

Exploring Knowledge Management Practices in Multinational Technology Companies

Tadeusz A. Grzeszczyk and Kevin Neelsen

Warsaw University of Technology, Faculty of Management, Poland

tadeusz.grzeszczyk@pw.edu.pl

kevin.neelsen.dokt@pw.edu.pl

Abstract: Global operations create significant growth opportunities for multinational companies, but effective knowledge management in different national markets is a key challenge. The specificity of such companies stems from management complexity, particularly in operational processes that require data, information, and knowledge processing, while accounting for extensive organizational structures, complex communication channels, and cultural differences. This requires the use of appropriately tailored, flexible, and scalable knowledge management and AI solutions. Although research on knowledge management and AI across various business areas is increasing, multinational companies continue to face challenges with existing and planned solutions, and there are theoretical, methodological, and practical gaps in the field. The paper explores the knowledge management approaches, practices, and procedures employed by selected multinational technology companies. The research was based on self-administered questionnaires and interviews with employees involved in the design, development, and implementation of knowledge management and AI systems. The study included professionals in various management and consulting roles across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), North America (NA), Latin America (LATAM), and the Asia-Pacific region (APAC) to capture a broad range of perspectives. The companies involved in the research use formalized knowledge management practices to varying degrees, adapting them to their specific organizational contexts. The identification and analysis of these practices, along with the related knowledge management challenges and barriers to AI adoption, may support the development of recommendations for improving the design and implementation of innovative solutions for managing both explicit and tacit knowledge.

Keywords: Knowledge management practices, Multinational companies, Information technology industry, Artificial intelligence

1. Introduction

Operating on a global scale presents multinational companies with significant opportunities for growth, while also posing a range of management challenges. One of the key challenges is effective knowledge management (KM) in the context of operating in diverse national markets, each characterized by distinct organizational, regulatory, cultural, and technological conditions. Implementing appropriate KM strategies, supported by best practices, facilitates internationalization, cross-border information exchange, flexible adaptation to local conditions, improved collaboration between geographically dispersed teams, and the utilization of globally available resources to gain a competitive advantage (Dixit, 2026).

It is worth noting that multinational technology companies typically operate under strategies that leverage innovation and a global orientation and are characterized by industry-specific dynamics. The KM practices they employ are integral to supporting innovation, ensuring competitiveness, and managing the complexity of operating in diverse markets worldwide. It should be emphasized that the technology sector is not homogeneous; e.g., the semiconductor industry plays a key role in influencing other branches of this sector, and intra-sectoral interdependencies must be taken into account (Čeryová and Árendáš, 2025).

The unique nature of international technology companies stems primarily from the complexity of their organizational structures, dispersed operational processes, multi-level communication channels, and the need to process large and diverse sets of data, information, and knowledge. In such conditions, solutions that enable the effective acquisition, organization, transfer, utilization, and development of knowledge - both explicit and tacit - become particularly important.

Technological solutions play a key role in improving KM in multinational companies, as they facilitate the optimization of knowledge-sharing processes, the development of innovation, and organizational agility in geographically dispersed entities. Digital technologies streamline reverse knowledge transfer processes, enabling companies to effectively acquire, assimilate, and apply knowledge, thereby fostering ambidextrous innovation that supports both exploratory and exploitative innovations (Ouyang *et al.*, 2023). AI tools are also playing an increasingly important role in this area, supporting process automation, data analysis, personalized access to information, and managerial decision-making.

Despite growing interest in KM and the application of AI in organizations, international technology companies continue to face numerous challenges in designing, implementing, and refining appropriate solutions. These

include, among other things, adapting KM practices to the specific characteristics of local markets, integrating dispersed knowledge resources, ensuring effective collaboration across organizational units, and leveraging employees' tacit knowledge. Challenges related to knowledge transfer between different business units may include, e.g., the diverse origins of knowledge, the hoarding of expertise, and the absorptive capacity challenge (Charmchian Langroudi *et al.*, 2025).

In the field of KM in multinational technology companies, significant theoretical, methodological, and practical gaps can also be identified, particularly regarding methods for identifying, analyzing, and evaluating KM practices in globally operating companies. In particular, the research undertaken may help address a gap in the theoretical foundations and empirical studies of KM practices tailored to the specific needs of multinational companies. The aim of this paper is to analyze the approaches, practices, and procedures adopted by selected multinational companies in relation to KM and AI, as well as the associated knowledge management challenges and barriers to AI adoption. The study used data collected through self-administered questionnaires and interviews with employees who are involved in the design, development, and implementation of KM systems and AI-based solutions. The respondents were professionals holding various managerial, expert, and advisory roles in many regions of the world, including Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA), the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, and the Americas (AMER), comprising North America (NA) and Latin America (LATAM). This approach enabled the collection of diverse perspectives on KM practices across organizations operating in different market and cultural contexts.

