

Emotionally Intelligent Leadership as a Generative Mechanism for Knowledge Management: A Multilevel Theory of Cultural Alignment and Change

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Abstract: Knowledge Management (KM) initiatives frequently struggle not because of technological limitations but due to persistent misalignment between organisational culture and KM objectives. While prior research has established the importance of culture, leadership, and social dynamics, there remains limited theoretical clarity regarding the *mechanisms* through which leadership behaviours translate into sustained knowledge-sharing practices. This paper addresses this gap by developing an integrative, multilevel theoretical framework that positions emotional intelligence (EI) as the generative mechanism linking leadership behaviour to cultural transformation and KM outcomes. With a structured synthesis of the research literature from KM, organisational culture, leadership, and change management, the paper takes a theory-building approach to integrate insights across domains. The analysis identifies key cultural barriers including lack of trust, psychological insecurity, rigid hierarchies, and workplace behaviours that systematically undermine knowledge sharing. These barriers persist despite the prevailing assumption that technology alone constitutes a sufficient solution. The central contribution of the paper is a four-level framework (individual, interpersonal, organisational, and system) that explains how emotionally intelligent leadership behaviours become institutionalized as cultural norms supporting knowledge processes over time. EI competencies (e.g., self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and relational skills) are conceptualised as mechanisms of organisational culture formation. These competencies are critical for fostering trust, openness, and learning orientation enabling leaders to mitigate resistance, support collaboration, and foster psychologically safe environments. The paper positions change management as the mechanism that embeds leadership-driven cultural conditions are translated into organisational routines. By integrating EI, leadership, culture, and change management into a unified model, the paper advances KM theory beyond static factor-based explanations toward a dynamic, multilevel understanding of knowledge system effectiveness. The findings suggest that sustainable KM success requires coordinated investment in leadership capability, cultural design, and behavioural change processes, with technology serving as an enabling condition, rather than the sole solution within a broader socio-technical system shaped by human and organisational factors.

Keywords: Knowledge management, Organisational culture, Leadership, Change management, Psychological safety, Emotional intelligence

1. Introduction

Knowledge management (KM) refers to the systematic creation, storage, transfer, and application of an organisation's knowledge to create value and achieve strategic objectives. While technological infrastructures remain essential, they operate within socially constructed systems shaped by organisational culture (Schein, 1992; Alavi and Leidner, 2001). Research demonstrates that KM failures are less often technical than socio-cultural, yet theoretical accounts frequently treat culture, leadership, and technology as parallel influences rather than dynamically linked processes (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). Responding to this limitation, the purpose of this paper is to develop an integrative theoretical framework that explains how emotionally intelligent leadership enables KM success through multilevel cultural transformation, supported by change management processes.

Rather than reiterating the research findings on key success factors in KM, the paper advances a mechanism-based explanation linking individual competencies to system-level outcomes. It explores the question: Through what mechanisms do leadership behaviours shape cultural conditions that enable or constrain KM outcomes? Addressing this question is critical because existing KM literature often emphasizes what matters (e.g., trust, culture, leadership) without sufficiently explaining how these elements interact across levels over time. This lack of mechanistic clarity limits both theoretical progress and practical implementation, as organisations may recognize the importance of culture yet lack guidance on how leadership behaviours produce knowledge-supportive environments.

2. Methodology

This paper adopts a structured theoretical synthesis methodology, drawing on established approaches to an integrative literature review and theory building. The analysis selectively incorporates seminal and recent contributions across four domains: KM, organisational culture, leadership theory, and change management. Sources were evaluated based on conceptual relevance, theoretical influence, and empirical grounding. Rather

than conducting a systematic review with exhaustive inclusion criteria, the objective here is analytical integration to identify underlying mechanisms, resolve conceptual fragmentation, and construct a multilevel framework. This approach aligns with theory-building traditions that prioritize conceptual clarity and cross-disciplinary synthesis over comprehensive aggregation. The resulting framework is, therefore, propositional rather than empirical in that it advances testable relationships and mechanisms that future research may validate through qualitative or quantitative methods. To enhance transparency, the synthesis prioritizes highly cited foundational works (e.g., Schein, Nonaka, Davenport & Prusak, Edmondson) alongside recent empirical and conceptual contributions. Inclusion was guided by theoretical relevance to explaining the mechanisms (e.g., leadership–culture linkage, psychological safety, knowledge sharing behaviours), rather than exhaustiveness of the literature. The analytical process involved integration across literatures to identify relationships and cross-level interactions, informing the proposed framework.

