variables. Regression analysis was conducted to estimate the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

- Qualitative data were analyzed using NVivo software, which facilitated thematic coding and interpretation of interview transcripts to identify patterns and insights related to knowledge sharing and LED practices.

4. Findings and Discussion

The findings of this paper offer critical insights into the role of knowledge sharing in advancing Local Economic Development (LED) in KwaZulu-Natal, as well as the key challenges that hinder its effectiveness.

4.1. Barriers to Knowledge Sharing

A prominent theme that emerged from the research is the presence of multiple barriers that obstruct effective knowledge exchange among LED stakeholders. Consistent with the literature (Hong et al., 2011), the paper identified several individual-level barriers, including:

- Mistrust among departments and individuals, which discourages open communication.
- Lack of motivation to share knowledge, especially when there are no clear incentives or recognition mechanisms.
- Limited awareness of existing knowledge resources, resulting in underutilization of valuable information.

Participants reported that knowledge often remains confined within individual departments and is typically accessed only through personal initiative or infrequent face-to-face interactions. This siloed approach significantly limits the potential for cross-departmental collaboration and innovation. Moreover, the absence of an integrated, technology-enabled knowledge management system was highlighted as a major structural barrier. Without centralized platforms for storing and accessing information, knowledge remains fragmented and difficult to retrieve, reinforcing departmental isolation. Additional organisational barriers include:

- Bureaucratic procedures that slow down or restrict the flow of information.

- High levels of classified or politically sensitive data, which limit transparency and discourage open sharing.

These findings align with existing research and underscore the need for a more cohesive, trust-based, and technologically supported knowledge-sharing environment to enhance LED outcome. The research further highlights a weak culture of knowledge sharing, particularly within the context of Local Economic Development (LED), where both individual and organizational motivation to share knowledge is notably low. As Stair and Reynolds (2012) emphasize, effective knowledge sharing both within and between organizations requires a culture rooted in transparency, strong leadership support, and appropriate incentives. However, findings from this paper reveal a lack of these enabling conditions. Respondents reported minimal leadership engagement and insufficient motivation mechanisms, which collectively hinder collaboration. As a result, municipal departments often operate in silos, pursuing isolated initiatives rather than engaging in coordinated, cross-departmental efforts that could enhance LED outcomes.

4.2. Organizational Culture and Leadership in Knowledge Management

Organizational culture and leadership are foundational to the success of knowledge management (KM) initiatives. This paper reveals that a weak culture of knowledge sharing significantly undermines Local Economic Development (LED) efforts in KwaZulu-Natal. Both individual and institutional reluctance to share knowledge driven by low motivation, lack of trust, and minimal leadership support contribute to fragmented practices and siloed operations across municipal departments.

4.3. The Role of Organizational Culture

A knowledge-sharing culture is characterized by openness, collaboration, trust, and continuous learning. As Stair and Reynolds (2012) argue, such a culture is essential for fostering both intra- and inter-organizational knowledge flows. However, the findings indicate that many departments operate in isolation, with knowledge often retained within individuals or units and shared only through informal or infrequent interactions. This aligns with the SECI model (Nonaka & Takeuchi), which emphasises the dynamic conversion of tacit and explicit knowledge through four modes: Socialization, Externalization, Combination, and Internalization. For these processes to function effectively, a supportive cultural context referred to as Ba is

required. Ba represents the shared space (physical, virtual, or mental) where knowledge is created and exchanged. In the absence of such a space, as observed in this paper, the SECI model's potential is significantly constrained.

4.4. Leadership as an Enabler of Knowledge Management

Leadership plays a critical role in shaping organizational culture and enabling KM practices. Effective leaders act as knowledge champions, promoting transparency, encouraging collaboration, and allocating resources for KM systems and initiatives. The lack of visible leadership support, as reported by participants, contributes to low engagement in knowledge-sharing activities and a general undervaluing of knowledge as a strategic asset. The Knowledge Management Lifecycle comprising creation, acquisition, dissemination, and utilization requires leadership to guide each phase. Leaders must ensure that knowledge is not only generated but also effectively shared and applied to support decision-making and innovation. Without this strategic oversight, KM efforts risk becoming disjointed and ineffective.