2. Knowledge Management in Multinational Technology Companies

In multinational technology companies, knowledge is a key resource that drives innovation, operational efficiency, and the ability to maintain a competitive advantage across diverse markets. Organizations of this type typically operate within distributed structures, encompassing business units, research and development centers, project teams, and sales, customer service, and technical support departments located in multiple countries. Under such conditions, KM cannot be limited to document administration or the collection of information in repositories. It should be understood as a comprehensive process of identifying, acquiring, organizing, sharing, transferring, protecting, updating, and utilizing knowledge in operational, project, and strategic activities.

The particular importance of KM in technology companies stems from the dynamic nature of their operating environment. These companies operate in a context of rapid technological advancement, shrinking product lifecycles, rising customer expectations, intense competition, and the increasingly widespread use of digital tools, including AI-based solutions. Their effectiveness depends on their ability to transform data and information into useful knowledge and then apply it to product design, service delivery, solving customer problems, process automation, risk mitigation, and managerial decision-making.

Implementing KM practices in multinational companies presents both opportunities and challenges. Among the opportunities are those related to cultural and geographic diversity, which typically foster innovation and creativity through cross-border knowledge exchange within collaborations between geographically dispersed teams. The development of intra-organizational networking and knowledge-sharing networks fosters increased innovation and competitiveness by facilitating the effective transfer of knowledge even between highly diverse organizational units (Rolland and Kaminska-Labbé, 2008).

Other opportunities relate to the potential use of critical assets for global competitiveness. Effective KM practices (e.g., knowledge transfer and codification) help to properly harmonize operations across diverse organizational units and maintain the competitive advantage of entire multinational enterprises. This facilitates the development of innovative products and services that support market success by improving communication and fostering a culture of support (Zhang *et al.*, 2009).

Certainly, significant opportunities lie in the use of modern information and communication technologies (ICT) and AI. These technologies significantly support the development of systems for knowledge sharing and innovation. If ICT and AI are properly integrated into business processes, it is possible to significantly improve knowledge discovery and sharing in distributed work environments (Yuan *et al.*, 2013)

As mentioned, implementing KM practices in multinational companies also presents challenges. Among these, cultural and behavioral barriers are particularly significant, as cultural diversity poses serious challenges regarding KM styles and approaches to knowledge sharing, which may even hinder organizational development (Sánchez Bengoa *et al.*, 2012).

IT systems and AI should also ensure the proper integration of various tools and practices to facilitate effective KM and sharing, while taking into account local cultures, thereby flexibly supporting the achievement of global outcomes. These systems should also take into account human and organizational factors, which play an important role in the proper development and use of IT solutions. Further challenges relate to tacit knowledge and system interoperability: codifying tacit knowledge remains a major challenge, as does ensuring interoperability between different IT systems (M. Järvenpää *et al.*, 2016).

The simultaneous use of explicit and tacit knowledge can present challenges, as the former, unlike the latter, is formalized and can be recorded, organized, and shared in the form of technical documentation, procedures, reports, manuals, training materials, knowledge bases, or best-practice guides. Tacit knowledge, on the other hand, is linked to employees' experience, expert intuition, practical product knowledge, customer relationships, and an understanding of local market conditions. In international organizations, it is particularly difficult to capture and transfer this second category of knowledge, as it often remains dispersed across teams, regions, and organizational functions.

KM in IT companies should be viewed not only as the use of specific IT tools, but also as a system of organizational and cultural practices. Knowledge repositories, intranet portals, collaboration platforms, search systems, and AI-based solutions can support the flow of knowledge, but they do not replace norms of collaboration, trust, and a willingness to share experience. For this reason, it is essential to create conditions that encourage documenting best practices, reporting improvements, leveraging other teams' experiences, participating in communities of practice, and transferring skills to less experienced employees. This is particularly important in global structures, where language, cultural, and geographical barriers can limit the effectiveness of collaboration.