3. Theoretical Contributions

This paper's primary contribution shifts KM research from factor-based explanations toward a multilevel, process-oriented account of how knowledge-supportive cultures emerge and persist. While prior studies identify leadership, trust, and culture as key factors, they often lack multilevel integration. This paper contributes in three distinct ways:

1. Mechanism identification: It conceptualizes EI as the causal micro-foundation through which leadership behaviours shape psychological safety, trust, and relational norms.
2. Multilevel integration: It links individual capabilities → interpersonal practices → organisational culture → system-level KM outcomes, demonstrating how local interactions scale into institutionalized knowledge processes.
3. Dynamic (recursive) model: It introduces a feedback-based perspective, showing how KM outcomes reinforce or destabilize the cultural conditions that produced them, moving beyond static models.
4. The role of technology: The framework explicitly repositions technology as a dependent variable contingent on cultural alignment, rather than an independent driver of KM success, refining dominant technologically-centric assumptions in prior literature.

The framework links the four analytically distinct but interdependent levels: (1) EI at the individual level, (2) leadership behaviours at the interpersonal level, (3) cultural conditions at the organisational level, and (4) KM outcomes at the system level. Rather than treating culture, leadership, and KM as loosely related factors, the framework specifies the mechanisms through which leadership capabilities become institutionalized as norms, routines, and expectations that govern knowledge flows over time. Importantly, the framework is recursive rather than linear. Improvements in knowledge reuse, learning efficiency, and decision quality reinforce the very cultural conditions that enabled them, while breakdowns at any level, such as misaligned incentives or psychologically unsafe leadership responses, can stall or reverse progress. This model therefore positions KM as a dynamic socio-technical capability requiring coordinated attention across levels rather than isolated technological or behavioural interventions.

3.1 Organisational Culture and Leadership

The social nature of knowledge, which is often tacit, context-bound, and embedded in routines, places culture at the center of successful knowledge processes and as a determinant of organisational performance (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Nonaka, 1994). Schein (1983, pp. 1-2) defines organisational culture as “the pattern of basic assumptions which a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which have worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.” Tadesse Bogale and Debela (2024) in their literature review of 52 articles, suggest that organisational culture exerts significant influence in the “interpersonal interactions, behaviours, and communication among employees during day-to-day work” (p. 1). Schein (2010), however, argues that culture is not merely a set of shared values or norms, but a deeper system of shared basic assumptions that guides how members perceive, think, and act within an organisation. These assumptions develop over time as groups learn how to work together while learning to survive and compete. Schein (2010) proposes a three-level model of culture that includes: 1) surface level artifacts (e.g., visible structures, behaviours, rituals, and language), 2) espoused beliefs and values, which represent stated strategies, goals, and philosophies, and 3) basic underlying assumptions regarding beliefs about reality, human nature, time, relationships, and truth. He posits that true cultural understanding requires the discovery of these implicit assumptions, as artifacts and values are often ambiguous

or contradictory. Because these underlying assumptions are socially learned and reinforced over time, their formation and persistence are not accidental but deeply shaped by leadership behaviour.

Leadership is the primary mechanism for culture creation, embedding, and change (Schein, 2010). Founders and leaders influence culture through what they systematically pay attention to, how they respond to crises, how they allocate resources, and whom they hire, promote, or dismiss. Over time, these leader behaviours become institutionalized as shared assumptions. As organisations mature, culture becomes increasingly stable and resistant to change, at which point leadership shifts from creating culture to its management and, when necessary, transformation (Schein, 2010; Kotter, 1996; Hatch, 2018). Schein (2010) also suggests that culture cannot be altered through superficial interventions alone; effective change requires exposing existing assumptions (Palmer and Dunford, 2007), creating psychological safety to enable learning (Edmondson (1999); Edmondson, 2008), and supporting unlearning previous cultural practices (Klammer and Gueldenberg, 2019), a difficult process that often involves anxiety, identity threat (Khaw et al, 2023), and resistance (Piderit, 2000). Schein highlights the role of leadership in fostering environments where people feel safe enough to experiment, question, and adopt new ways of working.

