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Organizational behavior skills and knowledge management in entrepreneurial environments: Evidence from Saudi Arabia

Faiz Alfazzi *

Management Science Department, Yanbu Industrial College, Royal Commission for Yanbu, Yanbu, Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices among entrepreneurs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As entrepreneurial environments increasingly rely on effective behavioral competencies to support learning, collaboration, and decision-making, understanding their association with knowledge management processes has become increasingly important. The study adopts a quantitative descriptive–analytical approach using a structured questionnaire administered to a sample of 384 entrepreneurs. The measurement instrument demonstrated acceptable reliability and validity indicators, confirming its suitability for empirical analysis. The statistical results revealed a strong positive relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices, indicating that behavioral competencies are closely associated with knowledge creation, sharing, storage, and application within entrepreneurial contexts. Specifically, entrepreneurs who reported higher levels of communication, teamwork, adaptability, and problem-solving skills also demonstrated stronger knowledge management practices. This study contributes to the organizational and entrepreneurial literature by clarifying the behavioral factors associated with knowledge-oriented development in emerging entrepreneurial environments. The practical implications emphasize the importance of integrating behavioral skill development into entrepreneurial training and support programs to enhance sustainable knowledge management capabilities.

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1. Introduction

Contemporary organizational environments are increasingly shaped by rapid technological change, global competition, and heightened uncertainty, requiring organizations to rely not only on structural capabilities but also on adaptive behavioral competencies. In such contexts, the ability of individuals and teams to communicate effectively, collaborate, and respond to emerging challenges has become a critical determinant of organizational performance.

Within this evolving landscape, knowledge has emerged as a central strategic resource rather than a supportive asset. Organizations are no longer evaluated solely based on their physical or financial resources, but also on their ability to generate, share, and apply knowledge in ways that enhance learning and adaptability (Alavi and Leidner, 2001; Girard and Girard, 2015). Consequently, knowledge management (KM) is increasingly conceptualized as a dynamic and socially embedded process that depends on human interaction, rather than purely technological systems.

Despite this recognition, much of the existing knowledge management literature continues to emphasize structural and technological dimensions, often overlooking the behavioral mechanisms that enable knowledge processes to function effectively. Organizational behavior (OB) research, on the other hand, has extensively examined individual and group dynamics, yet has rarely been explicitly integrated with knowledge management outcomes, particularly in entrepreneurial contexts.

Entrepreneurial environments provide a particularly relevant setting for examining this relationship. New ventures operate under conditions of uncertainty, resource constraints, and rapid change, making behavioral capabilities such as

* Corresponding Author.
Email Address: alfazzif@rcjy.edu.sa
https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2026.06.022
Corresponding author's ORCID profile:
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4606-6809
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communication, leadership, teamwork, and adaptability essential for organizational learning and knowledge utilization. In such settings, knowledge does not exist independently of behavior; rather, it is enacted through social interaction and collective practice.

This issue is especially salient within the Saudi Arabian context, where Vision 2030 emphasizes innovation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge-based economic transformation. While substantial attention has been given to structural reforms and investment initiatives, less emphasis has been placed on the behavioral capabilities required to sustain knowledge-driven entrepreneurial development. Understanding how behavioral competencies relate to knowledge management practices can therefore provide important insights into the human foundations of entrepreneurial success within this context.

Accordingly, this study seeks to examine the relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices among entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia. By integrating insights from organizational behavior and knowledge management literature, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how behavioral capabilities are associated with knowledge-oriented organizational processes. In doing so, it responds to calls for greater attention to the social and behavioral dimensions of knowledge management, particularly within emerging entrepreneurial ecosystems.

2. Literature review

2.1. Organizational behavior skills in entrepreneurial contexts

Organizational behavior (OB) research has long emphasized the role of individual and group dynamics in shaping organizational outcomes. Traditional perspectives often conceptualize behavioral competencies—such as communication, leadership, and teamwork—as supportive managerial tools that facilitate coordination and efficiency (Champoux, 2011). However, contemporary research increasingly challenges this instrumental view by positioning behavioral capabilities as central mechanisms through which organizations interpret complexity and sustain adaptive performance.

In entrepreneurial contexts, this shift becomes particularly significant. Unlike established organizations, entrepreneurial ventures operate under conditions of uncertainty, limited resources, and evolving structures. These conditions amplify the importance of behavioral competencies, as entrepreneurs rely heavily on interpersonal interaction, informal coordination, and rapid decision-making to navigate ambiguity (Wagner and Hollenbeck, 2021). Behavioral skills in such settings are not merely operational tools; they function as dynamic capabilities that enable learning, sense-making, and strategic adjustment. Nevertheless, existing research presents a degree of conceptual fragmentation. While some studies emphasize leadership and communication as drivers of team effectiveness, others focus on motivation and psychological factors as determinants of performance. This lack of integration has resulted in a limited understanding of how different behavioral competencies collectively contribute to broader organizational processes, particularly those related to knowledge creation and utilization.