The sources of knowledge utilized by international technology companies are diverse. They include internal resources such as employee expertise, project documentation, R&D results, project retrospectives, data from sales and service systems, customer support records, training materials, and organizational standards. External sources are also important, including customer feedback, competitive analyses, industry reports, legal regulations, recommendations from business partners, consultants' expertise, and the results of collaborations with universities, startups, and other entities in the technology ecosystem. However, the value of these resources depends not only on their quantity, but above all on their quality, timeliness, availability, and applicability in specific business processes.

An essential aspect of KM is the proper organization and storage of knowledge. In practice, this involves designing repositories, knowledge bases, classification systems, metadata structures, glossaries, and version control mechanisms. It is particularly important to ensure the consistency and timeliness of content, as outdated or inconsistent knowledge can lead to erroneous decisions, a decline in service quality, delays in the execution of processes and projects, or the recurrence of the same problems in different parts of the organization. Therefore, KM requires not only the creation of resources, but also their systematic verification, updating, and the elimination of irrelevant information.

Access to knowledge is essential for the smooth operation of multinational companies. In large organizations, the problem is often not a lack of knowledge, but rather an excess of it, its fragmentation, and the difficulty in assessing its relevance. This is why semantic search, corporate chatbots, natural language processing, and machine learning are becoming increasingly important. Knowledge transfer among employees, teams, and regions is also crucial, supported by training, mentoring, case studies, job rotation, and communities of practice. KM supports knowledge-based decision-making, customer service, risk mitigation, and responsiveness to change. AI tools help classify, summarize, and recommend content, but they require data governance, security, and regulatory compliance.

In addition, it is important to view AI capabilities from a multifaceted perspective and implement solutions that integrate not only effective KM but also compliance with sustainability requirements. Solutions that enable sustainability-oriented AI adoption enable more effective maintenance of a sustainable competitive advantage, long-term stimulation of progress through system integration, robust data management, continual performance monitoring, and the effective utilization of AI's potential in alignment with sustainable development (Schwaeke *et al.*, 2025).

KM in international technology companies should therefore be viewed as a multidimensional process that integrates technology, people, a culture of collaboration, organizational structure, and the use of ICT and AI solutions, aligned with sustainability considerations. The effectiveness of this process depends on the ability to

transform dispersed knowledge resources into actions that generate business, technological, and organizational value. Properly designed practices can foster innovation, improve the quality of products and services, strengthen organizational learning, and increase companies' resilience to changes in the international environment.

3. Methodology

The growing importance and use of AI tools and systems are changing how knowledge is created, shared, used, and stored within organizations. Examining these issues is particularly important in multinational companies, where KM practices may vary depending on organizational, technological, and regional factors. Therefore, this research explores the KM approaches, practices, and procedures employed by selected multinational technology companies, with particular emphasis on AI-based tools and systems. The research was conducted in March 2026 and was based on a questionnaire survey administered to employees involved in the design and development of KM and AI systems. Some of the responses were collected during interviews. The survey was addressed to professionals in various management and consulting roles across EMEA, NA, LATAM, and APAC to gather diverse perspectives. The companies surveyed differ in the extent to which they use formalized KM activities and practices and adapt them to the specific nature of their organizations.

The study focused on three purposively selected multinational technology companies. Questionnaires were distributed to 31 employees, of whom 15 responded during the 23-day data collection period. Regions of the responders (their numbers are given in brackets) are as follows: EMEA (5), APAC (6), as well as AMER (4) – including NA (3), and LATAM (1).

Respondents were asked the following questions, divided into three categories: scoring (0-10), open-ended, and ranking.

Scoring questions

1. How would you assess the level of data structuring in your department?
2. To what extent does your organization effectively capture and share knowledge across teams and departments?
3. What fraction of your tasks that you perform manually could be automated through IT solutions?
4. How much are you looking forward to having AI automate parts of your work?
5. How actively does your company encourage and support employees in documenting and sharing their expertise?
6. How well does your organization retain and transfer critical knowledge when employees leave or change roles?
7. To what extent do you believe that AI will play a crucial role in the future of KM in your organization?

Open-ended questions

8. How do cultural differences and the characteristics of different countries and regions shape KM practices?
9. How does the nature of international enterprises influence the selection and application of KM practices?
10. Does your organization have dedicated knowledge workers?
11. What KM practices are you familiar with, and which of them are applied in your organization?
12. Are there established procedures for KM in your organization, distinguishing between explicit and tacit knowledge?
13. What needs to be done in terms of KM in order to better utilize AI in your organization?
14. Are efforts made to collect and utilize the knowledge of employees who may leave the company?

