planning, monitoring & evaluation

Department:
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DPME Knowledge Management Maturity Survey

DPME Research and Knowledge Management Unit

29 March 2019

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1. Introduction

The Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) is the custodians of the National Development Plan (NDP). Its mandate is to facilitate delivery plans for the strategic cross cutting priorities of government. It monitors and evaluates the implementation of the plans and performance of municipalities, frontline services and national and provincial departments and also assess them to ensure their alignment. It also promotes good planning and M&E practices within government. The mandate of the Department is derived from *Section 85(2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (DPME Strategic Plan, 2015-2020).

DPME is a knowledge organisation that gathers and uses research and data evidence for planning, monitoring and evaluation in order to establish gaps in meeting the NDP goals and 14 outcomes of government and ultimately contribute towards improved service delivery (DPME, 2016/17 Annual Report). The DPME delivers on its mandate by amongst other methods, accessing data and using data and research related information from various organs of state (KM Strategy, 2018).

The DPME has identified a Knowledge Management gap, which impacts negatively on its ability to adequately deliver on its mandate timely and proactively. The management of information accumulated in the department is fragmented. Information is not systematically captured, packaged, stored, sufficiently shared and utilised in order to fulfil the DPME mandate and inform continuous improvements (Ledwaba & Hans, 2013). The knowledge management gap in the DPME means that available evidence is not accessible when needed to inform policy decisions. Strengthening knowledge systems is therefore, one of the key focus areas for the DPME over the medium term.

The Department acknowledges that data, research and knowledge management are critical components in serving the internal needs of the DPME (DPME, 2018). The DPME has therefore identified the need to improve its knowledge management function and institutionalise knowledge management in order to adequately deliver on its mandate and be proactive and more responsive. One of the activities that the DPME has undertaken in order to improve on its mandate is the development of a knowledge management strategy. It has also conducted a knowledge maturity assessment that will feed into the KM strategy of the Department. This report is therefore aimed at presenting the results of the KM maturity assessment.

2. Background

The DPME contracted an external organisation to conduct a Knowledge Management audit in 2012. The audit was aimed at investigating the status of KM and related systems, processes and technology in the Department. The audit report indicated that there is an abundance of information within the Department but illustrated that the information is not used optimally because of the gaps in KM within the department. It was found that there is a problem of information flow since there are no good systems for gathering, capturing, sharing and analysing data and information (Ledwaba, 2012).

The audit report also found that information in the Department is stored in the M-drive and website. These platforms were said to be difficult to navigate, did not have updated and backed-up information. Concerns about the M-drive were about its accessibility, complexity and manageability (Ledwaba, 2012). It was also highlighted that the organisation lacks a culture of communication and dissemination/sharing.

> *DPME generates valuable lessons and best practices through its learning networks and M&E forums, and reports generated. The wealth of information in DPME is not utilised to its full potential due to the fact that information is not always accessible. This inaccessibility is further exacerbated by the lack of an information sharing culture within DPME* (Ledwaba & Hans, 2013).

The report also identified that most individuals were not aware of existing KM supporting technologies within the organisation and identified that there is a lack of structured information/storage, slow or no access to the internet, server unavailability and intranet. Some of these problems still exist within the DPME environment.

The audit report results indicate that there is a clear business case for KM in the DPME. It argues that impediments to knowledge sharing will have to be overcome in order to effectively institutionalise knowledge management within the Department (Ledwaba & Hans, 2013). The KM audit report asserted that the implementation of KM in the Department ought to overcome certain hurdles such as management buy-in, training, culture of sharing, IT support and governance, and stakeholder management. Management buy-in was rated high in the list of hurdles. Training and the culture of sharing were the second highest. It therefore proposed that DPME strengthens existing KM enabling tools and technologies and embeds a knowledge-centric and knowledge sharing culture in its business processes (Ledwaba & Hans, 2013).

In 2013, a KM strategy, architecture and optimization project was undertaken by the DPME in partnership with a consultant in order to develop a KM strategy. The strategy was consolidated with a KM implementation plan as well as a KM architecture, optimization platforms and communication tools. This document guided the strategic direction of KM within the Department (Ledwaba & Hans, 2013). The DPME KM strategy was adopted in 2014. Currently, a revised strategy is underway. In order to inform the current strategy, a KM maturity study was undertaken in the third quarter of the 2018/19 FY and the results of this study are shared further in this report.

3. Aims and Objective

The aims of the report are to report the results of the KM maturity study and use them to inform the development of the KM strategy. A Knowledge Management Maturity Assessment was therefore conducted to establish KM progress within the DPME.

4. Methodology

In order to address the aims of the study, a quantitative study was undertaken. Questionnaires were distributed using the internal DPME mail. The Communications Unit assisted in distributing the questionnaire to the entire DPME. The questionnaire covered a number of KM dimensions. This included KM leadership and Governance, Business alignment, People and culture, Technology, Knowledge processes, Learning and innovation, Monitoring and evaluation, and Knowledge dissemination and communication. The questionnaire had a range of scores, from 0 for not being aware or not knowing, 1 denoting very poor to 5 denoting very good.

A convenience sampling strategy was used to collect data. DPME Employee that were willing and could afford their time to respond to the questionnaire participated. A sample of 20 employees participated. Figure 1 below, provides a description of the sample of participants.

Figure 1: Sample description

No. of years of service at DPME	Frequency (%)	Highest level of education	Frequency (%)	Branch/unit	Frequency (%)	Position	Frequency (%)
- 1 year	4 (20%)	PHD	5 (25%)	Corporate Services	5 (25%)	CD/ higher	4 (20%)
1-3 Years	2 (10%)	Masters	2 (10%)	EEKS	5 (25%)	Director	2 (10%)
4-5 Years	4 (20%)	Degree	2 (10%)	Finance & SCM	2 (10%)	DD	6 (30%)

5-7 Years	3 (15%)	Honours	5 (25%)	NPC Secretariat	2 (10%)	ASD	5 (25%)
7+ years	7 (35%)	Diploma	6 (30%)	Public Sector Monitoring & CD	6 (30%)	Operations	3 (15%)
	20 (100%)		**20 (100%)**		**20 (100%)**		**20 (100%)**

As illustrated in Figure 1 above, 20 employees participated in the study. About 35% (n=7) of the employees had more than 7 years at DPME, about 30% (n= 6) were from the Public Sector Monitoring and Capacity Development Branch, were Deputy Directors and had diplomas. Only about 30% (n= 6) had less than 4 years at DPME. These participants may not have been at DPME when the KM strategy was approved. Six were from the Public Sector Monitoring and Capacity Development Branch, the branch that had the KM function before the new DPME structure was approved and 30% (n= 6) were senior management. About 25% (n= 5) were from Evaluations Evidence and Knowledge Systems (EEKS), the Branch within which KM currently sits. Only 15% (n= 3) were operational employees.