4.5. Strategic Implications and Theoretical Integration

The Knowledge-Based View (KBV) of the firm position's knowledge as a key resource for achieving sustainable competitive advantage. From this perspective, leadership and culture are not peripheral but central to the development of organizational capabilities. Similarly, the Triple Helix and Quadruple Helix models emphasize the importance of collaboration among government, academia, industry, and civil society in fostering innovation ecosystems. These models underscore the need for leadership that transcends organizational boundaries and cultivates a culture of shared learning and co-creation. The absence of a strong knowledge-sharing culture and leadership commitment significantly limits the effectiveness of KM in LED. To address this, organizations must:

- Foster a culture of trust, openness, and continuous learning.
- Empower leaders to champion KM initiatives.
- Create enabling environments (Ba) for knowledge exchange.
- Align KM practices with strategic goals and community needs.

In embedding these principles into their operations, local governments can enhance their capacity for innovation, coordination, and sustainable development.

4.6. Importance of Knowledge Sharing in Knowledge-Based Economic Development

This paper underscores the critical role of knowledge sharing in driving Local Economic Development (LED), particularly in the context of KwaZulu-Natal. Knowledge is not only a catalyst for innovation but also a foundational asset in strategic planning, budgeting, and partnership development. As Carvalho, Santos, and van Winden (2014) note, knowledge-based economic development depends on a city's ability to generate, attract, and apply knowledge. This paper supports that view, revealing that effective knowledge sharing enhances LED outcomes by integrating insights from diverse stakeholders, including government, academia, and industry. Initiatives that promote collaboration between educational institutions and local businesses contribute to sustainable economic growth (Muthusamy et al., 2023). The adoption of the Quadruple Helix model which incorporates community participation alongside university-industry-government collaboration further strengthens regional development (Alizadeh, 2010). This model emphasizes that inclusive knowledge exchange is essential for addressing complex local challenges and fostering innovation ecosystems.

4.7. LED Knowledge Storage Practices

A significant finding of the paper is the inefficiency of current knowledge storage practices. Most LED-related knowledge is stored in outdated formats such as paper files, personal laptops, and external hard drives. These methods pose risks of data loss, limit accessibility, and hinder systematic sharing. The underutilisation of modern digital storage solutions, such as cloud platforms and centralized databases, highlights the urgent need for digital transformation in LED. The absence of a centralized Knowledge Management System (KMS) results in fragmented data, duplication of efforts, and reduced organizational learning.

4.8. Strategic Implications and Recommendations

To enhance the impact of LED, the paper recommends a strategic overhaul of knowledge-sharing practices:

- Implement a centralized KMS to facilitate systematic storage, access, and sharing of knowledge.
- Promote digital transformation by adopting cloud-based platforms and collaborative tools.
- Foster a culture of transparency and collaboration across departments and stakeholder groups.
- Encourage leadership support for KM initiatives to drive organizational change.

As Best (2010) argues, transitioning to digital systems is essential for realizing South Africa's vision of a technologically advanced and competitive economy. By embedding knowledge sharing into the core of LED strategies, local governments can unlock greater innovation, efficiency, and sustainable growth.

5. Conclusion

This paper underscores the pivotal role of effective knowledge sharing in advancing sustainable economic development through Local Economic Development (LED) initiatives. Despite its importance, knowledge sharing in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) faces substantial challenges rooted in individual behaviors, organizational culture, and technological limitations. Key findings reveal that knowledge within LED is often siloed, stored on personal devices, and shared only during formal meetings or upon request. The absence of a centralized, integrated Knowledge Management System (KMS) significantly hampers the systematic dissemination and utilization of valuable insights. This fragmented approach limits collaboration, reduces transparency, and impedes informed decision-making across departments.

The paper identifies several critical barriers to knowledge sharing, including:

- A weak culture of collaboration and trust;
- Overreliance on outdated, paper-based storage methods;
- Limited use of digital technologies;

- Isolated stakeholder efforts;
- Restricted access to classified or politically sensitive information.

Through a mixed-methods approach, the research triangulated qualitative and quantitative data to validate these findings and align them with existing literature and KM theories. Models such as the Knowledge Management Lifecycle and Nonaka's SECI model provided a theoretical lens to interpret the data and highlight the need for context-specific adaptations. To address these challenges, the paper recommends the implementation of a centralized, technologically advanced KMS, supported by leadership commitment and a culture that values openness and collaboration. Such reforms are essential for enabling LED stakeholders to access, share, and apply knowledge effectively ultimately enhancing the impact and sustainability of local economic development efforts.

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