Moreover, much of the OB literature has been developed within large organizational settings, raising questions about its direct applicability to entrepreneurial environments. Startups and small ventures often lack formal structures and rely on fluid interaction patterns, suggesting that behavioral competencies may operate differently compared to traditional organizational contexts. This gap highlights the need for more context-sensitive investigations that examine how behavioral skills function within entrepreneurial ecosystems.

2.2. Knowledge management in entrepreneurial organizations

Knowledge management (KM) has been widely recognized as a critical organizational capability that supports learning, innovation, and strategic adaptability. Entrepreneurship is increasingly associated with knowledge spillovers and knowledge-based economic development, where knowledge plays a central role in innovation and competitive advantage (Audretsch et al., 2020). Early KM literature primarily focused on technological systems and information processing mechanisms, emphasizing the role of databases, knowledge repositories, and information systems in capturing and disseminating knowledge (Alavi and Leidner, 2001). While these perspectives provided important foundational insights, they have been increasingly criticized for underestimating the social and behavioral dimensions of knowledge processes.

More recent research conceptualizes KM as a socially embedded process in which knowledge is created, shared, and applied through interaction, trust, and collaborative engagement (Girard and Girard, 2015; Centobelli et al., 2017). From this perspective, knowledge does not exist independently within systems; rather, it is continuously constructed and reconstructed through human behavior and organizational context. This shift highlights the importance of relational and behavioral factors in determining the effectiveness of knowledge management practices. Knowledge management is also linked to organizational learning and value creation processes, particularly in dynamic and knowledge-driven environments (North and Kumta, 2018).

In entrepreneurial organizations, the relevance of this perspective becomes even more pronounced. Startups and small ventures typically lack formalized knowledge structures and instead depend on

informal communication channels, experiential learning, and iterative problem-solving. As a result, knowledge management processes in such environments are often fluid, decentralized, and heavily reliant on the behavioral capabilities of entrepreneurs and their teams (Paoloni et al., 2020).

However, despite this recognition, a gap remains between theoretical advancements and empirical investigation. Much of the existing research continues to treat KM as an independent organizational function, without adequately examining how behavioral competencies shape its implementation. This disconnect is particularly evident in emerging entrepreneurial ecosystems, where contextual factors such as culture, trust, and leadership styles may significantly influence knowledge processes.

Accordingly, there is a growing need to reframe KM not as a purely structural or technological construct, but as a behavioral and relational phenomenon. Such a perspective allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how knowledge is mobilized within entrepreneurial settings, and provides a foundation for integrating organizational behavior insights into KM research.

2.3. Linking organizational behavior skills and knowledge management

The relationship between organizational behavior (OB) skills and knowledge management (KM) has gained increasing attention in recent years, particularly within perspectives that emphasize the social foundations of organizational processes. While traditional approaches often treated KM as a distinct functional domain, contemporary scholarship suggests that knowledge processes are inherently shaped by behavioral conditions within organizations.

At a conceptual level, organizational behavior skills and knowledge management are closely interconnected through shared underlying mechanisms. Communication facilitates the articulation and transfer of knowledge, teamwork supports the integration of diverse perspectives, leadership shapes the direction and legitimacy of knowledge initiatives, and problem-solving enables the application of knowledge in dynamic situations. These behavioral dimensions do not merely support knowledge processes; they actively constitute the conditions under which knowledge is created, shared, and utilized.

This perspective aligns with the view that knowledge is socially constructed and embedded in interactional contexts rather than stored as static information. Consequently, the effectiveness of KM practices depends less on the availability of technological systems and more on the quality of behavioral interaction within organizations (Girard and Girard, 2015). In this sense, organizational behavior skills can be understood as a form of "behavioral infrastructure" that enables knowledge to become actionable.

However, the close conceptual alignment between OB skills and KM also raises important methodological considerations. Because both constructs are rooted in social interaction and human behavior, empirical measurements may capture overlapping dimensions, potentially leading to strong statistical associations. This does not necessarily indicate redundancy, but rather reflects the integrated nature of behavioral and knowledge processes within organizational settings.

Despite these insights, empirical research explicitly examining the relationship between OB skills and KM remains limited, particularly in entrepreneurial contexts. Existing studies often focus on isolated behavioral variables or intermediate constructs, without providing a comprehensive framework that integrates multiple behavioral competencies with knowledge management outcomes. This gap is especially pronounced in emerging economies, where contextual factors may further shape the interaction between behavior and knowledge processes.