5. Results

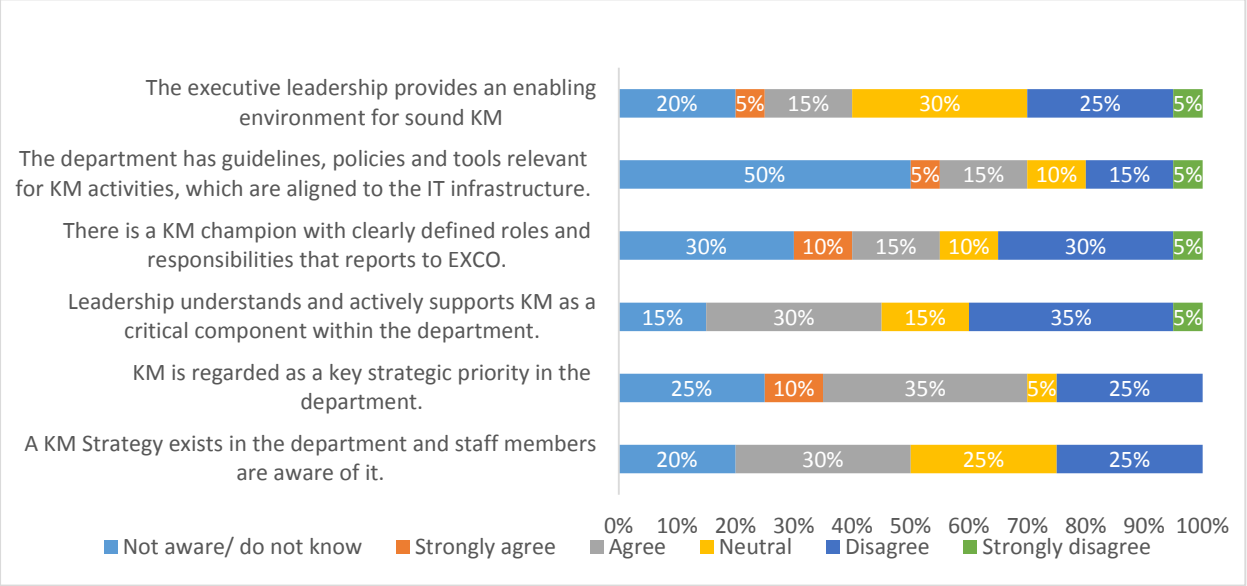
This section of the study presents the results of the study based on the information that was gathered through the questionnaires that were distributed. As previously alluded in the methods section, information gathered focused on eight KM dimensions.

5.1 KM Maturity Dimensions scores

5.1.1 KM Leadership and Governance

The leadership and governance dimension sought to uncover whether participants were aware of the existence of a KM strategy and champion within the department and whether KM was supported by the Executive and recognised as a strategic priority in the DPME. It also sought to ascertain whether participants were aware of the existence of guidelines, policies and tools that were aligned to the IT infrastructure to pursue KM goals.

Figure 2: Responses for Knowledge Management (KM) Leadership and Governance



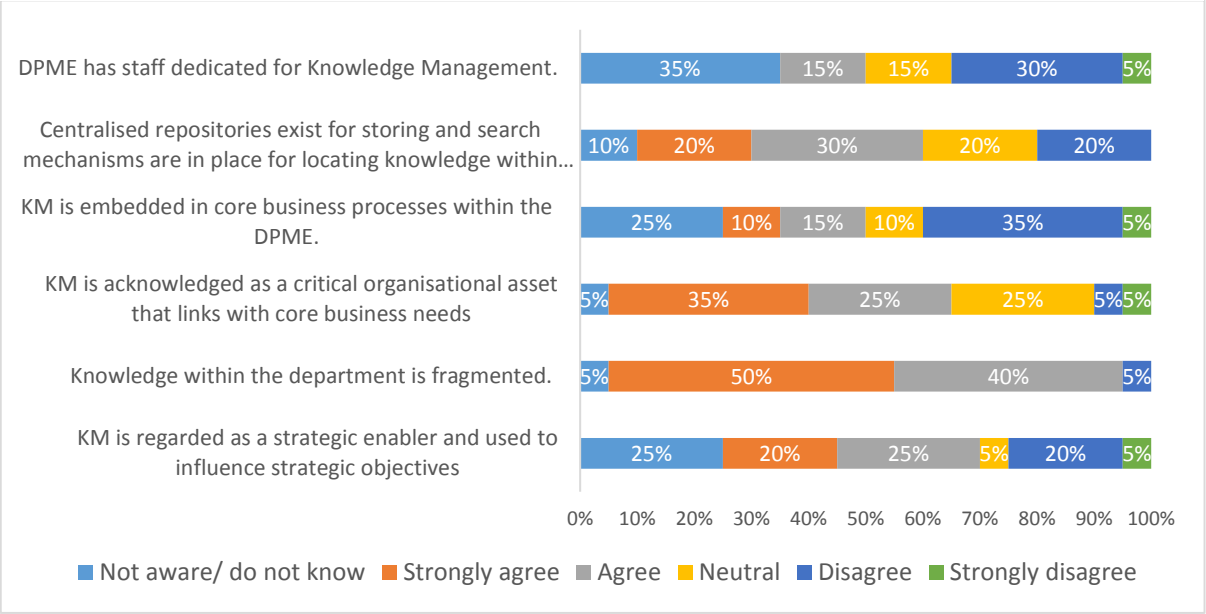
As reflected in the chart above, it is clear that almost 50% of the participants were not aware of the existence of KM policies, guidelines and tools that were aligned to the IT infrastructure within the department and about 30% were also not aware of the existence of a KM champion. About 40% percent indicated that leadership does not understand nor support KM as a critical component in the department, with 30% also indicating that an enabling environment is provided by Executive and 30% neutral about this. Even though a number of participants highlighted that the leadership did not adequately support KM as a strategic priority, about 45%, however, indicated that it is generally regarded as a strategic priority within the department.

Generally, the results illustrate that the question that aimed to ascertain whether participants were aware of any KM policies and guidelines, which were aligned to the IT infrastructure (25%) and leaderships' contribution to providing an enabling environment for KM attained the lowest overall scores.

5.1.2 Business Alignment

The business alignment dimension sought to uncover whether participants thought that KM within the DPME is regarded as an enabler and critical organisational asset that influences strategic objectives and also aligned with core business of the organisation. It also aimed to understand whether participants felt that KM was capacitated with staff members and had a centralised management system and whether it was considered fragmented.

Figure 3: Business alignment



The figure above illustrates that about 35% of participants indicated that they did not know whether KM was capacitated in terms of human resources and 35% indicated that it was not capacitated. About 25% of the participants also indicated that they were not aware whether KM is regarded as a strategic enabler. Forty-five percent, however, indicated that it is regarded as a strategic enabler, with about 60% further indicating that it is regarded as an asset that ties with core business.

Participants that indicated that knowledge within the department was fragmented 90%, with only 5% indicating that they were not aware and 5% indicating that it was not fragmented. Even though 25% of the participants indicated that KM was embedded within core businesses processes, about 60% indicated that it is a critical asset that links to core businesses. This illustrates that hypothetically, the organisation perceives the need for KM but also acknowledges that it is not well integrated into the systems and processes of the department.

