

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership and Organizational Performance: Mediating Role of Knowledge Management in the Banking Industry

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Abstract

Background: Effective leadership in managing knowledge resources has become essential for organizational success in today's information-driven and competitive economy. As a knowledge-intensive industry, banking depends on strategically applying knowledge assets to improve operational effectiveness, innovation, and service quality. Consequently, by cultivating a culture that encourages knowledge creation, sharing, and application, Knowledge-Oriented Leadership (KOL) has become a significant performance driver.

Objectives: Using the Knowledge-Based View and the Path-Goal Theory, this study investigates how Knowledge-Oriented Leadership affects Organizational Performance in Nepal's banking sector, emphasizing the mediating role of Knowledge Management procedures.

Methods: This research adopts a descriptive and causal design, using non-probability convenience sampling from 319 employees of commercial banks in Kathmandu. A structured

questionnaire was used to collect data, and regression modeling, correlation analysis, and mediation techniques were used to assess the hypotheses.

Results: The results show a strong positive correlation between organizational performance and knowledge-oriented leadership, suggesting collaborative leaders improve performance. Further, mediation analysis demonstrates that this relationship is partially mediated by knowledge management processes, emphasizing both the knowledge-driven and direct effects of leadership on performance.

Novelty: This study is among the limited empirical studies in Nepal exploring how KOL drives organizational performance through KM processes. By extending leadership and KM theories into a developing economy context, it offers valuable theoretical and managerial contributions for improving performance in knowledge-intensive industries.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Knowledge-Oriented Leadership, Organizational Performance, Banking, Nepal

Introduction

The service industry has become a key contributor to international economic development, playing a vital role in GDP and employment. In this sector, human capital is essential for improving efficiency, encouraging creativity, and ensuring business growth. As economies shift from production-centered models to expertise-focused systems, intangible resources have gained importance as a core emphasis for organizations striving to gain and maintain a market edge ([Alharbi & Aloud, 2024](#); [Dzenopoljac et al., 2018](#); [Salami & Elo, 2015](#)). This is especially relevant in the tertiary sector, where workflows demand substantial knowledge, requiring leaders to utilize specialized knowledge to promote long-term expansion and drive continuous progress ([Kim, 2021](#); [Shamim et al., 2019](#)). Competent executives who prioritize workforce involvement and information exchange strategies are essential, as they play a fundamental role in strengthening staff performance, fostering collaborative learning methods, and enhancing business outcomes ([Birasnav, 2014](#)).

In today's economy, where knowledge plays a fundamental role, it is widely recognized as a crucial asset for both individuals and organizations. Efficient knowledge management (KM) approaches such as knowledge generation, acquisition, dissemination, and utilization help companies convert intangible expertise into measurable business value ([Al Rashdi et al., 2019](#); [Asiaei et al., 2020](#)). These strategies strengthen decision-making processes, stimulate innovation, and support organizations in achieving a long-term competitive edge ([Abbasi et al., 2021](#); [Ashok et al., 2021](#); [Swan & Newell, 2000](#)). However, the effectiveness of KM largely depends on leadership styles that nurture an environment of trust and encourage information exchange. Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL), which blends transformational and transactional leadership aspects, facilitates such an environment by fostering teamwork, creativity, and employee participation ([Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015](#); [Rivière & Sitar, 2003](#)). On the other hand, leadership approaches that emphasize rivalry or restrict knowledge flow can negatively impact KM efforts and weaken overall organizational success ([Bryant, 2003](#); [Von Krogh, 2012](#)).

Leadership, knowledge management, and organizational performance are strongly linked in the service industry, where knowledge functions as a fundamental factor in improving financial, operational, and marketing aspects. ([Dzenopoljac et al., 2018](#); [Shamim et al., 2019](#)). Effective KM practices, facilitated by leadership, enable organizations to maximize knowledge resources, streamline processes, and improve customer satisfaction. While this relationship has been extensively explored in developed economies and industries such as manufacturing and technology, research examining its impact in service industries in emerging economies remains limited ([Miandar et al., 2020](#); [Al Ahbabi et al., 2019](#)). This variation can be particularly prominent in terms of Nepalese commercial banks, which operate in a highly dynamic environment shaped by rapid technological advancements and increasing global competition ([Madu, 2014](#)).

Leaders in Nepal's banking sector face the dual challenge of fostering a knowledge-friendly culture while addressing the pressures of service excellence and operational efficiency. While KOL has been widely recognized for its ability to drive innovation, employee engagement, and knowledge-sharing practices, much of the existing literature is geographically constrained to developed economies ([Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015](#)) or specific industries such as education and technology ([Rehman & Iqbal, 2020](#)). These studies often overlook the unique operational challenges and cultural dynamics of service industries, particularly in developing economies like Nepal, leaving a critical gap in understanding how KOL influences organizational performance in such contexts.