Therefore, examining the relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management within entrepreneurial environments offers an opportunity to advance both theoretical integration and empirical understanding of knowledge-driven organizational development.

This perspective contributes to an emerging shift in the literature that moves beyond viewing knowledge management as a purely technical system, toward recognizing it as a socially enacted process grounded in behavioral interaction.

2.4. Previous studies and research gap

A substantial body of research has examined knowledge management and its relationship with organizational performance, innovation, and competitive advantage across various sectors. Prior studies have also explored the role of human capital, organizational culture, and leadership in facilitating knowledge-sharing behaviors (Razzaq et al., 2019; Rhee and Choi, 2017; Manfredi Latilla et al., 2018). These contributions have advanced understanding of the mechanisms through which knowledge management influences organizational outcomes.

Similarly, organizational behavior research has extensively investigated the effects of communication, leadership, motivation, and teamwork on individual and group performance. These studies have provided valuable insights into how behavioral competencies shape organizational effectiveness and adaptability.

However, despite these parallel streams of research, a notable gap remains in the integration of organizational behavior and knowledge management perspectives. Much of the existing literature treats knowledge management as a structural or technological process, while organizational behavior is examined independently as a set of interpersonal or managerial skills. As a result, limited empirical attention has been given to

understanding how multiple behavioral competencies collectively influence knowledge management practices.

Furthermore, previous research has often focused on large or established organizations, with comparatively less attention directed toward entrepreneurial environments. This limitation is significant, as knowledge processes in entrepreneurial contexts are more fluid, informal, and behaviorally driven, making them particularly sensitive to individual and team-level competencies.

The gap is even more pronounced within the Saudi Arabian context. While Vision 2030 has stimulated considerable interest in entrepreneurship and knowledge-based economic development, empirical studies examining the behavioral foundations of knowledge management in Saudi entrepreneurial settings remain scarce. Existing research has largely emphasized structural reforms, policy initiatives, and economic outcomes, with limited focus on the human and behavioral dimensions that enable knowledge-driven growth.

Accordingly, this study addresses these gaps by examining the relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices within the context of Saudi entrepreneurship. By integrating behavioral and knowledge perspectives in an emerging economic environment, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how human capabilities are associated with knowledge-oriented organizational processes.

The preceding literature suggests that organizational behavior skills and knowledge management are closely interconnected through shared behavioral and social mechanisms. Communication, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving shape how knowledge is created, interpreted, and applied within organizational settings. In entrepreneurial environments, where knowledge processes are often informal and interaction-driven, these behavioral competencies become particularly relevant.

Rather than functioning as independent constructs, organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices may be understood as mutually reinforcing elements of knowledge-oriented organizational processes. Behavioral capabilities provide the conditions under which knowledge can be effectively mobilized, while knowledge practices reflect the outcomes of such interaction.

Given this conceptual alignment, it is reasonable to expect a positive association between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices. However, consistent with the study's cross-sectional design, this relationship is examined in terms of association rather than causation. Accordingly, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Organizational behavior skills are positively and significantly associated with knowledge management practices among entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia.

H2: Organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices vary significantly across demographic characteristics, including gender, age, project scale, and years of entrepreneurial experience.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative descriptive–analytical design to empirically examine the association between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices among entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia. A cross-sectional survey strategy was selected because it enables systematic observation of behavioral and knowledge-related constructs within a naturally occurring entrepreneurial context. This design is particularly appropriate for capturing patterns of association between competencies and organizational processes while maintaining statistical rigor.

3.1. Population and sampling

The target population of this study consists of entrepreneurs operating across various economic sectors in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including commercial, industrial, service, and technology-based ventures. This population reflects the diversity of the Saudi entrepreneurial ecosystem in terms of demographic characteristics, business size, and levels of experience.

A stratified sampling approach was adopted to enhance representativeness across key segments of the entrepreneurial population. The sample was structured to include variation in sector type, age, gender, project scale, and years of entrepreneurial experience. Given the practical challenges associated with accessing a comprehensive national sampling frame of entrepreneurs, the study employed a stratified convenience sampling strategy, whereby participants were selected based on accessibility within identified strata while maintaining proportional representation.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed electronically through professional networks, entrepreneurial communities, and business-related communication channels. The use of online distribution facilitated access to a geographically dispersed sample and increased participation rates.

A total of 384 valid responses were obtained and included in the final analysis. This sample size is consistent with established guidelines for quantitative research and is considered adequate for statistical analysis and generalization within the study context (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970).

While efforts were made to ensure diversity and representativeness, it is acknowledged that the sampling approach may introduce limitations related to generalizability. This limitation is

addressed and discussed in the limitations section of the study.