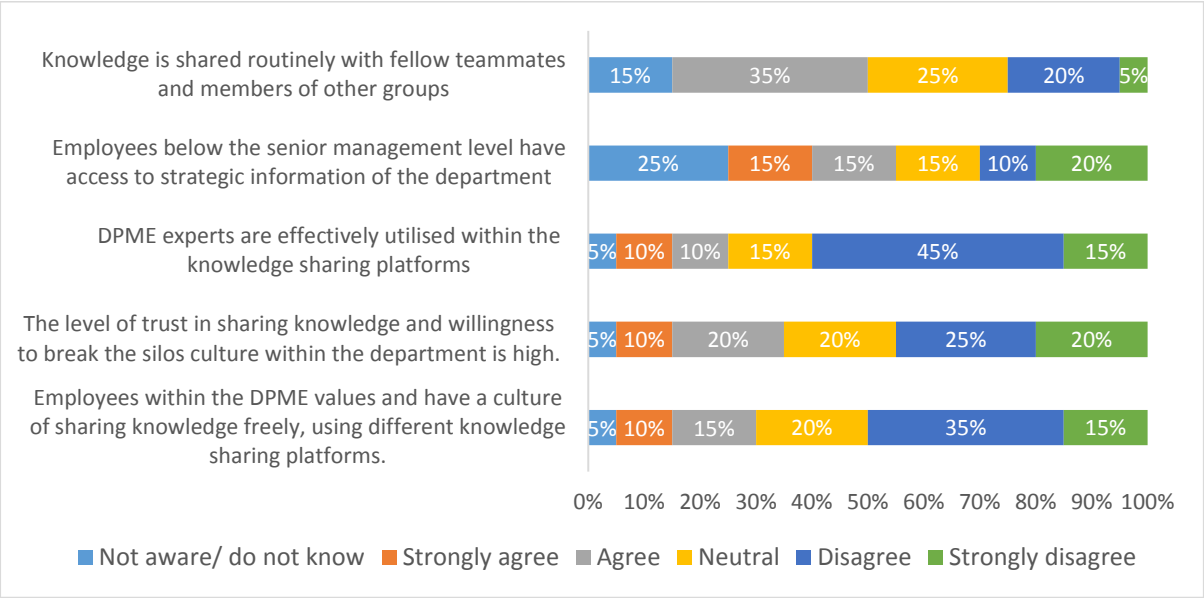
Even though there was a high level of assertion that knowledge within the department is fragmented, and that it is not adequately embedded in core business processes, as depicted by

the absence of a centralised KM system or repository, there was however, an acknowledgment that KM is an organisational asset that links to core business needs.

5.1.3 People and Culture

The people and culture dimension elicited information aimed at ascertaining whether participants perceived DPME as having a culture and level of trust in sharing knowledge and whether the department's experts were effectively used in sharing platforms. It also aimed to ascertain whether participants thought non-senior management staff members were had access to strategic information of the department.

Figure 4: People and culture



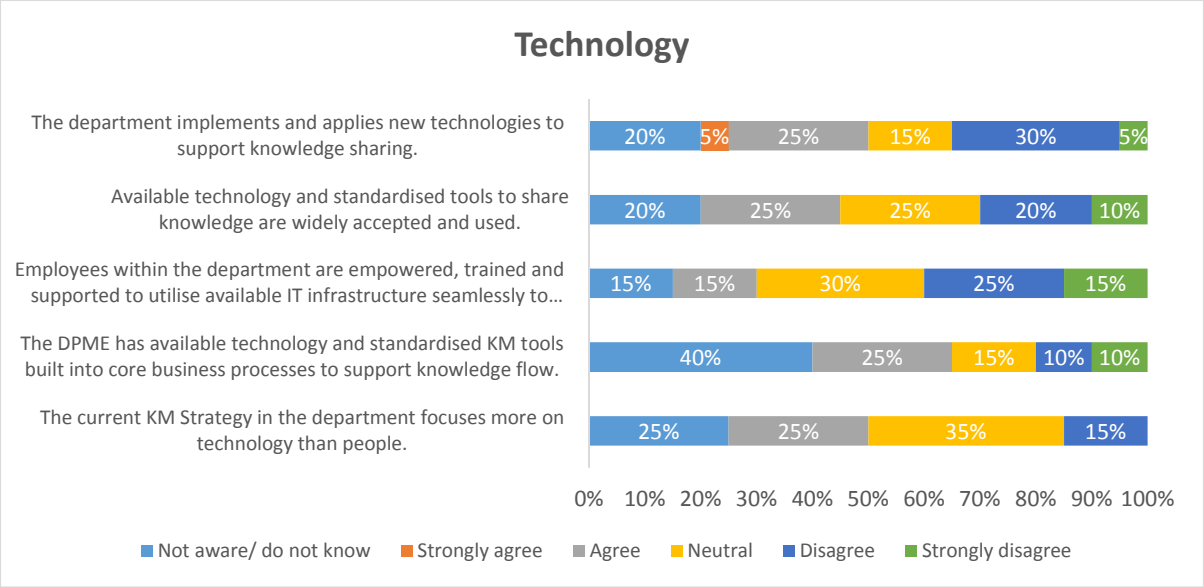
The figure above illustrates that about 60% of participants indicated that the experts are not adequately used in DPME sharing platforms, with about 50% indicating that the culture of sharing is not a norm in the department and 45% indicating that the level of trust in sharing and willingness to break silos is low. The lack of a sharing culture, is further highlighted in the question that ascertain whether knowledge is routinely shared with fellow team mated and others, where only 35% of the participants indicated that it was routinely shared, and the one that asked whether non-senior management employees had access to strategic information of the organisation, and 30% indicated that they had access.

5.1.4 Technology

The technology dimension aimed to ascertain whether employees perceived the DMPE as IT or people focused and also whether they thought the organisation has technology and KM tools that are built into core business processes to support the flow of knowledge. It also aimed to

understand whether employees felt that they were empowered and supported to use IT for knowledge sharing and whether the organisation applies new technology in support of knowledge sharing.