3.2 Emotional Intelligence as a Cultural Mechanism

EI provides a critical mechanism linking individual leadership behaviour to the cultural conditions required for effective KM. EI encompasses a set of interrelated competencies—including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills—that shape how leaders perceive, interpret, and respond to the emotional dynamics of organisational life (Boyatzis, 2006). These competencies are particularly salient in knowledge-intensive contexts, where sharing expertise, surfacing uncertainty, and learning from failure expose individuals to emotional and professional risk. Self-awareness and self-regulation enable leaders to recognize their own reactions to uncertainty, challenge, and dissent, reducing defensive or punitive responses that undermine learning. Empathy and social skills allow leaders to accurately read others' concerns, respond constructively to hesitation or resistance, and foster relational trust across roles and boundaries. Through repeated enactment, emotionally intelligent leadership behaviours normalize openness, inquiry, and respectful challenge, gradually transforming episodic interpersonal interactions into shared norms and expectations. In this way, EI operates not merely as an individual trait but as a generative mechanism through which leadership behaviours scale upward into psychologically safe cultures that support sustained knowledge sharing, collaboration, and organisational learning (Edmondson, 1999; Schein, 2010).

3.3 Cultural Barriers to Effective Knowledge Management

Effective KM is hindered by the belief that knowledge provides individual power rather than collective benefit, resulting in information being withheld to safeguard status or perceived worth (Iqbal, Ali, and Azam, 2022). Fear of losing control of knowledge or being superseded by a more comprehensive knowledge base further incentivizes “knowledge hoarding.” Knowledge hoarding can be defined as an individual’s deliberate and strategic concealment of knowledge for fear of giving their power away (Bilginoğlu, 2019).

There are additional cultural barriers to effective KM. Tacit knowledge (i.e., know-how embedded in experience and routines) is especially resistant to codification, compromising its reuse and organisational learning when documentation is perceived as burdensome or redundant (Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Hislop et al., 2020). Trust deficits and lack of psychological safety can derail candid conversations, critical after-action reviews, and the willingness to share imperfect insights. Leadership signals, even those that are unintentional, can misalign daily practices with stated KM goals. Finally, reward structures that emphasize individual performance, short-term results, or functional dominance (i.e., where one function, discipline, or department consistently holds greater power, status, or influence than others) often undermine collaborative knowledge behaviours. These barriers include silo mentality, fear of loss of power, tacit knowledge, distrust, leadership, misalignment, and incentive misalignment collectively undermine KM initiatives even when sophisticated technology is employed. Importantly, these barriers are not independent variables but mutually reinforcing conditions, suggesting that interventions targeting single factors (e.g., technology adoption alone) are unlikely to produce sustained KM improvements.

3.4 Technology and KM

Research on technology-mediated KM suggests advanced tools give the impression that knowledge sharing is improving, even though cultural problems such as lack of trust, reluctance to share expertise, rigid hierarchies, or fear of losing power remain unresolved (Davenport and Prusak, 1998; Alavi and Leidner, 2001). Davenport and Prusak (1998) repeatedly warn against overestimating the value of technology in KM, especially when

organisational culture, incentives, and trust are ignored. Technology can support knowledge work but cannot create knowledge sharing on its own; thus, KM initiatives often fail when organisations confuse installing systems with changing behaviour. Cultural factors (e.g., trust, norms, values, and motivation) are imperative for KM success, whereas a technological solution alone will likely distract attention from these more challenging issues. This reinforces the argument that technology adoption should be treated as an outcome of cultural readiness and leadership alignment, rather than a precursor to them.

3.5 Psychological Safety

Psychological safety refers to a shared belief among members of a team that taking interpersonal risks (e.g., speaking up with questions, concerns, or mistakes) is safe, i.e., without fear of being embarrassed, punished, or humiliated (Edmondson, 1999; Clarke, 2025). Psychological safety is a critical antecedent to knowledge sharing because it mitigates fear of judgment and retribution when individuals disclose uncertainties or admit gaps in their own knowledge or understanding (Edmondson, 1999, 2019; Disterer, 2001). Rather than implying comfort or consensus, psychological safety facilitates candid dialogue, learning behaviours, and adaptive performance, particularly in complex and uncertain work environments. Edmondson (1999) argues that psychologically safe teams are more likely to identify errors, challenge assumptions, and engage in knowledge sharing because norms support openness, mutual respect, and learning from failure. As such, psychological safety functions as a foundational condition for collaboration, innovation, and organisational learning, especially where expertise is distributed and coordination is critical (Edmondson, 2019).

In the absence of psychological safety, the core behaviours on which KM depends (e.g., admitting uncertainty, surfacing tacit knowledge, questioning assumptions, and reporting failures) are perceived as emotionally or professionally risky. Individuals, therefore, rationally limit disclosure, disengage from knowledge-sharing systems, or comply superficially without meaningful reuse (Fehlau, 2025). As a result, KM practices may appear technically operational while remaining ineffective as mechanisms for organisational learning. This dynamic helps explain why investments in KM technology frequently fail to generate value in environments where psychological safety has not been intentionally cultivated.