3.2. Data collection and measurement

Data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices within entrepreneurial settings. The instrument was developed based on established theoretical frameworks and previously validated scales to ensure conceptual rigor and consistency. Organizational behavior skills were operationalized across five dimensions: communication, leadership, teamwork, motivation, and problem-solving/adaptability. Knowledge management practices were measured through four dimensions: knowledge creation, storage, sharing, and application. All items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree) to (5 = strongly agree).

The measurement items were adapted from well-established studies in the fields of organizational behavior and knowledge management (Alavi and Leidner, 2001; Chang and Lin, 2015; Munir and Beh, 2019; Centobelli et al., 2017), with minor modifications to ensure contextual relevance to the Saudi entrepreneurial environment.

To enhance content validity, the instrument was reviewed by academic experts in management and entrepreneurship, who evaluated the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items. Based on their feedback, minor refinements were introduced prior to data collection.

In addition, several procedural steps were taken during the data collection process to minimize potential common method bias. These included ensuring respondent anonymity, clearly communicating that there were no right or wrong answers, and reducing evaluation apprehension. The use of previously validated scales further supports the reliability and consistency of the measurement instrument. Table 1 presents the structure of the measurement instrument used in this study.

3.3. Validity and reliability of the instrument

To ensure the robustness of the measurement instrument, both reliability and validity were carefully assessed. Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, which exceeded the acceptable threshold ($\alpha \geq 0.70$) across all dimensions, indicating strong internal consistency and stability of the measurement scales.

Content validity was established by adapting measurement items from well-established and widely cited studies in organizational behavior and knowledge management literature. Additionally, the instrument was reviewed by academic experts to ensure clarity, relevance, and contextual appropriateness for the Saudi entrepreneurial environment.

Table 1: Structure of the measurement instrument

Variable	Dimensions	Number of items	Source
Organizational behavior skills	Leadership	4	Munir and Beh (2019)
	Communication	4	Chang and Lin (2015)
	Teamwork	4	Wagner and Hollenbeck (2021)
	Motivation	3	Camilleri et al. (2024)
	Problem-solving & adaptability	3	Tang et al. (2024)
Total OB skills		18	
Knowledge management practices	Knowledge creation	2	Alavi and Leidner (2001)
	Knowledge storage	2	Botha et al. (2008)
	Knowledge sharing	3	Chang and Lin (2015) and Rhee and Choi (2017)
	Knowledge application	2	Del Giudice and Della Peruta (2016)

Total organizational behavior scale: 18 items; Total knowledge management scale: 9 items; Overall instrument: 27 items

Construct validity was examined using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Prior to factor extraction, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were assessed to confirm the suitability of the data for factor analysis. The KMO value (0.91) indicates excellent sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's Test was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming that correlations among items were sufficient for factor analysis.

The factor analysis results revealed that items loaded onto their respective dimensions with satisfactory loading values exceeding 0.50, supporting convergent validity. Furthermore, the factor structure demonstrated conceptual separation between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management dimensions, suggesting acceptable discriminant validity at the exploratory level. It is acknowledged that, given the cross-sectional design and the use of self-reported measures, some degree of association between constructs may be expected. However, the observed factor structure and theoretical distinction between the constructs support their conceptual independence within the study framework. The reliability analysis in Table 2 shows strong internal consistency across all dimensions. Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the acceptable threshold (0.70), confirming that the instrument reliably measures organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices. The overall reliability ($\alpha = 0.94$) indicates excellent measurement stability. Table 3 presents the KMO and Bartlett's Test results, while Table 4 reports the exploratory factor analysis loadings. Factor loadings demonstrate convergence of items within their theoretical dimensions. Loadings above accepted thresholds validate the measurement structure and confirm conceptual

alignment. In addition, to assess the potential presence of common method bias, Harman's single-factor test was conducted. The results indicated that a single factor did not account for the majority of the variance, suggesting that common method bias is unlikely to significantly affect the findings.

Table 2: Reliability analysis results (Cronbach's alpha coefficients)

Variable	Dimension	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Reliability level
Organizational behavior skills	Leadership	4	0.87	High
	Communication	4	0.89	High
	Teamwork	4	0.85	High
	Motivation	3	0.81	Good
	Problem-solving & adaptability	3	0.83	Good
Overall organizational behavior skills		18	0.93	Excellent
Knowledge management practices	Knowledge creation	2	0.78	Acceptable
	Knowledge storage	2	0.80	Good
	Knowledge sharing	3	0.84	Good
	Knowledge application	2	0.79	Acceptable
Overall knowledge management		9	0.88	Good
Overall instrument		27	0.94	Excellent

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's test of construct validity