Figure 5: Technology



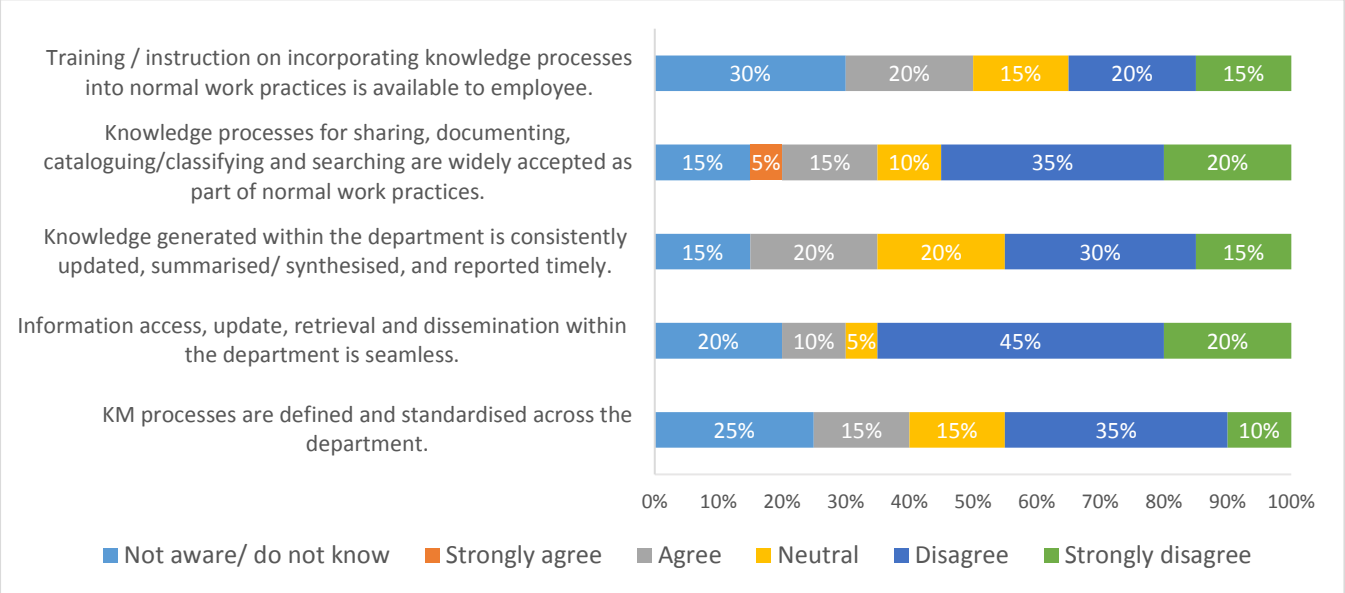
The figure above, illustrates that most (40%) participants indicated that they were not aware of the availability of technology and tools built into core businesses within the department to support knowledge flow. Only 25% of participants were in agreement even though none strongly agreed. Participants that indicated that the current KM strategy focuses more on technology than people were 50%, most of the participant were neutral and only 15% disagreed.

The results on the technology dimension seem to indicate that there is a sense that there is not enough integration between technology, KM tools and business processes.

5.1.5 Knowledge Processes

The knowledge process dimension aimed to ascertain whether participants perceived KM processes as defined and standardised across the department and whether knowledge generated within the department is constantly updated, managed and used for timely reporting. It also aimed to ascertain whether training on incorporating knowledge processes to normal work practices was available to employees.

Figure 6: Knowledge processes



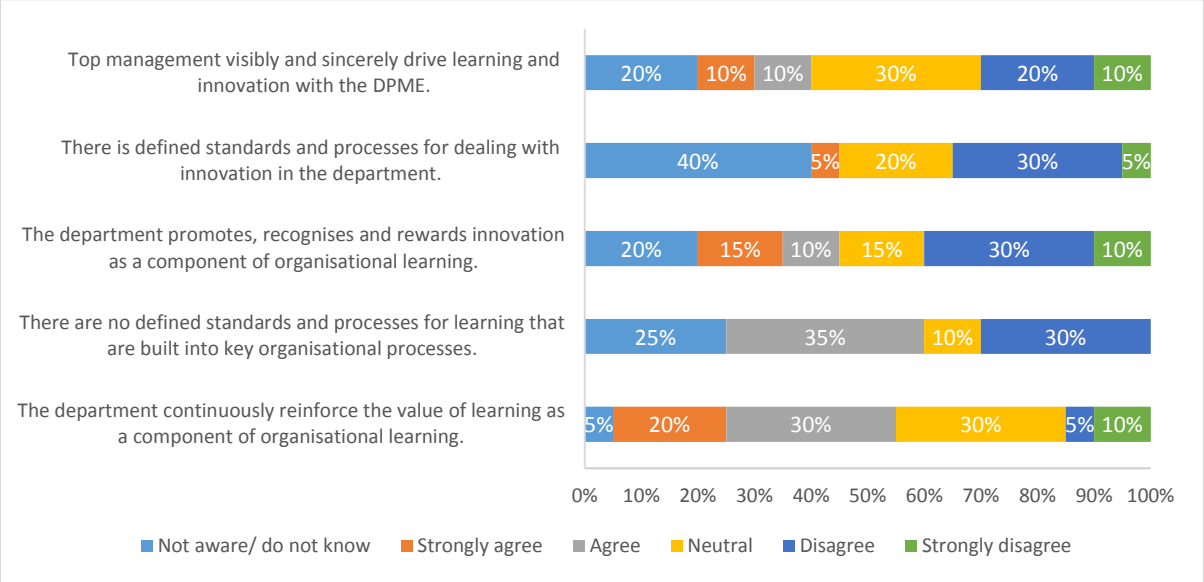
The figure above illustrates that more than 60% of participants of participants perceived of knowledge management (access, update, retrieval and dissemination) as fragmented. About 45% indicated that knowledge generated within the department is not constantly updated, synthesised and timely reported and about 55% indicated that knowledge processes for sharing, documenting, classifying and searching are not adopted as normal practices within the department.

The lowest scores were on information management, standardisation of KM within the department and the training aimed at enabling employees to incorporate knowledge processes to normal work processes.

5.1.6 Learning and Innovation

The learning and innovation dimension aimed at eliciting information to ascertain whether participants perceived of DPME as an organisation that promotes and rewards learning and innovation and has defined standard and processes built into the processes of the organisation that deal with learning and innovation, and whether this is supported by the Executive.

Figure 7: Learning and Innovation



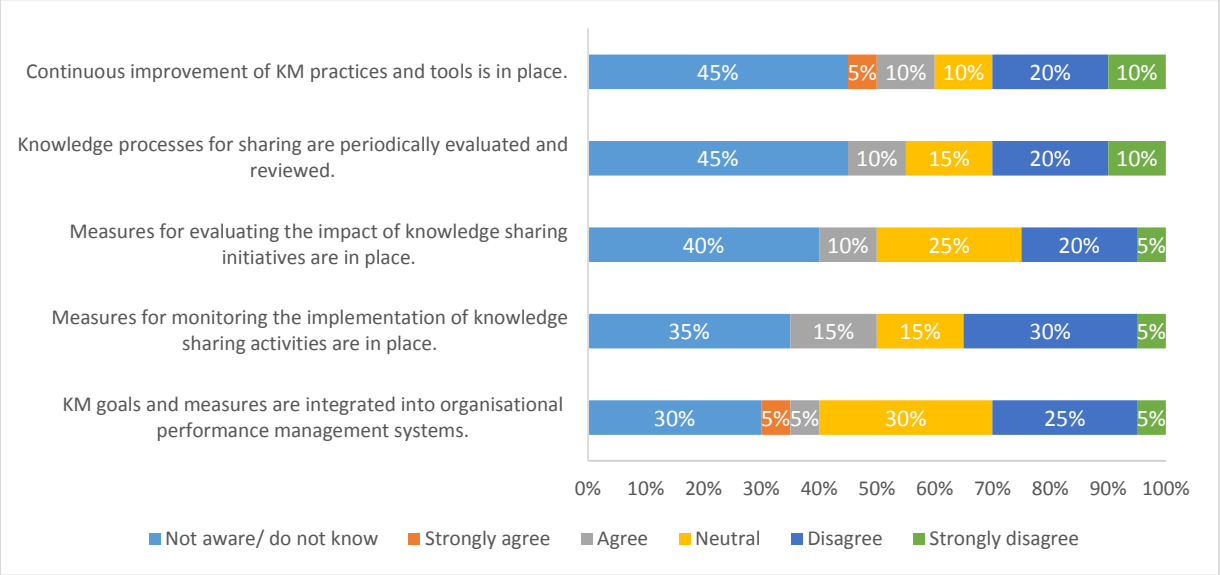
The figure above illustrates that 40% of the participants indicated that they were not aware of any standards and processes for dealing with innovation in the department and only 5% indicated that they were aware. About 25% indicated that they were not aware of standards and processes for learning that are built into key processes within the department and 35% indicated that they did not exist. It was however, interesting that even though a number of participants indicated that the DPME did not have standards and processes for dealing with learning and innovation. There was however, a sense that the department does reinforce organisational learning, as 50% indicated this.