3.6 Change Management

Change management refers to the mechanism through which emotionally intelligent leadership behaviours are translated into shared routines, reinforced norms, and stable cultural expectations that persist beyond individual leaders (Boyatzis, 2006). Change management is defined as “the sum of tasks, measures, and activities that are intended to bring about a comprehensive, cross-departmental and far-reaching change in an enterprise or organisation” (Helmold, 2021, 191). Research suggests an array of strategies for moving organisations through transitional states, emphasizing vision, leadership alignment, communication, capability-building, and structural changes that reinforce new behaviours. Table 1 exemplifies the core focus of each model, its key stages or components, the primary level of change within the Organisation, whether it is at the level of the Organisation, the group, or the individual, the strengths and limitations of each model, and the purpose for which each model is best used.

Table 1: Comparison of major change management models

Model	Core Focus	Key Stages/Components	Primary Level of Change	Strengths	Limitations	Best Used For
Kotter's 8-Step Model	Leading Organisational transformation	1. Create urgency 2. Build guiding coalition 3. Form vision and strategy 4. Communicate vision 5. Empower action 6. Generate short-term wins 7. Sustain acceleration 8. Anchor change in culture	Organisational / leadership-driven	Clear, prescriptive roadmap; strong emphasis on leadership, momentum, and culture	Linear and top-down; underplays individual sense-making and emotional response	Large-scale, planned Organisational change

Model	Core Focus	Key Stages/Components	Primary Level of Change	Strengths	Limitations	Best Used For
Prosci ADKAR (Hiatt)	Individual adoption of change	Awareness → Desire → Knowledge → Ability → Reinforcement	Individual (aggregates to Organisational)	Simple and diagnostic; strong focus on resistance, capability, and reinforcement	Limited strategic or structural guidance	Technology, process, and role changes with high end-user impact
Lewin's 3-Stage Model	Behavioural and social change	Unfreeze → Change → Refreeze	Individual & group	Intuitive and foundational; highlights preparation and stabilization	Assumes a stable end-state; oversimplifies continuous change	Introducing basic change concepts or analyzing resistance
Bridges' Transition Model (2009)	Psychological transition during change	Ending → Neutral Zone → New Beginning	Individual psychological	Explicit focus on identity, loss, and meaning-making	Not an implementation model; requires pairing with a structural approach	Managing morale, engagement, and identity disruption
Kübler-Ross (Change Curve)	Emotional responses to loss	Denial → Anger → Bargaining → Depression → Acceptance (<i>often adapted</i>)	Individual emotional response	Normalizes emotional reactions; helps leaders anticipate resistance	Not designed for organisational change; stages are non-linear and context-dependent	Sense-making, leadership empathy, communication planning
McKinsey 7-S Framework	Organisational alignment	Strategy, Structure, Systems, Shared Values, Skills, Style, Staff	Organisational system	Holistic diagnostic lens; integrates hard and soft elements	Not a process model; lacks sequencing guidance	Diagnosing misalignment during transformation
PDCA / Continuous Improvement	Incremental improvement	Plan → Do → Check → Act	Process / operational	Iterative, data-driven, adaptable	Insufficient for emotional or cultural transformation	Operational excellence, quality improvement

Figure 1 takes an integrated view of selected change management models and organizes them across three analytically different levels that can be seen as interdependent: organisational change (Kotter, 1995, 1996), individual adoption (Hiatt, 2006, 2010; Lewin, 1936, 1947), and emotional transition (Bridges and Bridges, 2009; Kübler-Ross). Rather than treating change models as competing frameworks, this figure illustrates how each addresses a different dimension of the change process, collectively explaining why technically sound change initiatives may nonetheless fail to achieve sustained adoption.

At the organisational level, Kotter's (1996) model emphasizes leadership actions required to mobilize change, including the creation of urgency, coalition building, and institutionalization through culture. This level focuses on strategic direction, governance, and structural alignment but largely assumes that individuals will adopt change once the appropriate conditions are established.

The individual adoption level foregrounds models such as ADKAR and Lewin, which explain how change is enacted in practice. ADKAR specifies the cognitive and behavioural conditions individuals must experience—awareness, desire, knowledge, ability, and reinforcement—while Lewin's unfreeze–change–refreeze logic highlights the importance of readiness and stabilization. These models clarify how organisational intentions are translated into altered routines and behaviours.