Furthermore, many studies lack a comprehensive examination of how KOL impacts KM processes and the extent to which these processes mediate performance outcomes, including financial, operational, and marketing metrics ([Shamim et al., 2019](#)). Although studies have shown how KM can enhance organizational results ([Abuaddous et al., 2018](#)), most studies focus on isolated performance dimensions or specific mediating factors, such as employee engagement, without considering the holistic interplay of these variables in banking sectors. This study aims to close this gap by investigating the connection between organizational performance, knowledge management process, and knowledge-oriented leadership. It provides insightful viewpoints on how leadership contributes to organizational success in Nepali commercial banks.

Literature Review and Hypothesis

The Knowledge-Based View (KBV), Path-Goal Theory, and Social Capital Theory are the three main theoretical frameworks that serve as the basis for this study. These methods comprehensively analyze the relationship among knowledge management (KM) practices, knowledge-oriented leadership (KOL), and organizational performance. Every approach provides distinctive perspectives into the way leadership encourages knowledge management techniques, which in turn affects how productive a company is.

According to the Knowledge-Based View (KBV), competence is the most valuable and unique resource that an entity can possess, serving as a key factor for sustaining competitive advantage

(Grant, 1996). KBV underscores the importance of managing knowledge through systematic acquisition, sharing, and application (Kogut & Zander, 1993; Merat & Bo, 2013). Within the context of KOL, this approach describes how leaders foster a culture of teamwork and knowledge exchange, allowing employees to utilize intellectual assets to drive innovation and enhance operational effectiveness (Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015). When organizations align their leadership practices with KBV principles, they enhance their capacity to utilize knowledge as a strategic asset, leading to improved performance outcomes (Sahibzada et al., 2019).

According to House's (1971) Path-Goal Theory, leaders adapt an approach of leadership to fit the demands of the workers and the objectives of the company. According to House (1996), this theory divides leadership styles into four categories: directive, supporting, collaborative, and achievement-oriented. In the context of KOL, these leadership behaviors play a critical role in guiding employees through KM-related challenges. For example, directive leadership clarifies knowledge-sharing responsibilities, while supportive leadership fosters an environment of trust, essential for effective collaboration (House, 1996). KOLs ensure that knowledge is properly disseminated and implemented within the firm by facilitating employees' participation in KM activities through the adoption of suitable leadership styles (Henttonen et al., 2016).

According to social capital theory, networks, relationships, and trust are important for promoting information sharing and teamwork within organizations (Zheng et al., 2017). This perspective emphasizes that social capital strengthens KM behaviors by cultivating shared values, norms, and mutual trust (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). In the context of KOL, leaders who build strong internal and external networks enhance knowledge-sharing capabilities, thereby fostering innovation and organizational learning (Bizzi, 2015; Huysman & Wulf, 2006). Social capital also helps reduce communication barriers and encourages collective problem-solving, making KM processes more effective (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). Through the incorporation of social capital concepts, companies can establish a cooperative culture that fosters long-term performance enhancement and sustainable information exchange.

Knowledge Oriented Leadership and organizational performance

Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL) is a managerial approach which relies on a data-driven environment, encouraging atmosphere that enables its employees to successfully acquire knowledge, share, and exploit information for the organization's success (Viitala, 2004). KOL integrates elements of both transactional leadership (focused on structure, rewards, and task completion) and transformational leadership (focused on vision, inspiration, and change), ensuring alignment between employee efforts and organizational goals (Bryant, 2003; Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015). Leaders who adopt KOL emphasize behaviors like effective communication, mentoring, and sharing a clear vision, which are crucial for promoting a sense of collaboration and perpetual learning (Safari & Azadehdel, 2015; Shamim et al., 2019).

KOL leaders facilitate and motivate employees, enabling them to source, create, transform, and utilize knowledge effectively (Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015). By fostering trust,

engagement, and collaboration, KOL enhances knowledge diffusion, which is essential for fostering creativity and boosting organizational effectiveness ([Shamim et al., 2019](#)). Key behaviors associated with KOL include delegation, facilitation, consultation, and recognition, all of which contribute to creating an environment where knowledge-sharing and learning thrive ([Bryant, 2003](#); [Safari & Azadehdel, 2015](#)). These behaviors are particularly important in knowledge-intensive industries, where leveraging knowledge assets is a key determinant of competitive advantage ([Nonaka, 1994](#); [Grant, 1996](#)).