The lowest scores were on standards and processes guiding innovation and learning within the department. There was however, a sense that the organisation reinforces a culture of learning.

5.1.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation dimension aimed to ascertain whether participants felt that KM measures were integrated into organisation's performance management system and departmental activities and whether processes and measures for monitoring and evaluating knowledge sharing activities and tools are in place and reviewed periodically.

Figure 8: Monitoring and Evaluation

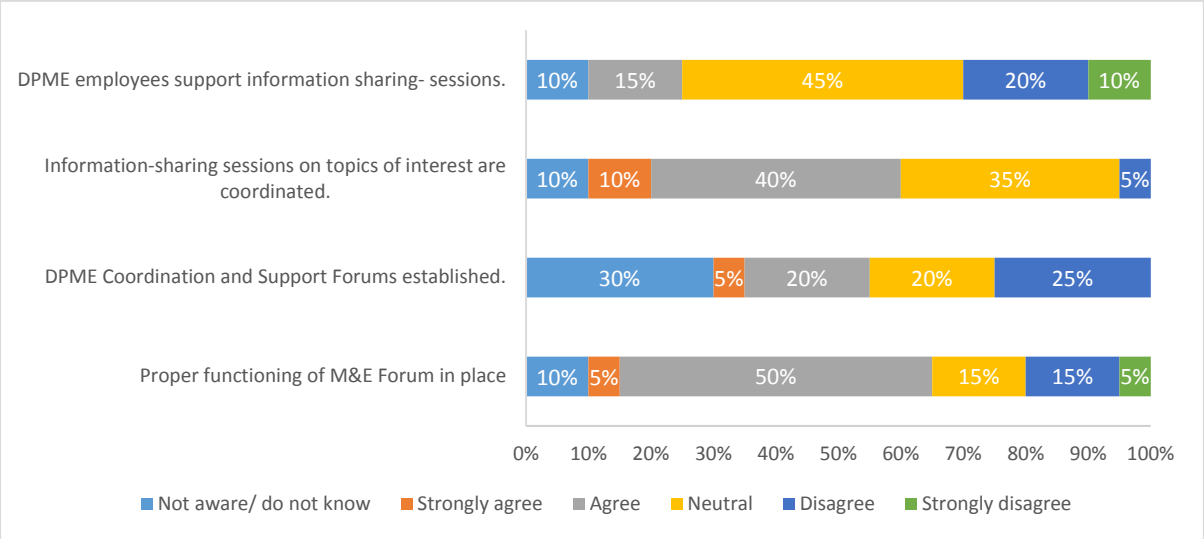


The figure above illustrates that most participants indicated a lack of awareness of almost all the variables elicited in the question. About 45% indicated that they were not aware of continuously improved practices and tools and knowledge processes for sharing that are periodically reviewed. Measures for evaluating the impact of knowledge sharing initiatives and for monitoring the implementation of knowledge sharing initiatives were not known by 40% and 35% of participants, respectively. Only between 10% and 15% of participants agreed to any of the statements reflected in the figure above. This is deeply concerning and illustrate that there may be poor alignment between M&E activities and KM activities.

5.1.8 Knowledge Dissemination and Communication

The knowledge and dissemination dimension aimed at ascertaining whether certain information sharing forums are established, coordinated and functioning within the organisation and whether information sharing sessions are coordinated and supported within the DPME.

Figure 9: Knowledge dissemination and communication

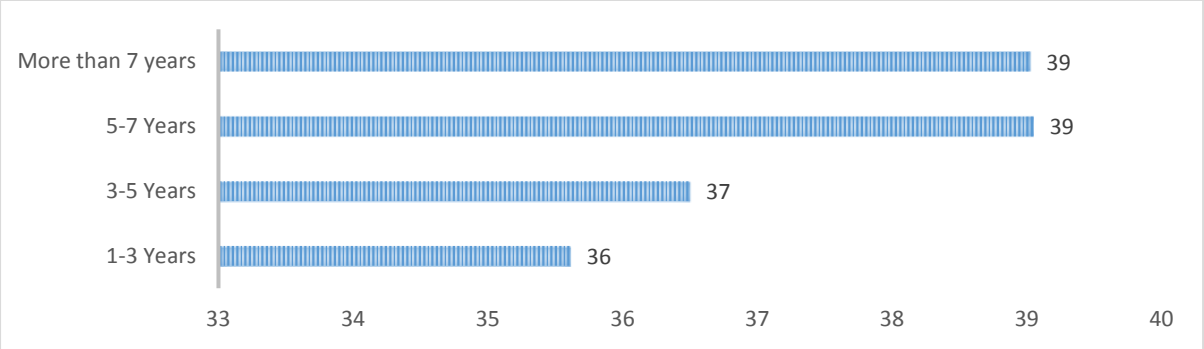


The figure above illustrates that 50% of the participants indicated that knowledge sharing sessions are facilitated within the department, with about 35% that were neutral and 5% that disagreed. About 55% indicated that there was a functioning M&E Forum in place but 30% indicated that they were not aware of DPME coordination and support forums, with only 25% of participants indicating that they are established support forums.

Only 15% of participants indicated that employees in the DPME support information sharing sessions, with most participants (45%) neutral on this and 30% in disagreement.

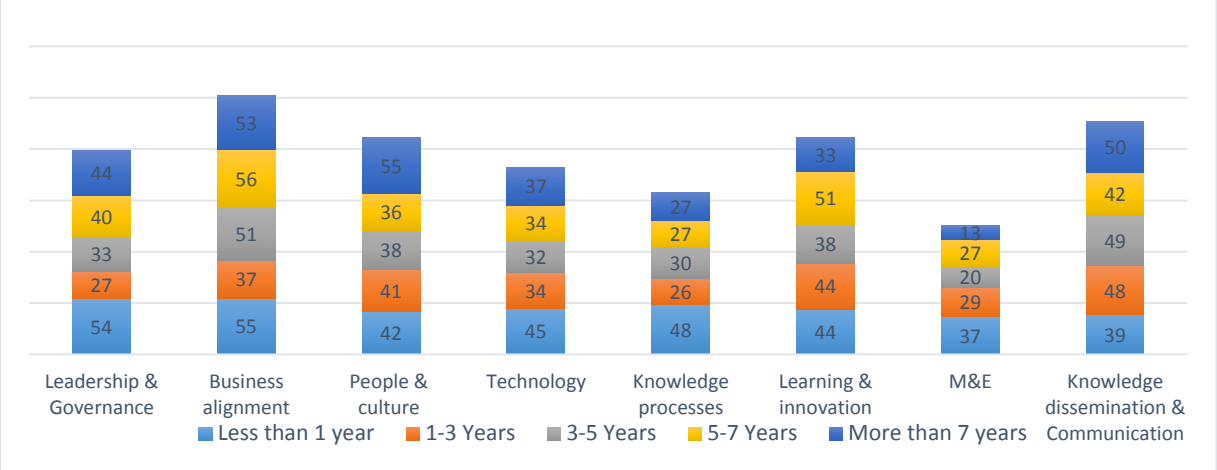
5.2 Comparison across Demographic Variables