Ranking questions

15. Rank the following KM challenges in your organization from most to least critical:
 - Siloed information across departments,
 - Lack of proper tools and systems,
 - Difficulty in accessing relevant knowledge,
 - No knowledge-sharing culture,
 - Loss of knowledge due to employee turnover.

16. Rank the following barriers to AI adoption in KM in your organization from most to least significant:

- Integration challenges with existing systems,
- High implementation costs,
- Data privacy and security concerns,
- Insufficient training and awareness,
- Lack of employee trust in AI solutions.

Given the relatively small number of participants, the study should be regarded as preliminary and followed by further, more in-depth research.

4. Results and Discussion

Figure 1 shows the regions of the responders, which are almost equally distributed across the three regions mentioned earlier.

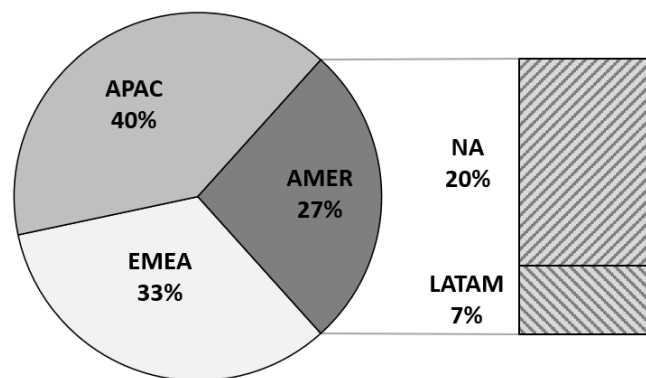


Figure 1: Regions of the responders (source: Own study)

The subjects of the research are the following global companies:

- Company 1 specializes in data security, backup, and ransomware protection, helping enterprises manage and protect their data across cloud and on-premises environments,
- Company 2 provides IT lifecycle services, helping businesses efficiently handle their technology investments,
- Company 3 is a global IT distributor and solutions aggregator, connecting vendors in the hardware and software areas while managing supply chains.

These companies operate on a multinational scale, with workforces ranging from over 1,000 to more than 20,000 employees. They partner with major technology vendors and specialize in IT infrastructure, data management, and security, enabling enterprises to transform digitally. Focused on B2B operations, they offer a mix of hardware, software, and IT services to help organizations modernize and optimize their technology ecosystems.

The most positive responses among the scoring questions were observed regarding the extent to which respondents look forward to AI automating parts of their work, as well as their belief that AI will play a crucial role in the future of KM within their respective organizations. These findings are consistent with each other. Conversely, the most negative responses concerned the organization's ability to retain and transfer critical knowledge when employees leave or change roles. This suggests that knowledge retention remains a significant challenge and that existing KM practices may not be sufficiently effective in preventing the loss of important organizational know-how. At the same time, employees already seem to recognize the potential benefits of AI in their work. However, processes and procedures related to capturing, retaining, and transferring knowledge require significant improvement before organizations can fully benefit from AI.

In terms of regions, one clear trend emerged: APAC results were higher than EMEA and AMER, which were on par. This suggests that employees in the Asia-Pacific region have a more optimistic outlook, while those in Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas tend to be more cautious or skeptical. This has significant implications for how people approach their work, with differences across regions, even within the same organization.

Understanding these variations is crucial for tailoring KM and AI implementation strategies to better align with regional mindsets and expectations.

The results of the open-ended questions indicate that KM practices in international technology enterprises are strongly influenced by cultural, regional, and organizational factors. Respondents emphasized that Western regions tend to rely more on structured, documented approaches, whereas Eastern regions often prefer informal, relationship-based knowledge sharing. At the same time, the international nature of enterprises adds complexity, as KM must address cultural diversity, varying regulations, language barriers, time zones, and local managerial practices.

The findings also suggest that many organizations lack dedicated knowledge workers. KM is often treated as an additional responsibility rather than a clearly defined professional role. Awareness of specific KM practices appears relatively low, and existing initiatives are typically limited to training, documentation, and digital tools. However, these practices are frequently perceived as ineffective due to inconsistent implementation.

