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## ANALYSIS OF APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN ZIMBABWEAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: THE CASE OF POLYTECHNICS IN ZIMBABWE.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research report proffers a detailed exposition of an Analysis of Application of Knowledge Management Systems In Zimbabwean Educational Institutions: The Case of Polytechnics in Zimbabwe. The investigation anchored on four research questions, four research objectives and four hypotheses. The theoretical framework of the study emanated from the knowledge-based view as popularised by (Drucker, 1985; Nonaka 1994; Polanyi 1966 and supported by Newell, 2009) provided a distinction between two different types of Knowledge Management, the possession and practice views. The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (Nziramasanga Commission, 1999) questioned the relevance of the current educational system which seems to fail to address socio-economic challenges affecting the country. Zimbabwean educational system has not articulated a development strategy linking the application of Knowledge Management System to intellectual capital and economic growth.

This research pursues the positivist-interpretive paradigm and is planted in the ontology of constructivist/interpretivist philosophy. The research methodology was a case study of polytechnics in Zimbabwe. Purposive sampling was used and the population comprised educationists, authors, curriculum experts, students, lecturers, heads of departments and divisions, principals and vice principals of polytechnics, directors and deputy directors in the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. A mixed mode design philosophy was adopted in order to benefit from the advantages of each method. Quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used. Data was collected using the structured questionnaires and interviews and analysis was through descriptive and inferential statistics in the form of the Chi-square test, frequency diagrams and qualitative analysis. The findings were statistically significant in that tacit knowledge was found to be useful than explicit knowledge and that the current remuneration of knowledge workers does not encourage them to acquire more knowledge. Research knowledge was found to be relevant for the acquisition of skills by students and knowledge acquired by knowledge workers was found to be useful for the acquisition of skills by students in polytechnics in Zimbabwe. Emanating from the findings of the study, a model for improved Knowledge Management implementation was developed.

The implications from these findings are that polytechnics in Zimbabwe do not drastically lack ICT facilities which could hinder effective and efficient Knowledge Management implementation. These findings further propose that polytechnics in Zimbabwe could enhance

their Knowledge Management implementation and capacitation in knowledge workers and development of ICT infrastructure. Holistic and integrative policies can be developed to support the maturation and growth of Knowledge Management System. This means that Knowledge Management Systems can be implemented implicitly. Those in leadership should understand and emphasise practical approaches and solutions to deploy application of Knowledge Management Systems. Knowledge professionals must be taught how to participate in the application of Knowledge Management initiatives like publications, journal contributions, conference hosting and seminars. Future research should explore the broadening of the empirical perspective by investigating Knowledge Management systems in similar industries in order to explicitly comprehend Knowledge Management in Zimbabwean organisations. In conformity with the four research questions and the testing of the four research hypotheses this has led to the realisation of the objectives of this research study.

#### **KEY TERMS:**

Knowledge Management (KM), Knowledge Management System (KMS), knowledge-based organisations, learning organisations, Information Communication Technologies (ICTs), tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge, knowledge-oriented social factors, implicit knowledge inforstructure, inforculture and infrastructure.