Organizational performance serves as an essential indicator of how effectively a firm achieves its strategic objectives, maintains competitiveness, and ensures long-term success ([Ahmad et al., 2017](#)). It is a multidimensional construct that includes financial performance, operational efficiency, and marketing performance, all of which play a vital role in achieving the organization's overall success ([Koohang et al., 2017](#)). Financial performance assesses an organization's capability to generate revenue, manage costs, and ensure financial stability, often measured through key indicators such as return on assets, profitability, revenue growth, and financial efficiency relative to industry benchmarks ([Treacy & Wiersema, 2007](#); [Schulz & Jobe, 2001](#)). Strong financial performance is essential for maintaining investor confidence, securing funding, and ensuring sustainability in competitive markets. Operational performance focuses on the internal efficiency of an organization, particularly in optimizing resource utilization, reducing waste, and improving productivity, which are crucial for maintaining high-quality service standards and cost effective processes ([Koohang et al., 2017](#); [Schulz & Jobe, 2001](#)). Organizations that excel in operational performance often experience higher levels of efficiency, customer satisfaction, and adaptability to market demands. Marketing performance, on the other hand, evaluates an organization's ability to strengthen brand equity, enhance customer engagement, and expand market share. It is often measured through customer retention rates, market responsiveness, and innovative marketing strategies, which are essential for sustaining a competitive advantage in dynamic industries ([Treacy & Wiersema, 1995](#); [Akhavan et al., 2014](#)). In the banking sector, where customer relationships and service quality are paramount, marketing performance plays a crucial role in differentiating firms and building long-term customer loyalty. Together, financial, operational, and marketing performance serve as the backbone of an organization's overall efficiency, enabling it to navigate dynamic environments and maintain a competitive edge.

A 5-point Likert scale is used to assess Knowledge Oriented Leadership behaviors that cultivate a knowledge-driven culture. The scale evaluates key KOL dimensions, such as mentoring, facilitating knowledge sharing, encouraging innovation, and recognizing employee contributions ([Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015](#); [Shamim et al., 2019](#)). These behaviors are essential in establishing a workplace that allows employees to acquire, exchange, and apply expertise effectively. Organizational Performance (OP), on the other hand, is operationalized as a multidimensional construct measured through financial, operational, and marketing performance indicators. Financial performance is evaluated through indicators like revenue growth, return on assets, and financial stability, while operational performance is measured

based on factors like efficiency, productivity, and resource utilization ([Koohang et al., 2017](#); [Schulz & Jobe, 2001](#)). Marketing performance is measured through customer retention rates, market responsiveness, and brand equity ([Treacy & Wiersema, 1995](#); [Akhavan et al., 2014](#)). These findings collectively affirm that KOL significantly impacts financial, operational, and marketing performance, leading to the hypothesis:

***H1:** There is significant relationship between Knowledge Oriented Leadership and organizational performance.*

Knowledge Oriented Leadership and Knowledge Management processes.

Knowledge Management (KM) processes are fundamental activities that empower organizations to acquire, distribute, store, and apply information, promoting innovation and enhancing performance ([Maier, 2005](#)). These processes transform tacit knowledge (unarticulated, individual insights) into explicit knowledge (transferable and storable), creating a sustainable competitive advantage ([Jimes & Lucardie, 2003](#); [Nonaka, 1994](#)). KM processes encompass acquiring, sharing, and applying knowledge, all of which are crucial for promoting collaboration, informed decision-making, and value generation ([Choo, 2003](#); [Wang & Wang, 2012](#)).

Knowledge acquisition involves collecting information from both within and outside the organization, enhancing its knowledge reservoir ([Chiu & Chen, 2016](#)). Knowledge transfer facilitates its flow across different levels, fostering learning and driving innovation ([Elrehail et al., 2018](#)). Knowledge application focuses on utilizing acquired knowledge to achieve organizational objectives, ensuring its practical impact on performance ([Al-Azzam & Al-Qura'an, 2019](#); [Lee et al., 2013](#)). These processes function as an ongoing cycle, as demonstrated by models such as SECI (socialization, externalization, combination, internalization), which emphasizes the interaction between implicit and codified knowledge ([Nonaka, 1994](#)). Efficient KM processes allow organizations to stay ahead of the competition and adjust to fast-evolving environments, highlighting their strategic significance ([Alavi & Leidner, 2001](#)).

Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL) plays a crucial role in promoting successful Knowledge Management (KM) practices by combining both transformational and transactional leadership approaches ([Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015](#)). KOL encourages knowledge creation, sharing, and application, enhancing organizational capabilities. [Shamim et al. \(2017\)](#) identified key KOL behaviors such as mentoring, facilitating knowledge-sharing initiatives, and incentivizing innovation, all of which contribute to improved KM procedures by cultivating a cooperative and trusting culture. [Naqshbandi & Jasimuddin \(2018\)](#) further emphasized that KOL enhances collaboration in multinational firms, strengthening KM processes and boosting innovation. Additionally, [Latif et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Al-Rashdi et al. \(2019\)](#) confirmed that KOL driven leadership promotes KM adoption, optimizing resource use and employee engagement.