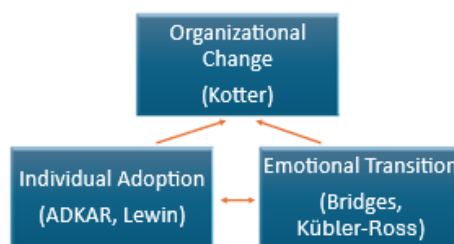


Figure 1: Integrated change management model

The emotional and psychological transition level draws on Bridges' transition model and Kübler-Ross's change curve. These frameworks explain how individuals interpret and respond emotionally to change, particularly

when it involves perceived loss of identity, competence, status, or stability. Prescriptive implementation models are critical for understanding resistance, disengagement, and delay, especially during periods of uncertainty or disruption.

Importantly, the figure portrays these levels as mutually influential rather than sequential. organisational policies and timelines shape individual experiences, while emotional responses can accelerate or undermine adoption efforts. This layered perspective is especially salient for KM and digital transformation initiatives, where cultural norms, trust, and identity play a decisive role alongside formal systems and processes.

By integrating organisational, individual, and emotional dimensions of change, change management becomes a multilevel translation mechanism rather than a linear implementation.

3.7 Summary of Proposed Framework

Figure 2 synthesizes the theoretical argument developed in Section 2 by illustrating how EI operates as a multilevel mechanism through which leadership behaviours scale upward to shape organisational culture and KM outcomes. The framework highlights the pattern of change in which a system's current state repeatedly feeds back into its own rules of evolution so that output at one step becomes the input for the next step, through which individual capabilities, interpersonal practices, and institutional conditions interact to produce durable knowledge cultures.

Leadership is a decisive influence on whether KM capabilities translate into organisational value. Visionary leadership that articulates a clear, measurable KM strategy linked to the organisation's overarching goals translates abstract aspirations into concrete actions. Leaders must model the behaviours they seek to institutionalize openness, curiosity, vulnerability, and a willingness to receive feedback. Psychological safety emerges as a central leadership concern. Leaders who tolerate experimentation and constructive failure create an environment where individuals feel safe to share uncertainties and challenge prevailing assumptions (Edmondson, 1999, 2004). Governance structures (e.g., cross-functional KM councils, clear roles, and decision rights) provide the accountability scaffolding needed for sustained practice. Incentive design is another critical instrument: recognition and rewards, promotions, and performance evaluations should reflect and reinforce knowledge contributions, collaboration, and the creation of reusable assets rather than solely individual task completion. Boundary-spanning leadership (e.g., where leaders actively connect disparate functions, regions, and disciplines) facilitates the bridging of knowledge gaps and the diffusion of best practices across the Organisation.

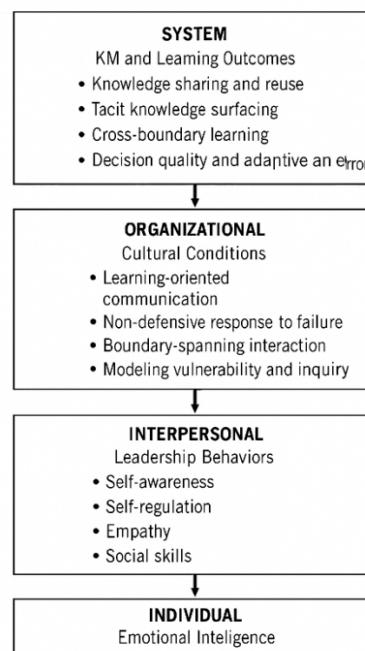


Figure 2: Proposed Framework (The framework should be interpreted as a set of theoretically grounded propositions rather than a validated model, intended to guide future empirical research and practical experimentation)

4. Change Management as a Vehicle for Cultural Transformation

Effective change management translates strategic intent into observable and sustainable behavioural change. Cultural assessment, stakeholder mapping, and related diagnostic tools help identify barriers and enablers to KM, while participative design ensures that diverse perspectives shape KM initiatives, thereby increasing organisational legitimacy and local relevance. Established change models (see Table 1) offer structured pathways for action but must be adapted to the specific dynamics of each Organisation, with particular attention to the socialization of new norms, rituals, and governance mechanisms. Communication and storytelling play a critical role in driving change by creating emotional resonance, highlighting early successes, and making the benefits of knowledge sharing visible and credible. Capacity building is further supported through targeted training, as well as the establishment and sustained use of communities of practice and mentorship programs that develop the skills and social networks necessary to sustain KM practices. Rituals and artifacts—such as after-action reviews, knowledge-sharing sessions, and visible knowledge repositories—serve as both symbolic and practical anchors, enabling new behaviours to emerge and become embedded in organisational culture. Finally, feedback loops and metrics are essential for learning and adjustment; cultural indicators (e.g., trust and psychological safety) should be monitored alongside KM metrics (e.g., reuse rates and time to locate knowledge) to assess progress and recalibrate interventions as needed.