Figure 10: Comparison of mean KM scores on the basis of years of service at DPME



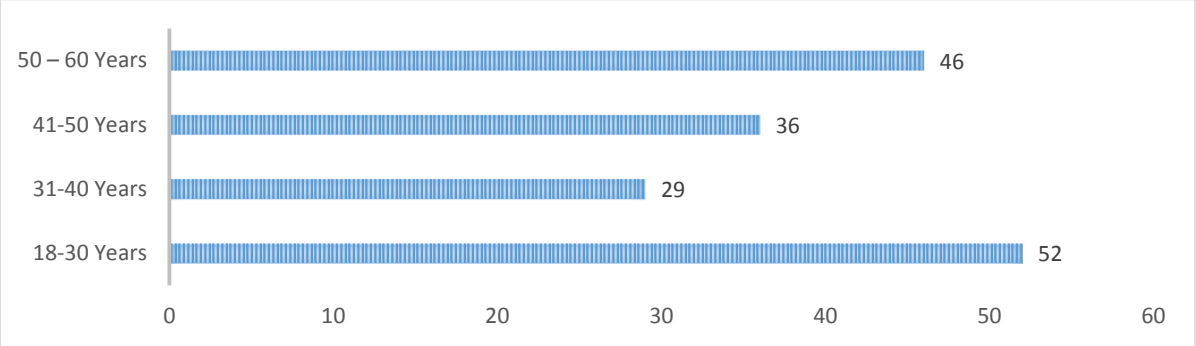
The diagram above illustrates that there was more awareness of knowledge management aspects amongst employees that have been in the department for more than 5 years than those below. The results also illustrate that there is not much difference in the awareness of knowledge aspects amongst the different groups of participants, with a difference in score of 3 between the ones with the highest scores and those with the lowest.

Figure 11: Years of service in relation to 8 dimensions



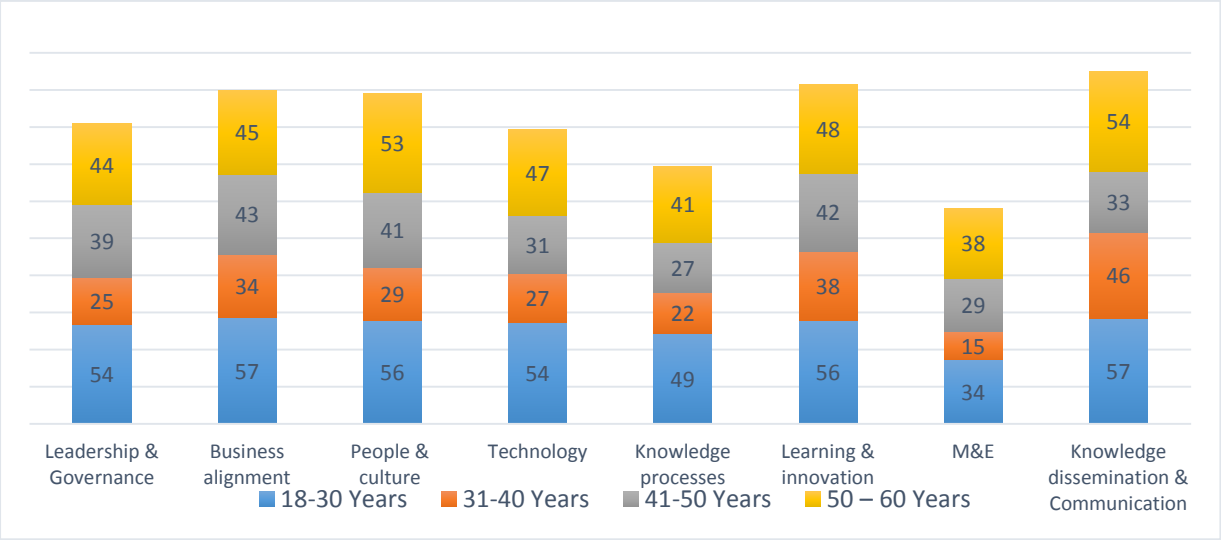
The figure above illustrates that only participants that had between 1 and 3 years (37%) of service at DPME had scores below 50% on the Business alignment dimension. Participants with more than 7 years of service were the only group with scores above 50% on the dimension Knowledge dissemination and People and culture, and those with less than a year were also the only group with scores above 50% on the dimension Leadership and governance. The dimension M&E, Knowledge Processes and Technology had the lowest score, with participants with more than 7 years having an average score of 13% on M&E, 27% on Knowledge processes and 37% on Technology. Scores of participants with less than a year were however, the on the same variables, 37%, 48% and 45%, respectively.

Figure 12: Comparison of mean KM scores on the basis of age



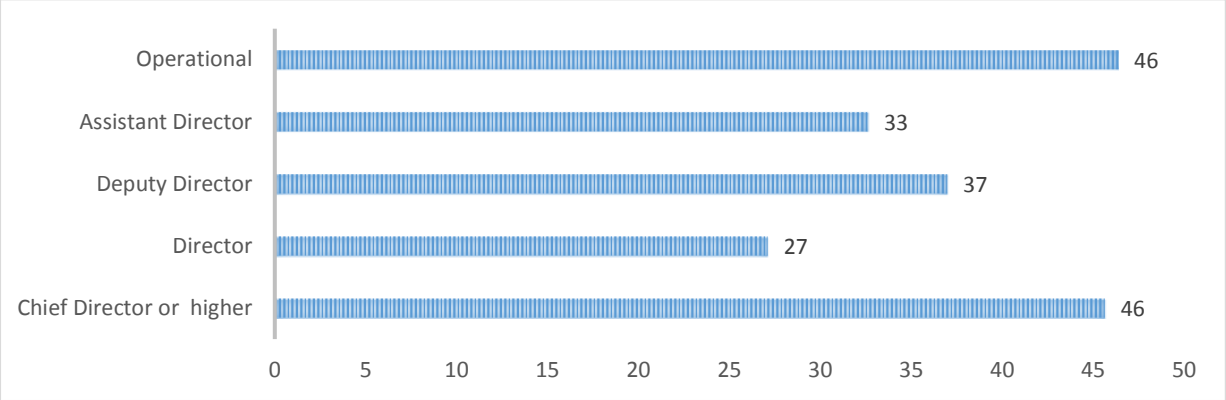
The diagram above illustrates that the average scores on the overall questionnaire were highest amongst the age group 18 - 30 years at 52% and lowest amongst those between 31 and 40 years at 29%.