Knowledge Management (KM) involves structured processes for handling organizational intellectual assets, including gathering insights, distributing them across the workforce, and

leveraging them in decision-making. These processes, as adapted from [Wang & Wang \(2012\)](#), are critical for enhancing organizational performance and fostering innovation.

Collectively, these studies demonstrate that KOL plays a crucial role in embedding KM practices into organizations, improving efficiency, innovation, and performance. Thus,

H2: Knowledge Oriented Leadership has a significant relationship with Knowledge Management (KM) processes.

KM and organizational performance

Knowledge Management (KM) involves organized practices for generating, obtaining, distributing, storing, and applying information to improve organizational decision-making and effectiveness ([Nonaka, 1994](#); [Alavi & Leidner, 2001](#)). Effective KM enables firms to leverage intellectual capital, drive innovation, and optimize resources, ultimately improving overall performance ([Wang & Wang, 2012](#)). In present knowledge-based economy, KM functions as a crucial strategic enabler to secure long-term market leadership by ensuring organizations can effectively apply both implicit and explicit knowledge ([Choo, 2003](#)).

Organizational Performance (OP) is a comprehensive measure of a firm's ability to accomplish its strategic goals and sustain ongoing growth ([Ahmad et al., 2017](#)). It encompasses multiple dimensions, including financial, operational, and marketing performance, which collectively determine an organization's success ([Koohang et al., 2017](#)). Financial performance evaluates profitability, revenue growth, and cost management, operational performance assesses efficiency, productivity, and resource utilization, and marketing performance focuses on customer satisfaction, market positioning, and brand value ([Treacy & Wiersema, 1995](#); [Schulz & Jobe, 2001](#); [Akhavan et al., 2014](#)).

Numerous studies have emphasized the beneficial influence of KM on OP. [Gürlek and Çemberci \(2020\)](#) found that knowledge-sharing and utilization significantly enhance financial, operational, and marketing performance in the Turkish service sector. Similarly, [Ngha & Wong \(2020\)](#) demonstrated that KM practices, particularly knowledge creation and sharing, improve customer satisfaction and market share. Additionally, [Shahzad et al. \(2016\)](#) confirmed that KM processes boost financial performance, including profitability and return on investment. Organizations that effectively integrate KM into their strategic framework experience improved decision-making, customer-centric strategies, and long-term sustainability.

KM frameworks, knowledge acquisition, dissemination, and application are measured through their contribution to financial, operational, and marketing performance ([Alavi & Leidner, 2001](#); [Lee et al., 2013](#)). For example, systematic information acquisition strengthens strategic planning and drives innovation, which are critical for financial performance. Knowledge sharing improves collaboration and operational efficiency, while knowledge application ensures that insights are utilized to achieve strategic objectives, boosting marketing performance ([Elrehail et al., 2018](#); [Al-Azzam & Al-Qura'an, 2019](#)). These findings emphasize how KM serves as a link between leadership styles and business performance, reinforcing its influence on sustaining a competitive position.

H3: There is significant relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance.

