

From Governmental To International: How University Type Shapes Knowledge Management Capability And Sustainability

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Abstract

Background: Knowledge management (km) and organizational sustainability are strategic imperatives for universities; however, thorough comparisons across university types remain limited.

Aim of the study: To evaluate knowledge management domains and organizational sustainability among governmental, private, national, and international universities within the faculties of physical therapy in egypt.

Methodology: A cross-sectional survey was conducted among academics in 37 faculties utilizing a validated knowledge management and sustainability questionnaire on a 7-point likert scale (n=301). One-way anova and tukey's hsd were employed to assess differences among university types.

Results: Governmental universities achieved the lowest mean scores across all knowledge management domains and organizational sustainability, whereas private and international universities achieved the greatest scores, with national universities positioned in the middle. Anova results were extremely significant across all domains (p<0.001).

Conclusion: The type of university significantly influences both knowledge management and organizational sustainability within the faculties of physical therapy in egypt, with governmental universities showing the lowest scores among all university types.

Keywords: Higher Education, Knowledge Management, Organizational Sustainability, University Type, Physical Therapy, Egypt.

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Introduction

Knowledge management (KM) and organizational sustainability are now considered important strategic concerns in higher education and often help each other. The KM is defined as a set of integrated processes: knowledge generation, codification, sharing, and utilization. These processes make the institutions formulate, organize, share, and implement knowledge to enhance innovation and performance [1]. These procedures include both explicit knowledge (documents, databases, digital archives) and tacit knowledge (experience, talents, routines), allowing higher education institutions to convert scattered expertise into organizational proficiency and use it over their competitors [2].

Organizational sustainability has become an important target for higher education institutions. This includes financial stability, environmental and social responsibility, providing a high-standard teaching, and the maintenance of high-quality research [3]. So, Sustainability in higher education is not limited to environmental sustainability. It also includes an economic dimension, an effective management system, and the ability to achieve academic aims despite any changes happens.

To achieve sustainability goals, universities need to manage knowledge effectively in both academic and administrative areas. An examination of the implementation of both KM and organizational sustainability showed that institutions that are known to be "knowledge-rich organizations" have their

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sustainability connected to the implementation of KM domains [4,5]. Proper KM strategic plans, such as audits, archives, and creating multidisciplinary teams, are crucial for ensuring that innovative ideas will be generated, and ensuring that the organization's vision and mission align with those of other higher education institutions [6].

Research findings on other higher education systems showed that the implementation of KM enhances growth, performance, and adaptability within the universities, leading to improved sustainability, especially in the academic goals [7]. Additionally, research on service organizations shows that KM has a huge positive impact on sustainability. So, knowledge needs to be used in decisions and activities, not just created and stored [8].

A study assessing KM and sustainability among physical therapy faculties in Egypt showed that all KM domains were significantly positively correlated with organizational sustainability. Knowledge codification and utilization acted as predictors of organizational sustainability [5]. This supports the idea that universities enhance their sustainability by generating, organizing, and applying knowledge in everyday academic and managerial practices, so coordinating institutional capabilities with national and international goals.

Universities in Egypt can be classified into four main types: governmental, private, national, and international. Each type is characterized by unique structures of governance, allocation of resources, and strategic goals. Governmental universities are founded under centralized legal systems relying mainly on state funding and operate under more Government rules[9].

On the other hand, national universities are funded mainly by citizens, although they follow the same regulations as governmental universities. In contrast, private and international universities have a broader range of funding sources, are more independent, and have more integrated strategies. These institutions prioritize their market position and public image, which involves significant global integration and branding strategies [9].As a result, the differences in how they are organized and governed are expected to affect how they use knowledge management systems.

A study on sustainable human resource management in universities showed that governance factors, such as financial support and institutional reputation, are

significantly influenced by an institution's ability to maintain people-centered strategies [10].

Based on this background, research conducted on higher education institutions revealed performance disparities across institutional types. Governmental universities showed limitations due to state regulations, limited independence, and insufficient financial support for research and innovation. On the other hand, private and international universities are more capable of rolling out resources, promoting research, and establishing strong sustainability[11].

These different approaches show the potentially significant impact of institutional structure on shaping both KM capacities and the integration of sustainability into university strategy and operations. Evidence from governmental, private, and international universities demonstrates that governance capacity and organizational independence influence institutional responses to external pressures, such as global rankings and sustainable development agendas. Additionally, private and international models are more adaptable and more effectively synchronize knowledge management, research, and global collaboration with long-term sustainability goals [12].