Test	Value
KMO measure of sampling adequacy	0.91
Bartlett's test Chi-square	3542.67
df	351
Sig.	0.000

Table 4: Exploratory factor analysis – Factor loadings

Dimension	Item code	Loading
Leadership	OB1	0.78
	OB2	0.81
Communication	OB3	0.84
	OB4	0.79
Teamwork	OB5	0.76
Motivation	OB6	0.74
Problem-solving	OB7	0.72
Knowledge creation	KM1	0.83
Knowledge sharing	KM2	0.80
Knowledge storage	KM3	0.77
Knowledge application	KM4	0.75

Furthermore, discriminant validity between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management constructs was assessed by comparing inter-construct correlations and factor loadings. The results indicate that, although the constructs are conceptually related, they remain empirically distinct, supporting their validity as separate constructs within the analysis.

3.4. Statistical analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to examine both descriptive and inferential aspects of the study variables. The analytical approach was aligned with the study objectives and the nature of the collected data.

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, were used to summarize respondents' characteristics and to provide an overview of organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices.

To test the first hypothesis, Pearson correlation analysis was employed to assess the strength and direction of the association between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices. This was complemented by linear regression analysis to evaluate the extent to which behavioral competencies are associated with variations in knowledge management outcomes.

To examine demographic differences (H2), independent samples t-tests were used for gender comparisons, while one-way ANOVA was conducted to assess differences across age, project scale, and years of entrepreneurial experience. Where statistically significant differences were identified, post hoc comparisons were performed to explore group-level variations.

In addition to statistical significance, emphasis was placed on interpreting the practical relevance of the findings by examining the magnitude and consistency of observed differences across groups. This approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of the results beyond p-values alone.

All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of ($p < 0.05$), ensuring that the probability of Type I error remains within acceptable limits.

4. Results

4.1. Demographic characteristics

Table 5 presents the demographic composition of the study sample (N = 384), illustrating variation across age, gender, project scale, and entrepreneurial experience. The distribution reflects a heterogeneous participant profile, supporting the representativeness of the dataset for comparative statistical analysis.

The largest proportion of respondents fell within the 35–44-year age category, followed by participants aged 55–64 and 45–54 years, with younger entrepreneurs forming a comparable segment of the sample. Gender distribution shows a higher representation of male entrepreneurs, although female participation constitutes a substantial portion of the dataset. In terms of venture scale, small enterprises account for the largest segment, with micro and medium enterprises also well represented. Entrepreneurial experience is similarly distributed, with respondents spanning early-stage and advanced practice.

Collectively, these demographic patterns indicate that the sample captures diverse entrepreneurial conditions, providing an appropriate foundation for examining behavioral and knowledge management dynamics.

Table 5: Distribution of the study sample according to demographic characteristics (N = 384)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	24–34 years	86	22.4
	35–44 years	111	28.9
	45–54 years	87	22.7
	55–64 years	100	26.0
Gender	Male	234	60.9
	Female	150	39.1
Project scale	Micro enterprises	130	33.9
	Small enterprises	166	43.2
	Medium enterprises	88	22.9
Years of experience	Less than 5 years	140	36.5
	5–10 years	142	37.0
	More than 10 years	102	26.6
Total		384	100

4.2. Organizational behavior skills

Descriptive statistics summarizing organizational behavior skills are displayed in Table 6. Mean scores across items indicate consistently elevated perceptions of behavioral competency, suggesting that respondents generally report strong engagement with behaviors that facilitate knowledge-oriented interaction.

Communication-centered behaviors received the highest ratings, particularly those associated with clarity of information exchange and adaptability. Items reflecting collaborative openness and goal alignment also demonstrate strong endorsement. In contrast, delegation practices and certain conflict management behaviors show comparatively lower — though still positive — evaluations.

The distribution of responses suggests that entrepreneurs prioritize interpersonal clarity, flexibility, and trust-building as central behavioral mechanisms supporting knowledge activity. Overall patterns indicate that organizational behavior competencies are perceived as actively embedded within entrepreneurial practice.