Knowledge Management as a Mediator

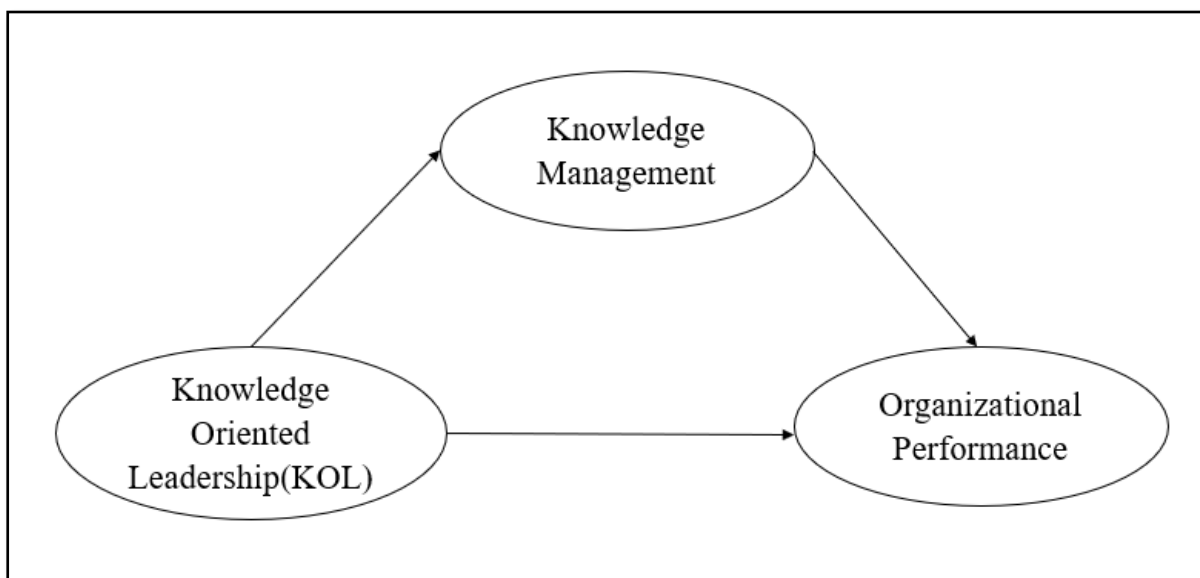
Empirical research continuously emphasizes how Knowledge Management (KM) procedures act as intermediaries between Organizational Performance (OP) and Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL). [Donate and Sánchez de Pablo \(2015\)](#) proposed that KOL improves knowledge management behaviors including utilization and sharing, which lead to performance gains. In a comparable manner, [Wang and Wang \(2012\)](#) highlighted how KM procedures serve as a vital tool that aids companies convert leadership behaviors into creativity and effectiveness. [Zheng et al. \(2010\)](#) additionally emphasized that KM promotes faith and teamwork, both of which are necessary for attaining higher performance. Collectively, these findings suggest that KM processes, which translate leadership actions into tangible results, act as intermediaries between KOL and OP.

H4: Knowledge Management Processes act as a mediator between Knowledge Oriented Leadership and Organizational Performance.

Research Framework

This study's conceptual framework, which is based on well-known theories like the KBV and Path-Goal Theory, investigates the connection between Knowledge Oriented Leadership, Knowledge Management procedures, and Organizational Performance. As an independent variable, KOL promotes innovation, sharing, and implementation behaviors that improve KM processes and serve as mediators affecting organizational performance in terms of marketing, operations, and finances ([Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015](#); [Grant, 1996](#)).

Figure 1 Research Framework



(Source: [Chaithanapat et al., 2022](#); [Donate & Sánchez De Pablo, 2015](#); [Raudeliūnienė & Kordab, 2019](#))

Research Methods

The data for this study were obtained from employees of commercial banks operating in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. The sample included staff members from diverse departments such as finance, operations, marketing, and human resources, ensuring a well-rounded representation of the local banking industry. The research focused on individuals at various organizational levels, ranging from managers and supervisors to general employees, to capture a broad spectrum of insights on the study's variables.

According to [Hair et al. \(2012\)](#), the sample size of 319 respondents was established using the sample-to-item ratio guideline. For mediation analysis, a ratio of 10:1 (10 respondents per item) is considered robust for ensuring reliable and valid results. The questionnaire comprised 28 items, and a sample size of 319 exceeded the minimum requirement of 280 respondents (28 items \times 10 respondents per item). This ensures that the data are sufficient for conducting advanced statistical analyses, such as correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis, without compromising the reliability of the results.

The research uses both descriptive and causal research designs. The descriptive design provides a detailed and systematic portrayal of the population, while the causal design helps determine the connections between variables. The study follows a cross-sectional approach, where data is gathered from the population at one specific time. This method enables the quick gathering of data from a large group of respondents, making it an effective way to explore the associations between the variables in the banking sector ([Setia, 2016](#)).

The data collection process followed strict ethical standards, such as securing participants' consent, guaranteeing their privacy, and ensuring they could opt out at any point. These practices contributed to maintaining the accuracy and trustworthiness of the data ([Levin, 2008](#)). Furthermore, using Google Forms enabled automatic response validation, minimizing the chances of receiving incomplete or conflicting data. The strong response rate (319 valid submissions out of the total 350 distributed) further reinforces the consistency and dependability of the collected information.

Measurement

The questionnaire was designed using validated scales from prior research, with minor adaptations to align with the banking context of Kathmandu Valley. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). There were four primary divisions of the questionnaire: Demographic Information section collected data on respondents' age, gender, educational background, years of experience, and job position. To measure independent variable, Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL), six items from [Donate and Sánchez De Pablo \(2015\)](#) were utilized to assess how leaders cultivate a culture of knowledge sharing and foster employee learning and innovation. To evaluate knowledge management processes, twelve items from [Taherparvar et al. \(2014\)](#) were used to measure knowledge acquisition, sharing, and application within the organization. Organizational performance (OP) was assessed through three dimensions: financial, operational, and marketing. Three items modified from [Inman et al. \(2011\)](#) were used to assess financial

performance, [Khamwon & Speece \(2005\)](#), and [Day & Fahey \(1988\)](#). Operational performance was measured with five items from [Wang and Wang \(2012\)](#), and marketing performance was gauged with four items from [Fidel et al. \(2015\)](#).