A common pattern across regions is the lack of formal procedures for managing knowledge, especially tacit knowledge, which is mainly shared informally. Explicit knowledge is usually better supported through repositories, guides, and documentation. In the context of AI, the main challenge is poor data organization. Respondents pointed to the need for structured, clean, and AI-readable knowledge, stronger data governance, better documentation standards, employee training, and strategic AI adoption. Finally, knowledge retention processes for departing employees remain limited and mostly ad hoc.

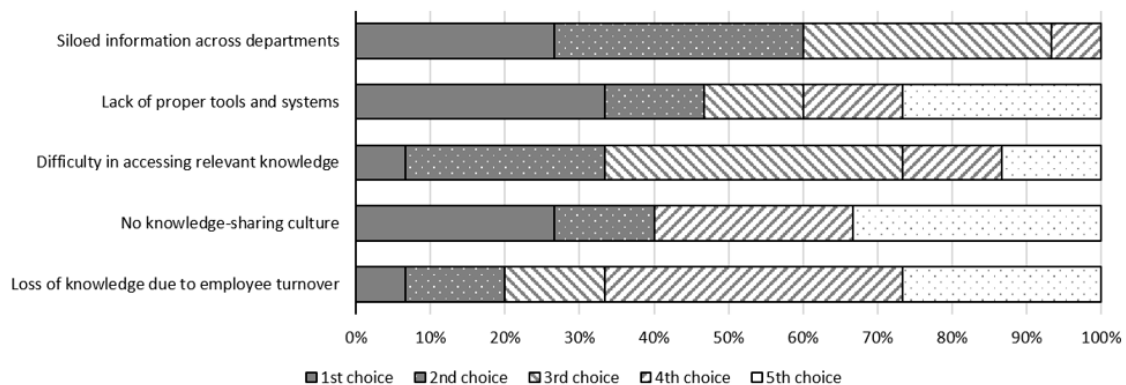


Figure 2: Knowledge management challenges (source: Own study)

The ranking questions provide a useful continuation of the open-ended part of the study, as they show which KM challenges are perceived as the most critical in international technology enterprises (Figure 2). The results indicate that siloed information across departments and the lack of proper tools and systems are among the most serious problems, regardless of the region. This suggests that, although many organizations recognize the importance of KM, they still struggle to create integrated, accessible knowledge environments. Difficulty in accessing relevant knowledge also appears to be an important issue, confirming that knowledge is often available but not sufficiently organized or easy to retrieve. At the same time, the lack of a knowledge-sharing culture remains significant, particularly in EMEA. Importantly, none of the listed challenges can be treated as marginal, as each of them was ranked as the main problem by at least some respondents.

The results regarding barriers to AI adoption in KM indicate that technological and organizational readiness are closely linked (Figure 3). High implementation costs and data privacy and security concerns were ranked as the most significant obstacles across regions, while integration challenges with existing systems also ranked highly. These findings suggest that companies do not only face financial barriers, but also need to ensure that AI solutions can be safely and effectively embedded into existing KM infrastructures. Insufficient training and awareness also remain relevant, indicating that successful AI adoption requires employee preparation and clear communication. Interestingly, the lack of employee trust in AI solutions seems to be less problematic than other barriers. This may suggest that employees are relatively open to AI, provided that organizations address practical issues such as cost, data governance, system integration, and training.

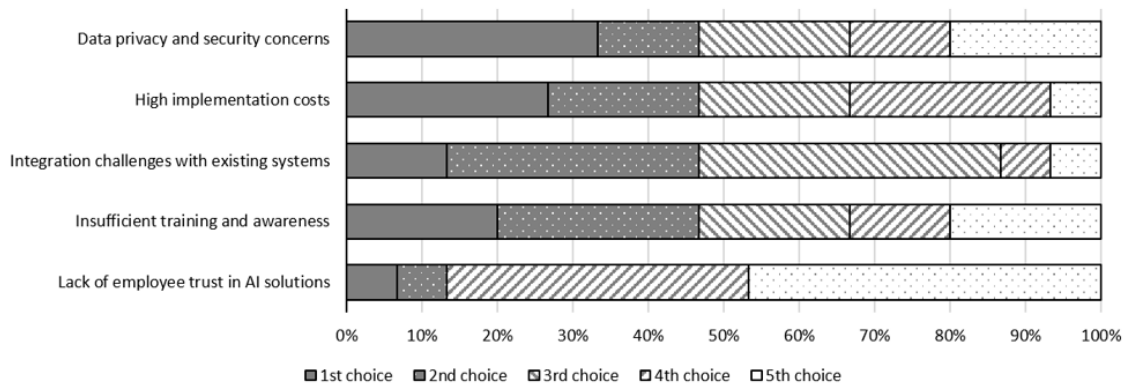


Figure 3: Barriers to AI adoption in knowledge management (source: Own study)