The highest-rated item was clear communication supporting knowledge application (M = 4.44), followed by adaptability to external change (M = 4.28) and open communication practices (M = 4.26). Lower mean scores were observed for delegation-related behaviors (M = 3.66) and conflict management practices (M = 3.86). Overall, the results indicate strong endorsement of behavioral competencies associated with knowledge development.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics for the first axis – Organizational behavior skills and their role in developing knowledge management

No.	Item	Mean	SD	Relative weight (%)	Rank
1	The diversity I encourage in my team helps generate ideas and knowledge from multiple perspectives.	4.08	0.80	81.7	8
2	Clear communication helps my team understand and apply knowledge better.	4.44	0.76	88.8	1
3	My active listening to the team improves documentation of lessons learned.	4.20	0.76	84.0	5
4	I maintain open communication to ease knowledge exchange.	4.26	0.67	85.2	3
5	The clear vision I set inspires creative knowledge creation.	4.24	0.69	84.8	4
6	Motivational leadership creates a safe knowledge-sharing environment.	3.86	0.83	77.2	16
7	Delegation enables independent knowledge acquisition.	3.66	0.93	73.2	18
8	Open communication channels foster knowledge sharing.	4.03	0.63	80.6	11
9	Fair conflict resolution maintains productive knowledge environments.	3.86	0.80	77.1	17
10	Support for experimentation encourages new knowledge creation.	3.92	1.01	78.3	14
11	Flexibility to change supports adaptive knowledge use.	4.28	0.93	85.6	2
12	Innovative thinking encourages non-traditional knowledge acquisition.	3.99	0.70	79.9	13
13	Clarifying goals enhances knowledge exchange participation.	4.20	0.64	84.0	6
14	Encouraging initiative generates new ideas and knowledge.	4.01	0.72	80.2	12
15	Building trust promotes knowledge transfer and sharing.	4.08	0.72	81.7	9
16	Negotiated conflict resolution supports knowledge sharing.	4.10	0.73	82.0	7
17	Change management plans ensure knowledge leverage.	3.90	0.70	78.0	15
18	Brainstorming sessions foster innovative knowledge creation.	4.06	0.59	81.2	10

4.3. Knowledge management practices

Table 7 summarizes descriptive findings for knowledge management practices. Reported mean values indicate a broadly favorable perception of knowledge-related processes, reflecting active engagement with knowledge creation, documentation, and exchange mechanisms.

Practices associated with leveraging external input and structured documentation received the strongest evaluations, suggesting that entrepreneurs recognize the value of integrating stakeholder feedback and maintaining organized knowledge repositories. Collaborative exchange activities also show strong representation. While culture-based knowledge sharing received comparatively lower ratings, responses remain within a positive range.

These patterns collectively indicate that knowledge management processes are perceived as operationally present and strategically relevant within participating ventures. Knowledge utilization through stakeholder feedback recorded the highest mean value (M = 4.46). Documentation of procedures and collaborative knowledge-sharing practices also received high ratings. Comparatively lower scores were observed for collaboration culture

and routine information exchange, though still within a positive range.

4.4. Hypothesis testing

H1: Organizational Behavior Skills and Knowledge Management. Pearson correlation analysis reveals a strong positive association between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices ($r = 0.876$, $p < .01$). The magnitude and statistical significance of this relationship indicate that higher levels of behavioral competency correspond with more developed knowledge management activity (Table 8). This finding is consistent with the proposed relationship, indicating that behavioral effectiveness is closely aligned with knowledge-oriented organizational functioning within entrepreneurial contexts.

The strong positive correlation confirms that higher organizational behavior skills are associated with stronger knowledge management practices, supporting the first hypothesis.

H2: Demographic Differences. Inferential analysis examining demographic variation is presented in Table 9. The results indicate statistically significant differences in both organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices across age categories, project scale, and years of entrepreneurial experience. Gender-based comparisons, however, do not demonstrate statistically meaningful variation.

These findings suggest that demographic characteristics influence the expression of behavioral and knowledge practices, reinforcing the hypothesis that entrepreneurial context and experience contribute to observable variation in organizational functioning.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics for the second axis – Knowledge management practices

No.	Item	Mean	SD	Relative weight (%)	Rank
1	Employees are encouraged to propose new ideas.	3.96	0.87	79.3	7
2	Innovation is supported through resource allocation.	4.13	0.79	82.6	5
3	External feedback is leveraged for knowledge creation.	4.46	0.76	89.2	1
4	Meetings and workshops support knowledge exchange.	4.22	0.77	84.4	2
5	Organizational knowledge is documented systematically.	4.22	0.68	84.4	3
6	Stored knowledge is organized for accessibility.	4.22	0.68	84.3	4
7	Information sharing is routinely encouraged.	3.89	0.84	77.8	8
8	Collaboration culture discourages knowledge monopolization.	3.68	0.95	73.6	9
9	Trust-based environments support knowledge sharing.	4.05	0.62	81.0	6

Table 8: Testing the first hypothesis – The relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management

Variables	Pearson correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	N	Result
Organizational behavior skills– knowledge management	0.876	0.000	384	Significant at 0.01 level