5. An Integrated Framework for Culture, Leadership, Change Management, and Technology in KM

This framework emphasizes a layered approach that integrates people, process, and technology. The people layer focuses on cultivating a culture receptive to KM, developing leaders who model desired behaviours, and fostering communities of practice. The process layer designs KM activities—capture, codification, sharing, and reuse—with explicit cultural considerations to ensure alignment with norms and incentives. The technology layer deploys tools to enable KM workflows, but not to dictate them; adoption is contingent on cultural readiness and process compatibility. Five guiding principles emerge from the synthesis: culture first, tools second; shared language and norms; trust and psychological safety; co-creation and participation; and continuous learning. An implementation roadmap comprising five phases—diagnosis and sponsorship; governance and pilot tool design; departmental piloting; scaling and embedding; and sustainment with continuous improvement loops—offers a practical sequence for organisations pursuing culturally informed KM transformation.

6. Practical Implications and Recommendations

For organisational leaders, the primary prescription is to model and reinforce the desired KM culture through everyday actions. Leaders should invest in psychological safety, cross-functional collaboration, and shared goals, ensuring that performance management systems explicitly reward KM-related behaviours and outcomes. Human resources and organisational development functions must embed KM norms into onboarding, development programs, and talent management, cultivating communities of practice and mentorship that facilitate tacit knowledge transfer. IT and KM practitioners should select tools that augment social processes—improving visibility, searchability, trust, and ease of contribution—while avoiding excessive automation that might erode human judgment and relational work. Teams and knowledge champions should establish clear governance, contribution guidelines, and recognition mechanisms, while routinely reviewing the relevance and quality of knowledge assets. Finally, measurement should be multidimensional, capturing cultural change indicators (e.g., psychological safety, trust, collaboration) and KM outcomes (e.g., knowledge reuse, access speed) alongside business performance metrics such as cycle time and project success rates.

7. Limitations and Considerations

Context significantly modulates the effectiveness of culture-led KM interventions. Organisational size, industry, history, and geopolitical context shape both culture and KM needs. Change fatigue is a real risk; rolling changes without tangible benefits can erode trust, underscoring the importance of delivering early wins and maintaining transparent communication. Digital maturity matters: technology is a complement, not a substitute for cultural and process changes, and issues of data quality, interoperability, and governance must be addressed. Ethical considerations include privacy, consent, and responsible use of data and analytics in KM, particularly when monitoring collaboration and knowledge flows.

8. Conclusions

This paper advances KM theory by providing a mechanism-based, multilevel explanation of how leadership behaviours translate into sustained knowledge-sharing outcomes through cultural transformation. It demonstrates that KM success is not simply contingent on the presence of supportive factors such as trust or leadership, but on the processes through which these conditions are produced, reinforced, and institutionalized.

By positioning EI as a generative capability and change management as a translational mechanism, the framework integrates previously fragmented literatures into a coherent explanatory model. [REVISION:] This contribution moves beyond established claims regarding the importance of culture to specify how culture is actively constructed and sustained through leadership practice.

The findings reaffirm that sustainable KM success depends on coordinated investment in human, cultural, and organisational systems. Technology remains essential, but only as an enabling infrastructure within a broader socio-technical system shaped by leadership and culture.

Finally, this paper contributes to KM scholarship by advancing a theory-building perspective that specifies how leadership-driven cultural transformation unfolds across levels of analysis. By identifying EI as a generative mechanism and change management as a translational process, the framework moves beyond static factor models toward a dynamic, process-oriented understanding of KM effectiveness. Future research should empirically test the proposed relationships, particularly the mediating role of psychological safety and the recursive effects between KM outcomes and cultural conditions, across organisational contexts.

Ethics Declaration: The work presented in this paper is based exclusively on a review and analysis of publicly available literature and does not involve human participants, personal data, or primary data collection.

AI Declaration: The author acknowledges the use of Microsoft Co-Pilot to help structure the paper and improve language clarity. All AI-generated content was reviewed, edited, and verified for accuracy by the author.

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