The majority of current research focuses on specific KM practices within universities and the implementation of sustainability initiatives. It is less common to see research that compares governmental, private, international, and National institutions from that point of view [2]. This significant gap exists in the absence of comparative quantitative research demonstrating differences among university types across the KM domains and organizational sustainability outcomes [13]. Although certain studies indicate that KM processes are correlated with organizational sustainability, they failed to analyze the variability of this KM-sustainability relationship across governmental, private, national, and international university classifications [14].

This study investigates this gap within the specific context of physical therapy faculties in Egypt, a discipline- and country-specific context that has been mainly neglected in prior KM-sustainability research within higher education. So, the aims of the study are to compare the impact of various university types (governmental, private, national, and international) on knowledge management capabilities throughout the entire KM cycle (generation, codification, sharing, and

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utilization) and their subsequent influence on organizational sustainability in physical therapy faculties in Egypt. So, the study tends to answer the following research questions (RQ):

RQ1: Do knowledge generation levels vary considerably among governmental, private, national, and international universities with faculties of physical therapy in Egypt?

RQ2: Do knowledge codification levels vary considerably among governmental, private, national, and international universities with faculties of physical therapy in Egypt?

RQ3: Do knowledge-sharing levels vary considerably among governmental, private, national, and international universities with faculties of physical therapy in Egypt?

RQ4: Do knowledge utilization levels vary considerably among governmental, private, national, and international universities with faculties of physical therapy in Egypt?

RQ5: Do organizational sustainability levels vary considerably among governmental, private, national, and international universities with faculties of physical therapy in Egypt?

Methodology

Research Design and Ethical Considerations

This research is a cross-sectional survey utilizing a questionnaire. The study was executed in accordance with ethical standards for research involving human participants. Ethical approval for the research was obtained from The Sinai University Research Ethics Committee and registered on OSF with a DOI. [10.17605/OSF.IO/4XW93](https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/4XW93)

Research Setting and Population

The current research studied forty-one active faculties of physical therapy in Egypt during the academic year 2024–2025. Participants were selected only from 37 physical therapy faculties in Egypt, from different types of universities. Teaching assistants, lecturers, assistant professors, and professors at Egypt's physical therapy faculties completed this questionnaire.

Sample Size

Before gathering data from the participants, a calculation was done to determine the sample size. The estimate was based on a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence interval. The calculation revealed that at least 278 subjects would need to be recruited, given that there were only roughly 1,000 qualifying academics in the target demographic and the expected population proportion was 50%. Our final sample size of 301 participants met this requirement.

Data Collection Instrument and Procedures

The research was conducted via an electronic survey administered through Google Forms. The questionnaire was derived from the studies conducted by Zaim et al.[15] and Demir et al.[16] which proved its validity and reliability as a measurement tool. An approval from the authors was obtained to use the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of six sections, labeled A to F, which include: Demographic Data, Knowledge Generation and Development, Knowledge Codification, Knowledge Sharing, Knowledge Utilization, and Organizational Sustainability. Sections B through F of the questionnaire were designed to evaluate the study's five essential constructs. A 7-point Likert scale was employed for all items. Participants indicated how much they agreed with each statement, based on their experiences in the organization. The agreement scale went from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

Data Analysis and Statistical Design

Statistical Analysis was calculated using SAS© OnDemand for Academics. Descriptive analysis was performed to clarify scores for KM domains and organizational sustainability by university type. Levene's test was used to test the homogeneity of variances. One-way ANOVA tests were conducted on the variables, and Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) post hoc test was used for pairwise comparisons.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

A predominant 73.0% (n = 27) of faculties were affiliated with private universities. National universities represented 8.1% (n = 3), while governmental universities constituted 13.5% (n = 5). International institutions were linked to a reduced proportion of physical therapy faculties (5.4%, n = 2). The predominant number of respondents were associated with private universities (n = 210, 69.8%). Among the respondents (n = 77), 25.6% were enrolled in government universities, whereas 3.3% were enrolled in national universities (n = 10). The proportion of respondents associated with international universities was smaller (n = 4; 1.3%). Among the 301 respondents, one hundred seventy-nine possess a PhD in physical therapy (59.5%), sixty-one hold an MSc in physical therapy (20.3%), and the remaining sixty-one have a BSc in physical therapy.

Approximately one-third (30.2%, n = 91) of the participants classified themselves as middle-level

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managers, whilst the majority (59.5%, n = 179) indicated they held no managerial role. Only 2.3% (n = 7) of respondents occupied the role of general director, while a lesser proportion (8.0%, n = 24) served as directors. In relation to the academic position, teaching assistants (demonstrators) constituted the predominant category among the 301 participants, representing 33.6% (n = 101) of the sample. Teaching assistants (assistant lecturers) comprised 20.3% (n = 61), whilst lecturers and assistant professors constituted 31.6% (n = 95). Associate professors (6.6%, n = 20) and full professors (8.0%, n = 24) represented a lesser percentage of responses.