Figure 13: Age categories in relation to the 8 dimensions



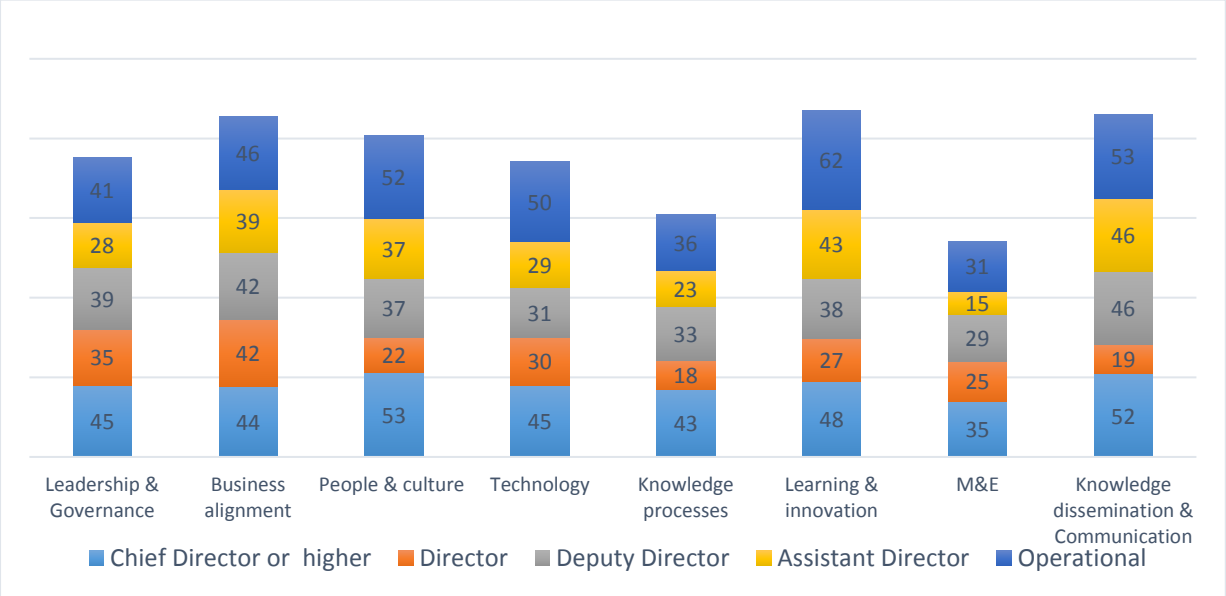
The figure above illustrates that the youngest group of participants were more agreeable and had the highest scores on all the dimensions except for the M&E dimension which was better rated (38%) by the group above 50 years of age. The youngest group and oldest group were the only group of participants that had scores above 50%. The youngest had scores above 50% in all dimensions except for Knowledge processes and M&E and the oldest group had scores above 50% only in the dimension Knowledge dissemination and People and culture.

Figure 14: Comparison of mean score in relation to position at DPME



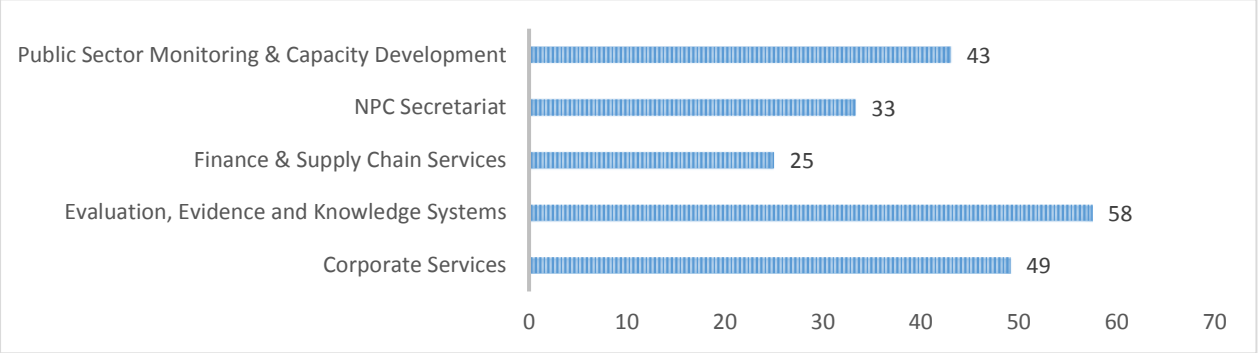
The diagram above illustrates that the average scores on the overall questionnaire were highest amongst chief directors and operational staff at 46% and lowest amongst directors at 27%.

Figure 15: Position at DPME in relation to the 8 dimensions



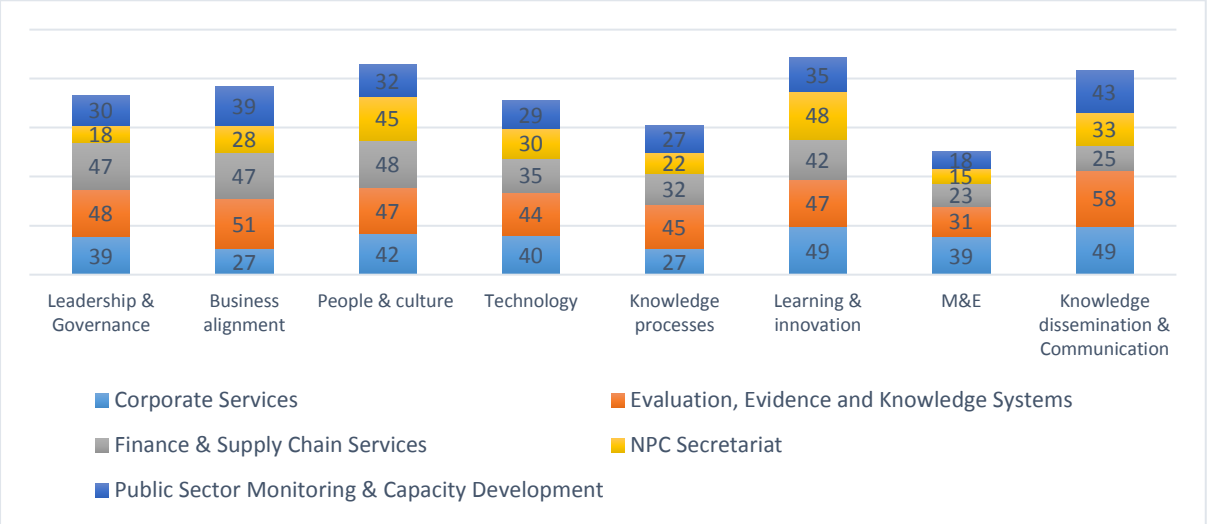
The figure above illustrates that chief directors were more agreeable and had the highest scores and scores above 50% on 4 of the 8 dimensions, namely; Learning and innovation (62%), Knowledge dissemination and communication (53%), People and culture (52%) and Technology (50%). Participants at operational level also had the second highest scores to chief directors and had scores above 50% on 2 dimension, namely; Knowledge dissemination and communication (52%), People and culture (53%). Directors were the least agreeable, with lowest scores on almost all the dimensions. They had the lowest score on Knowledge processes (18%) and scores below 30% on People and culture, M&E and Learning and innovation.