Table 9: Demographic differences — Hypothesis testing

Demographic variable	Statistical test	Dependent variable	F/t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Gender	Independent samples t-test	Organizational behavior skills	1.649	0.100
		Knowledge management	–0.014	0.989
Age	One-way ANOVA	Organizational behavior skills	7.193	0.000
		Knowledge management	4.398	0.005
Project scale	One-way ANOVA	Organizational behavior skills	7.073	0.001
		Knowledge management	14.249	0.000
Years of experience	One-way ANOVA	Organizational behavior skills	7.360	0.001
		Knowledge management	8.320	0.000

The statistical results indicate significant group differences in organizational behavior skills and knowledge management across several demographic variables. Specifically, age, project scale, and years of entrepreneurial experience demonstrate meaningful variation, whereas gender differences are not statistically significant. These findings suggest that demographic characteristics are associated with observable variation in behavioral competencies and knowledge management practices, thereby supporting Hypothesis H2.

Post hoc comparisons further indicated that these differences were primarily observed between early-stage and more experienced entrepreneurs, suggesting that exposure to organizational complexity enhances both behavioral and knowledge management capabilities.

To provide a more comprehensive interpretation of the statistical findings, effect sizes were calculated using eta squared (η^2). The results indicated that the observed differences across demographic variables ranged from small to moderate effect sizes, suggesting that while statistically significant, these differences reflect modest practical significance within the entrepreneurial context.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the behavioral foundations of knowledge management within entrepreneurial environments. Rather than interpreting the results as indicating a direct causal relationship, the findings suggest a strong association between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices. This strong association may also reflect the conceptual proximity between behavioral interaction and knowledge processes, rather than indicating measurement redundancy. From a theoretical perspective, this association can be

understood through the lens of knowledge as a socially embedded process. Knowledge management does not operate independently of human interaction; instead, it emerges through communication patterns, collaborative engagement, and leadership practices that shape how knowledge is interpreted and applied. In this context, organizational behavior skills can be viewed as enabling conditions that facilitate the activation of knowledge processes within entrepreneurial settings.

The strength of the observed relationship highlights the extent to which behavioral competencies are aligned with knowledge-oriented practices. However, this alignment should be interpreted with caution. Given the conceptual proximity between behavioral interaction and knowledge processes, a degree of overlap between the constructs is expected. This suggests that the strong statistical association may reflect the integrated nature of these dimensions rather than a simple cause-and-effect relationship.

While traditional approaches emphasize systems and technological infrastructure, the present results support perspectives that highlight the central role of human and relational dynamics in shaping knowledge outcomes, particularly within entrepreneurial environments characterized by flexibility and informality.

Further interpretation of the findings suggests that not all behavioral dimensions contribute equally to knowledge management practices. While some competencies appear to be more strongly aligned with knowledge processes, others may operate as supporting or moderating factors within the broader behavioral framework.

For instance, communication-related behaviors can be interpreted as foundational mechanisms that enable knowledge articulation and exchange, while adaptability reflects the capacity to utilize knowledge in response to changing environmental conditions. In contrast, relatively weaker behavioral dimensions—such as delegation and certain aspects of conflict management—may indicate structural or cultural constraints that limit the full realization of knowledge-sharing potential.

These variations highlight that behavioral competencies are not uniformly developed across entrepreneurial settings, and that differences in behavioral maturity may influence how effectively knowledge processes are enacted. From an organizational perspective, this suggests that strengthening specific behavioral capabilities could enhance the overall effectiveness of knowledge management practices.

From a contextual perspective, the findings acquire additional significance within the Saudi entrepreneurial ecosystem. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 places strong emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship, and knowledge-based economic transformation. However, while structural and policy-level initiatives have received substantial attention, comparatively less focus has been directed toward the behavioral capabilities required to sustain knowledge-driven development.

The present findings suggest that behavioral competencies may represent a critical yet underexplored dimension of entrepreneurial success within this context. In particular, the ability of entrepreneurs to foster communication, collaboration, and adaptive problem-solving appears to be closely associated with the development of effective knowledge management practices.

This highlights the importance of considering human and behavioral factors as integral components of entrepreneurial ecosystems, rather than treating knowledge management as a purely structural or technological function. In environments characterized by rapid change and uncertainty, such as the Saudi entrepreneurial landscape, behavioral capabilities may serve as a key mechanism through which knowledge is mobilized and translated into organizational outcomes.

Accordingly, this study contributes to the literature by providing a contextually grounded understanding of how behavioral competencies are associated with knowledge management practices in an emerging economy. It also responds to calls for greater integration of behavioral and knowledge perspectives, particularly in non-Western and rapidly developing entrepreneurial settings.

Demographic variation introduces an additional layer of interpretation. Differences associated with age, venture scale, and experience imply that exposure to organizational complexity and managerial learning shapes how behavioral and knowledge practices are enacted. Entrepreneurs operating in more mature or structurally complex settings may develop routines that formalize knowledge integration, while emerging entrepreneurs continue to experiment with behavioral strategies that support learning. These patterns indicate that behavioral capability evolves alongside organizational growth, reinforcing its developmental character.