Test of Homogeneity

Levene's Test was performed on all scores for the KM domains and Organizational sustainability to assess the assumption of homogeneity of variances in a one-way analysis. All p-values were non-significant ($p > 0.05$), confirming homogeneity. So, ANOVA was performed, demonstrating that the variances of scores were statistically comparable among the four university types (Governmental, Private, National, and International).

KM and Sustainability Scores (Mean ± SD) by University Type

Table 1 and Figure 1 present the descriptive statistics for KM domains and Organizational Sustainability, classified by university type. Governmental universities showed the lowest average scores, with Organizational Sustainability achieving a notably low score of 3.95 ± 1.83 . Private and international universities demonstrate high KM and organizational sustainability scores; where knowledge codification, sharing, utilization, and overall performance, international universities score better than their private universities.

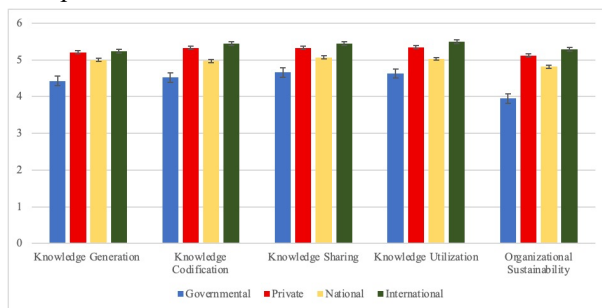


Figure 1: Mean Scores of KM and Sustainability Domains by University Type

National universities often hold a middle position, with scores generally lower than those of private and international universities, yet higher than those of governmental universities. The standard deviations

showed the distribution of responses within each group, revealing that the patterns are uniform across university types rather than influenced by other outliers.

Table 1: Mean Scores and SD of KM Domains and Organizational by University Type

Domain	Governmental $\bar{x} \pm SD$	Private $\bar{x} \pm SD$	National $\bar{x} \pm SD$	International $\bar{x} \pm SD$
Knowledge Generation	4.43 ± 1.85	5.21 ± 1.60	5.00 ± 1.73	5.23 ± 1.54
Knowledge Codification	4.52 ± 1.78	5.33 ± 1.61	4.97 ± 1.71	5.45 ± 1.51
Knowledge Sharing	4.66 ± 1.65	5.33 ± 1.48	5.07 ± 1.57	5.44 ± 1.40
Knowledge Utilization	4.63 ± 1.73	5.35 ± 1.53	5.03 ± 1.64	5.50 ± 1.43
Organizational Sustainability	3.95 ± 1.83	5.12 ± 1.72	4.82 ± 1.85	5.29 ± 1.73
Overall KM & Sustainability Score	4.47 ± 1.71	5.26 ± 1.52	4.97 ± 1.65	5.37 ± 1.45

A one-way ANOVA was performed for each domain to determine whether there were significant differences in KM domains and organizational sustainability scores across university types. Across all domains, the results were highly significant, with all p-values below 0.001. The significant F-statistics demonstrate that university type largely influences KM domains and organizational sustainability (Table 2).

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA Comparing KM and Organizational Sustainability by University Type

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Domain	F-statistic	p-value	Significance
Knowledge Generation	5.93	< 0.001	***
Knowledge Codification	9.42	< 0.001	***
Knowledge Sharing	8.66	< 0.001	***
Knowledge Utilization	9.59	< 0.001	***
Organizational Sustainability	16.92	< 0.001	***
Overall KM & Sustainability Score	10.79	< 0.001	***

$\alpha=0.05$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ One-Way ANOVA

Post-Hoc Analysis (Tukey's HSD) - Detailed Pairwise Comparisons

Tukey's HSD post hoc analysis was used to identify the precise differences among university types. The findings show that Governmental universities score significantly lower than other types. In particular, government institutions scored significantly lower than private universities on Knowledge Codification, Sharing, Utilization, and Organizational Sustainability ($p < 0.001$), and lower than international universities on the overall score and all KM domains ($p < 0.01$ for all). Organizational sustainability was the only significant advantage that national universities had over government ones ($p < 0.05$) (Table 3).

Additionally, most two-group comparisons revealed no significant differences among Private, International, and National universities, placing Private universities in a leading position, followed by international universities. Governmental universities showed up as the lower-performing group (Table 3).