Figure 16: Comparison of mean score at Branch level within the DPME



The diagram above illustrates that the average scores on the overall questionnaire were highest amongst participants in the Evaluation, Evidence and Knowledge Systems Branch at 58%, followed by the Corporate Services Branch and Public Sector Monitoring Branch at 49% and 43%, respectively. The lowest scores were in the Finance and Supply Chain Service, with a score of 25%.

Figure 17: Branch level comparisons in relation to the 8 dimensions

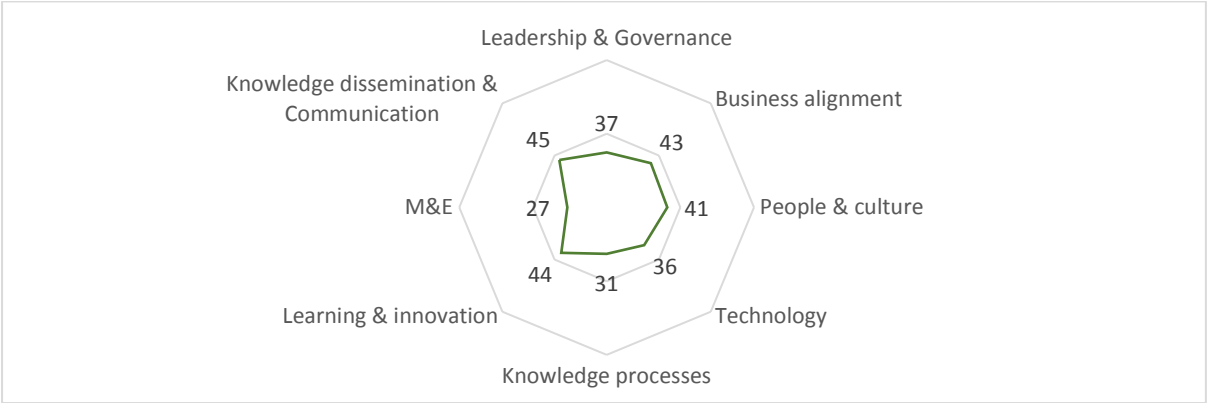


The diagram above illustrates that the rating within the branch was quite low, with only the Evaluation, Evidence and Knowledge Systems Branch scoring above 50% on 2 of the 8 dimensions, namely; Knowledge dissemination and communication (58%) and Business alignment (51%). The NPC Secretariat had the lowest scores on almost all the dimensions, except for the dimension, People and culture (45%), Learning and innovation (48%), Knowledge dissemination and communication (33%) and slight margins in Technology (30%).

5.2.1 Mean KM Maturity score for the DPME

The graphs below provide an illustration of the level of KM maturity within the DPME based on the eight KM dimensions.

Figure 18: Mean maturity scores per KM dimension (%)



As illustrated in Figure 18 above, none of the components had a level of maturity above 50%. The closest to 50% was knowledge dissemination and communication, with a level of awareness of 45%, learning and innovation at 44%, business alignment at 43% and people and culture at 41%. The lowest score at 27% was monitoring and evaluation, followed by knowledge processes at 31%.

5.3 Comparison of DPME KM Maturity with DPSA results

The results of the DPME KM maturity study will be compared with the results of a KM maturity study that has recently been undertaken by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). The DPSA conducted the study to ascertain how advanced different national and provincial departments were in terms of understanding and implementing KM practices. The DPSA had 17 national departments that participated in the study out of 25 nominated departments. The results of the study indicated that out of the seven dimensions measured, only the dimension Technology had an average score of 50% (15/30). Monitoring and Evaluation had the lowest score, with an average of 23% (7/30). Further comparisons are done in Figure 19 below. It should be noted that the DPME added one other dimension that did not appear in the DPSA questionnaire hence the absence of the Knowledge dissemination and communication scores.

Figure 19: Comparison of KM Dimension scores between DPME and National Departments

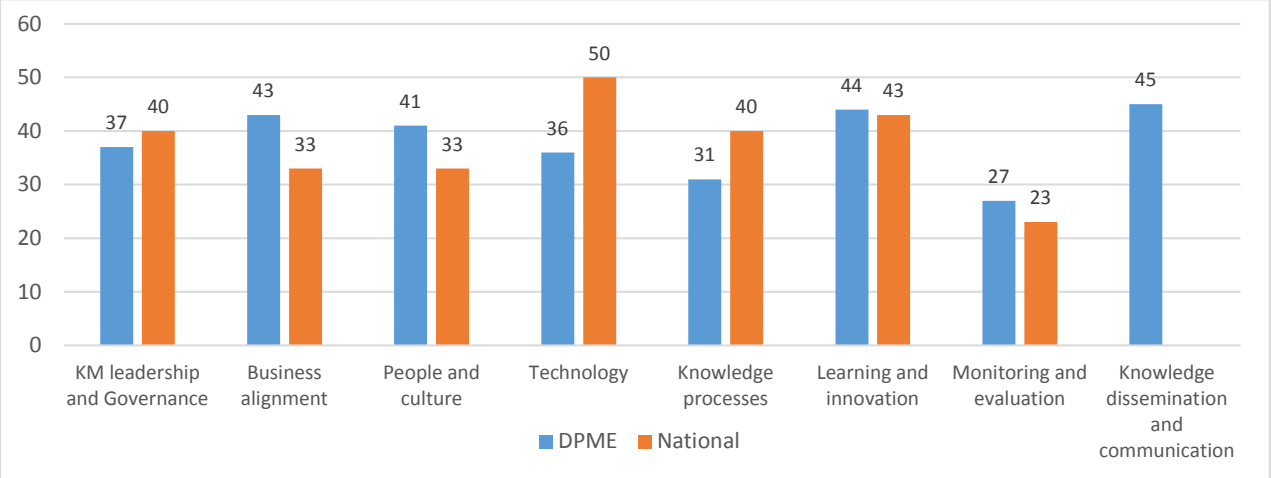


Figure 19 above, illustrates that the average scores for almost all the dimensions are below average for the national departments except the dimension Technology (50%). The DPME average scores were higher than the average national departments for the dimension Business alignment, People and culture and Learning and innovation. National departments had higher scores on the dimension KM Leadership and Governance (40%), Technology (50%), Knowledge processes (40%). Monitoring and evaluation had the lowest average score for both national departments (23%) and DPME (27%).

6. Conclusion

The comparison of the mean scores illustrate that the level of KM maturity in national departments in general is quite low. The score of the maturity study conducted by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the DPME are not quite different. The average KM maturity score for the national departments is at 37 % and 33% for DPME. This illustrates that a lot has to be done to improve the uptake of KM not only in the DPME but also at a national level.

The DPSA results also indicated that provincial departments are doing much better than national departments. The DPSA (2018) study highlights that only a few national departments have a KM strategy and do not have a clearly defined business case for KM. This therefore, makes DPME slightly ahead as it has an existing strategy and conducted an audit, which clearly specified that there is a business case for KM at DPME.

The KM audit report asserted that the implementation of KM at DPME ought to overcome certain hurdles such as management buy-in, training and the culture of sharing. IT support and governance and stakeholder management were also identified as critical in ensuring

improvement in KM implementation. It would therefore be important for DPME to utilise the results of the audit report, the DPSA report and other relevant reports to identify areas of improvement and also use these to feed into the KM strategy.

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