5.1. Practical implications

The findings of this study provide several practical implications for entrepreneurs, training providers, and policy makers seeking to strengthen knowledge management practices within entrepreneurial environments.

At the entrepreneurial level, the results suggest that developing specific behavioral competencies—particularly communication, teamwork, and adaptive problem-solving—can enhance the effectiveness of knowledge-related processes. Entrepreneurs are encouraged to implement structured practices such as regular knowledge-sharing meetings, feedback sessions, and collaborative problem-solving workshops to support knowledge exchange within their ventures.

For training institutions and entrepreneurship development programs, the findings highlight the importance of integrating behavioral skill

development into existing training frameworks. Rather than focusing solely on technical or financial aspects, programs should include targeted modules on communication skills, team coordination, and conflict management. For example, short interactive training sessions (e.g., 4–6 hours) focusing on active listening, feedback exchange, and team-based decision-making can contribute to improving knowledge-sharing behaviors among entrepreneurs.

At the policy and ecosystem level, organizations supporting entrepreneurship—such as incubators, accelerators, and government initiatives—can incorporate behavioral competency development into their support mechanisms. This may include mentoring programs, peer-learning platforms, and structured networking activities that facilitate interaction and knowledge exchange among entrepreneurs.

Overall, these implications emphasize that strengthening knowledge management in entrepreneurial environments requires not only structural support but also deliberate investment in behavioral capability development.

5.2. Limitations and future research

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices, several limitations should be acknowledged.

First, the study adopts a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to draw causal inferences. The findings therefore reflect associations between variables rather than cause-and-effect relationships.

Second, the data were collected using self-reported measures, which may introduce potential biases such as common method bias and social desirability effects. Although procedural steps were taken to minimize these risks—such as ensuring anonymity and using established measurement scales—the possibility of bias cannot be fully excluded.

Third, the relatively high correlation observed between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices suggests potential conceptual overlap between the constructs. While this may reflect the inherently interconnected nature of behavioral and knowledge processes, future research could employ more advanced statistical techniques, such as confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) or structural equation modeling (SEM), to further examine construct distinctiveness.

Fourth, the sampling approach, while designed to enhance representativeness, may limit the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia. Future studies are encouraged to utilize probabilistic sampling techniques where feasible.

Finally, future research may benefit from longitudinal designs to examine how behavioral competencies and knowledge management practices evolve over time. Additionally, incorporating qualitative or mixed-method approaches could provide deeper insights into the contextual and behavioral mechanisms underlying knowledge processes in entrepreneurial environments.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between organizational behavior skills and knowledge management practices within entrepreneurial environments in Saudi Arabia. The findings indicate a strong association between behavioral competencies—such as communication, teamwork, leadership, and adaptability—and the effectiveness of knowledge management processes.

Rather than suggesting a direct causal relationship, the results highlight the interconnected nature of behavioral and knowledge-related processes. Organizational behavior skills appear to provide the conditions through which knowledge is created, shared, and applied within entrepreneurial settings, reinforcing the view of knowledge management as a socially embedded phenomenon.

The study contributes to the literature by integrating organizational behavior and knowledge management perspectives within a single empirical framework, particularly within the context of an emerging entrepreneurial ecosystem. By doing so, it offers a more nuanced understanding of how human and behavioral factors are associated with knowledge-oriented organizational practices.

From a practical standpoint, the findings underscore the importance of developing behavioral competencies as part of broader efforts to strengthen knowledge management capabilities. In dynamic and uncertain environments, such as entrepreneurial ventures, these competencies may play a critical role in supporting learning, adaptability, and innovation.

Overall, the study emphasizes that knowledge management effectiveness is not solely dependent on systems or structures, but is closely associated with the behavioral capabilities that shape how knowledge is mobilized within organizations.

Future research is encouraged to further explore this relationship using longitudinal designs and multi-source data to better capture the dynamic interplay between behavioral competencies and knowledge processes over time.

List of abbreviations

CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
df	Degrees of freedom
EFA	Exploratory factor analysis
F	F-statistic
KM	Knowledge management
KMO	Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin
N	Number of participants/sample size
OB	Organizational behavior
p	Probability value
r	Pearson correlation coefficient
SD	Standard deviation
SEM	Structural equation modeling
Sig.	Significance

t t-statistic
α Cronbach's alpha

Compliance with ethical standards

Ethical considerations

Participation in the study was voluntary. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained; all data were analyzed in aggregate form, and all procedures were conducted in accordance with established ethical research principles.

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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