Table 3: Post-Hoc Pairwise Comparisons (Tukey's HSD) of KM and Organizational Sustainability Scores Between University Types

Domain	Governmental vs. Private	Governmental vs. National	Governmental vs. International	Private vs. National	Private vs. International	National vs. International
Knowledge Generation	Private > **	N.S.	International > *	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Knowledge Codification	Private > ***	N.S.	International > ***	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Knowledge Sharing	Private > ***	N.S.	International > ***	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Knowledge Utilization	Private > ***	N.S.	International > ***	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Organizational Sustainability	Private > ***	National > *	International > ***	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Overall KM & Sustainability Score	Private > ***	N.S.	International > ***	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.

N.S. = Not Significant ($p \geq 0.05$); * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. The ">" symbol shows the group with the significantly higher mean score within each pairwise comparison.

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Discussion

This study aimed to investigate how different types of universities: governmental, private, national, and international, influence KM capabilities across their four domains: generation, codification, sharing, and utilization. Additionally, we examined how these differences affect organizational sustainability within physical therapy faculties in Egypt.

The results showed that Private and international universities achieved the highest scores across all KM domains and organizational sustainability, while national universities occupied a middle position, and governmental universities scored the lowest.

Also, the study findings revealed that the four KM domains differed significantly across university types. This was supported by studies conducted in Chinese and Pakistani universities, which revealed that effective implementation of KM processes significantly improves organizational performance[17–19].

Recent research at Kurdistan's universities revealed that knowledge creation and codification domains can improve organizational sustainability significantly [20]. Additionally, Research conducted in universities in the Kingdom of Jordan showed that the degree of KM implementation leads to a difference in performance according to the university types[21]. This supports our study results, which revealed statistically significant differences in KM domains across university types.

Governmental universities showed a lower KM score compared to private and international universities. An analysis of KM systems for the strategic development of universities reveals that governmental universities have a high level of control over the operational and strategic functions[22]. This suggests that governmental universities face more structural and regulatory limitations in implementing the KM process than private or international universities.

Evidence from Indian higher education reveals that the application of KM varies among different types of universities, with governmental universities often experiencing more complex administrative regulations and applying less solid KM processes compared to private universities. An analysis from 2024 of KM implementation at Indian universities showed that diverse academic fields, cultural norms, and administrative regulations generate challenges in applying effective KM. Beyond that, resistance to change and Insufficient digital infrastructure are

unfortunately very common in governmental universities [23]. This supports the current results showing that governmental universities scored lower than other university types regarding KM Domains.

The current results showed that private universities scored the highest among all types of universities in KM Domains. This can be explained by the fact that private universities face intense competition and pressure to distinguish themselves to attract new students. So, Private universities had to invest more in KM processes to enhance responsiveness and innovation. On the contrary, governmental universities are protected by the state funding and experience less competitive pressures, leading to deprioritizing the implementation of KM[21]. A case study on KM enablers at a prominent European institution showed that high-performing universities invest in KM; these investments are more independent and internationally oriented than those of governmental universities. Santos et al. claim that effective KM processes need a strong culture of information sharing, advanced infrastructure, Broad resource databases, and monitoring and assessment of KM process [13]. Another study showed that government universities frequently struggle with incoherent knowledge structures and insufficient digital infrastructure, thereby diminishing KM compared with other types of institutions[24].

Some recent studies have challenged our findings, indicating that governmental universities may develop strong knowledge management capabilities when governance and culture are purposefully altered, challenging the belief that governmental universities are inferior to private or international universities. A qualitative study in Turkish governmental universities demonstrated strong knowledge management infrastructure and process capabilities, supported by leadership investments in physical conditions, technology, communication systems, and formal knowledge management teams, overcoming bureaucratic constraints. The research emphasizes that bureaucracy and structural differentiation can be mitigated by a supportive culture, a clear knowledge management strategy, and transparent processes, indicating that ownership type alone does not dictate knowledge management efficacy [25].

Evidence from governmental universities indicates that organizational Unresponsiveness is changeable, suggesting that government universities are not destined to poor KM. A case study of a governmental institution

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in the UAE revealed that transformational leadership, progressive national policies, and a supportive culture may Conquer Overly regulated processes and Resistance to change. Also, it can improve the effective adoption of KM, with information technology playing a main role in knowledge generation and sharing [26].

Eventually, KM is not the difference between governmental and private universities, but rather the manner in which KM processes are applied and the presence of digital infrastructure at each university. [27]. This point of view argues against the overgeneralization of low KM ratings among governmental universities as a constraint, instead showing the results as objectives for strategic improvement.

Conclusion

The current research shows that the type of university influences both Knowledge management and Organizational sustainability significantly within the faculties of physical therapy in Egypt. Governmental universities consistently exhibited the lowest average scores across all knowledge management domains and sustainability metrics, while private and international universities were at a superior, statistically comparable level, with the highest levels of knowledge management maturity and sustainability integration; national universities occupied a middle position.

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