Data Analysis Tools

Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Version 23) were used to examine the gathered data; both of these tools are well known for their versatility and adaptability in statistical analysis. Measures of central tendency (mean, standard deviation) and frequency distribution were among the descriptive statistics used to compile the information and identify trends. Inferential analysis included multiple regression analysis that examined at direct impacts, correlation analysis to evaluate correlations between variables, and mediation analysis using the Hayes PROCESS macro to analyze the mediating function of KM processes between KOL and OP. To ensure the validity of the regression models, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Durbin-Watson statistic were used to check for autocorrelation and multicollinearity, respectively.

Results and Findings

Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the demographic analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected via surveys, offering insights into the demographic characteristics of the study's participants.

The study included 319 respondents from commercial banks in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. The sample comprised 55.17% males and 44.83% females, reflecting a fairly even gender distribution. The majority of respondents were aged 20-30 years (51.72%), followed by 31- 40 years (36.36%), reflecting a younger workforce. Regarding professional experience, 38.24% had between 2 to 5 years of experience, while 25.39% had less than 2 years, suggesting a blend of early-career and mid-career employees.

In terms of education, 52.35% of the respondents held a Master's degree, while 35.42% had a Bachelor's degree, indicating a well-educated workforce. Respondents were distributed across various departments, with the highest representation in Finance and Treasury (28.21%) and Human Resource (26.33%). In terms of job roles, 51.10% were in Officer Roles, while 21.00% held Supervisory Roles, and 16.93% were Branch/Department Heads.

Table 1

Demographics of survey respondents

Demographic variables	Subcategory	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	176	55.17
	Female	143	44.83
Age	20-30	165	51.72
	31-40	116	36.36
	41-50	25	7.84
	51-60	13	4.08
Experience	Less than 2 years	81	25.39
	2-5 years	122	38.24
	6-10 years	77	24.14

	Over 10 years	39	12.23
Education	SLC/+2	14	4.39
	Bachelor's	113	35.42
	Master's	167	52.35
	MPhil & above	21	6.58
Department	Finance and Treasury	90	28.21
	Operational and IT	52	16.30
	Human Resource	84	26.33
	Marketing and Customer Relations	41	12.85
	Compliance, Audit & Legal Affairs	52	16.30
Job Title	Top-Level Management	10	3.13
	Branch/Department head	54	16.93
	Supervisory Role	67	21.00
	Officer Role	163	51.10
	Support/Clerical Staff	25	7.84

Reliability

The internal consistency of the scales, measured by Cronbach's Alpha, was used to evaluate the constructs' reliability. The findings showed that the dependability of every construct ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. At a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.805 (10 items), Knowledge Management (KM) procedures demonstrated good reliability, but Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL) demonstrated moderate reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.701 (6 items). A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.901 (12 items) indicated that Organizational Performance (OP) was highly reliable. According to [Hair et al. \(2012\)](#), these results surpass the generally recognized cutoff point of 0.70, demonstrating the validity of the scales employed in this investigation for assessing the relevant components.

Table 2*Reliability Statistics*

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Knowledge Oriented Leadership	0.701	6
KM Process	0.805	10
Organizational Performance	0.901	12

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive statistics indicate that the mean values for all variables which are relatively high, suggesting that respondents generally agree with the measured constructs. The standard deviation values, all below 0.6, indicate moderate dispersion in responses, reflecting a consistent pattern of agreement among participants. According to [Gliem & Gliem \(2003\)](#), lower standard deviation values in Likert-scale data suggest that most respondents share similar views, enhancing the reliability of the findings.

Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation of Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Knowledge-Oriented Leadership	3.8377	0.47561
Knowledge Management Process	3.8990	0.46702
Organizational Performance	3.9207	0.52355

Correlation

Relationship analysis, also known as Pearson Correlation Analysis, promotes in revealing the bivariate association, strength, and direction of the variables in a study. The Pearson correlation coefficient, which ranges from -1 (perfect negative link) to +1 (perfect positive relationship), measures the degree of linear association between two continuous variables. Hair et al. (2012).

Table 4

Correlation between Dependent and Independent Variable

	KOL	KM Process	OP
KOL	1		
KM Process	.479**	1	
OP	.446**	.674**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Organizational Performance (OP), Knowledge Management (KM), and Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL) all have strong positive associations, according to the correlation analysis. The highest association is between KM and OP ($r = 0.674$, $p < 0.01$), confirming the importance of knowledge management in improving organizational performance. Leadership has a considerable impact on knowledge-sharing and usage, as evidenced by the moderate correlation between KOL and KM ($r = 0.479$, $p < 0.01$). A lesser association between KOL and OP ($r = 0.446$, $p < 0.01$) indicates that KOL has a mostly indirect effect on performance, with KM serving as a significant mediator during this process.