Respondents demonstrated openness to using various new tools and practices in KM, but also highlighted the need for broader implementation of AI-based solutions. Management plays a key role in this area by helping employees develop the necessary competencies. The need for continuous improvement of required competencies and for enhanced communication within work teams is also significant. Improving competencies can help reduce the selective and incomplete application of best practices and the opportunities arising from AI use in KM within multinational companies. A recommendation to develop modern forms of organizational culture based on knowledge sharing and to improve internal communication within companies appears useful. Issues related to AI are not yet sufficiently well understood or effectively and comprehensively utilized in business practice. Research findings from literature on the applications of AI in KM can help improve the situation in this regard (Pai *et al.*, 2022).

Respondents were generally aware of the benefits of using KM tools, but not all of them knew how to use them, e.g., to improve knowledge sharing within organizations. The results of this study also did not reveal the motivations of employees who use AI to support communication within companies and KM. Other research findings show that motivation to use AI is directly proportional to task complexity: greater motivation accompanies more complex and cognitively demanding tasks, for which AI is perceived as an effective tool that increases productivity; conversely, for simpler, routine tasks, AI may even be viewed as a potential competitor that could lead to the elimination of employees in the future (Mohammad *et al.*, 2026). In addition to motivation, the complexity of tasks, and the problems being solved, it is also worth considering the diversity of potentially available and constantly evolving intelligent tools and systems. The multifaceted nature of these issues requires expanding the scope of future research to include, e.g., the various roles performed within organizations, participation in different processes and projects, as well as the levels of AI support required across three perspectives: process, engagement, and content (Sundaresan and Zhang, 2022).

The interviews with respondents focused on the initial identification of KM practices in multinational technology companies. It should be emphasized, however, that the technology sector is not homogeneous, and it is desirable to take its diversity and intra-sectoral interdependencies into account in future research. Future research should also consider key factors that facilitate the implementation and use of KM tools and systems. These factors include, e.g., the strategic role of organizational culture and its impact on knowledge sharing using AI and organizational effectiveness. Organizational culture undoubtedly constitutes a key factor in the flexibility of KM systems, thereby increasing users' perceptions of their usefulness and fostering greater interest in these solutions in multinational corporations (Abdelrahman *et al.*, 2025).

5. Conclusions

The research indicates that the companies analyzed use formalized activities, procedures, and tools to varying degrees to support KM. The solutions employed are, to a greater or lesser extent, tailored to the specific characteristics of the organization, the nature of the projects being carried out, the geographical dispersion of teams, and the needs related to the development of technological innovations. Identifying and analyzing these practices can contribute to a better understanding of KM mechanisms in international technology companies, as well as to the formulation of recommendations supporting the more effective design and implementation of solutions for managing explicit and tacit knowledge.

The results of the theoretical analyses and empirical studies presented in this article may be useful to researchers in management and quality sciences, as well as to managers and specialists in the technology sector. They are particularly important to those responsible for developing KM systems, implementing AI tools, organizing interregional cooperation, and streamlining innovation processes in companies operating on an international scale.

Based on the study, it can be concluded that KM tools and methods are fairly well known and largely recognized by respondents; however, their actual use within organizations varies. Respondents perceive them as useful and potentially beneficial in their daily work, but at the same time point to the need for broader use of best practices, tools, and methods of KM in multinational companies. Appropriate training is also important, as it enables employees to develop the skills needed to effectively apply these solutions. There is, therefore, a clear need to expand employees' knowledge and experience in multinational companies regarding the actual benefits of well-designed, consistently implemented KM practices. The results also show that cultural differences, regional specificities, language, time zones, and local management decisions have a significant impact on how KM practices are implemented and function. It also suggests that employees may be more ready for AI-driven KM than their organizations are in terms of KM maturity.

It should be noted, however, that the study was exploratory in nature and covered selected technology companies; therefore, its results should not be overgeneralized. In the future, it would be worthwhile to expand the research, include a larger, more diverse sample, and conduct a more detailed analysis of the relationships among region, organizational culture, the maturity of KM processes, and the degree of AI adoption.

Ethics Declaration: Ethical clearance is not required for this research.

AI Declaration: Grammarly software was used for language proofreading.

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