Regression

Regression analysis is a statistical method used to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables, estimating the strength, direction, and significance of their influence (Hair et al., 2012). It is a powerful tool for testing hypotheses and understanding causal mechanisms in social science research (Fidel et al., 2015; Cohen et al., 2013).

Table 5

Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model Summary ^b										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.573 ^a	0.328	0.324	2.99016	0.328	76.810	2	315	0.000	1.589

a. Predictors: (Constant), KM Process, KOL

b. Dependent Variable: OP

The regression model, with Independent Variable (KOL) and Mediating Variable (KM Process) as predictors, explained 32.8% of the variance in the Dependent Variable (OP) ($R^2 = 0.328$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.324$). The model was statistically significant ($F(2, 315) = 76.810$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the predictors collectively have a significant impact on DEPE. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.589 suggests no significant autocorrelation in the residuals, confirming the reliability of the model.

Table 6

Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	9.127	1.221		7.472	0.000		
KOL	0.252	0.106	0.126	2.364	0.019	0.756	1.323
KM Process	0.539	0.057	0.500	9.412	0.000	0.756	1.323

The regression analysis revealed that both Independent Variable (KOL) and Mediating Variable (KM Process) significantly predict the Dependent Variable (OP). KOL had a positive but weaker effect ($\beta = 0.126$, $p = 0.019$), while KM Process showed a stronger positive effect ($\beta = 0.500$, $p < 0.001$). The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for both predictors were below 2 (KOL: 1.323; KM Process: 1.323), indicating no multi collinearity issues. These findings imply that, in comparison to KOL, KM Process contributes more significantly to the explanation of OP variance.

Mediation

A statistical method for determining how an independent variable affects a dependent variable through a mediator variable is called mediation analysis. (Hayes, 2018; Baron & Kenny, 1986).

The mediation analysis revealed that Knowledge Management (KM) processes partially mediate the relationship between Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL) and Organizational Performance (OP). T KOL had a total effect of 0.7464 on OP, with a direct effect of 0.2516 and an indirect effect of 0.4947 through KM. The mediation was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$, $t = 7.1358$) because the 95% CI for the indirect effect (0.5406 to 0.9522) did not include zero. These results indicate that while KOL directly influences OP, a significant portion of its impact is channeled through KM processes, supporting partial mediation.

Table 7

Mediating Effect

Relation ship	Total effect	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Confidence Interval		p	t - Statistic	Conclusion
				lower	upper			
KOL-KM- OP	0.7464	0.2516	0.4947	0.5406	0.9522	0.000	7.1358	Partial Mediation

Hypothesis testing

Table 8

Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	p-value	Result
H1: There is significant relationship between Knowledge Oriented Leadership and organizational performance.	0.019	Accepted
H2: Knowledge Oriented Leadership has a significant relationship with Knowledge Management (KM) processes.	0.000	Accepted
H3: There is significant relationship between knowledge management and organizational performance.	0.000	Accepted
H4: Knowledge Management Processes mediates the relationship between Knowledge Oriented Leadership and Organizational Performance.	0.000	Accepted

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL) has a major influence on Knowledge Management (KM) procedures, creating an atmosphere that makes it easier to acquire, share, and use knowledge. Additionally, the findings indicate that KM procedures somewhat moderate the association between KOL and Organizational Performance (OP). The analysis also confirms that KOL directly improves OP by influencing the operational, marketing, and financial aspects of performance. These results indicate that leadership styles emphasizing knowledge-sharing and collaboration are essential for enhancing overall organizational performance in Nepal's commercial banking sector. This aligns with the observation of [Donate & Sánchez De Pablo \(2015\)](#), who identified that KOL significantly

enhances KM practices, cultivating an atmosphere of mutual benefit and confidence that promotes innovation and knowledge exchange. Similarly, [Shamim et al. \(2017\)](#) highlighted the dual importance of transformational and transactional leadership styles in creating an environment conducive to effective KM. This study extends their work by demonstrating how KOL encourages knowledge acquisition, sharing, and application in Nepal's banking sector, which is critical for improving organizational performance.

Consistent with [Chaithanapat et al. \(2022\)](#), this study validates the intermediary role of KM processes in linking KOL to organizational performance. The findings underscore how leadership drives knowledge practices, which in turn enhance innovation quality, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, [Rehman & Iqbal \(2020\)](#) found that KM serves as a mediator between KOL and OP in higher education institutions, particularly in the financial and marketing aspects. This study extends their work by including the operational performance dimension and applying it to the banking sector, a context marked by rapid technological shifts and competitive pressures.

While the study corroborates the broader findings on KOL's impact, it also highlights sector specific differences. For instance, [Putra et al. \(2022\)](#) discovered that KOL influences employee performance in government institutions indirectly, with learning and innovation acting as mediators. However, this study demonstrates that KOL directly influences OP in the banking sector, alongside the mediating role of KM. This divergence suggests that the hierarchical and operational characteristics of the banking sector provide a more direct pathway for leadership to affect performance. This insight holds particular significance for Nepal's banking sector, where effective leadership is crucial for addressing the challenges of an increasingly dynamic financial environment.

[Birasnav \(2014\)](#) emphasized transformational leadership's positive impact on KM and performance in Bahrain's service sector, even when accounting for transactional leadership. This study supports [Birasnav's \(2014\)](#) conclusion and goes further to quantify the mediation effect of KM processes. By extending these insights to the Nepalese banking sector, this research highlights the importance of contextualizing KOL's impact within specific industries and economic environments. The results indicate that leadership practices fostering knowledge exchange and teamwork are especially impactful in knowledge-driven industries such as banking, where maximizing intellectual capital is essential for maintaining a competitive edge. The study validates the integration of the Knowledge-Based View (KBV), Path-Goal Theory, and Social Capital Theory in understanding the dynamics between leadership, KM, and performance. Similar to [Naqshbandi & Jasimuddin \(2018\)](#), who emphasized KM capability as a mediator in multinational enterprises, the findings demonstrate that KM processes function as a vital link between leadership and performance. The findings enrich the KBV framework by demonstrating how KOL transforms knowledge into strategic assets, enabling firms to sustain competitive advantages through effective KM practices ([Grant, 1996](#)). This is consistent with existing knowledge management research, emphasizing how leadership fosters a culture of trust and collaboration that enhances knowledge sharing and innovation. This

indicates that KOL has a stronger direct influence on OP within the banking sector, likely due to the industry's dependence on leadership-driven decision-making and operational effectiveness. It highlights the need to account for contextual factors when analyzing the interplay between leadership, KM, and performance.

The study's findings regarding the positive and significant impact of KOL and KM on OP are consistent with the broader literature on leadership and knowledge management. Nevertheless, the findings also emphasize the necessity for additional research to investigate the context-specific dynamics of these relationships. For example, while the banking sector in Nepal benefits significantly from KOL and KM practices, other sectors or regions may exhibit different patterns. This underscores the need for a deeper understanding of how leadership and KM interact in different organizational and cultural settings.

Conclusion

This study offers an in-depth examination of the connections between Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL), Knowledge Management (KM) processes, and Organizational Performance (OP) within Nepal's banking industry, making significant contributions to both academic theory and practical applications. The results indicate that KOL is crucial in fostering an environment that facilitates efficient KM practices, such as the acquisition, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge. These practices act as crucial mediators, connecting leadership actions to organizational achievements. The research aligns with established theoretical frameworks including Knowledge-Based View (KBV), Path-Goal Theory, and Social Capital Theory, illustrating how leadership can convert knowledge into a strategic asset that drives competitive advantage. It also reveals that KOL has a direct impact on OP across financial, operational, and marketing metrics, expanding on previous studies that have primarily focused on indirect effects through innovation or employee engagement. Focusing on a developing economy, this research emphasizes how KOL and KM can be effectively adapted to improve performance, even in environments with constrained resources.

The research underscores the crucial role of leadership in cultivating systems and cultures that promote knowledge-sharing behaviors, thereby enhancing organizational efficiency and competitiveness. For industry professionals, the findings highlight the need to develop KOL capabilities and invest in comprehensive KM systems to achieve sustained success. As Nepal's banking sector evolves to meet the demands of a knowledge-driven landscape, this study offers practical strategies for integrating leadership and KM practices to sustain a competitive advantage. Future studies could investigate these relationships in different industries and cultural settings to further validate and broaden the applicability of the findings.

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

By confirming and extending the Knowledge-Based View (KBV), which views knowledge as a crucial strategic asset for attaining competitive advantage, this study contributes to theoretical understanding. In fostering a culture of knowledge sharing, supporting Knowledge Management (KM) procedures, and promoting enhancements in Organizational Performance (OP), it emphasizes the significance of Knowledge-oriented Leadership (KOL). The research

addresses a gap in the literature by investigating knowledge management as a mediating variable. It provides new insights into the impact of leadership on performance, particularly in information-intensive industries such as banking. Additionally, it contributes to the field by offering empirical evidence from a developing economy, showcasing how KOL and KM practices can be effectively adapted to resource-limited settings.

From a managerial standpoint, the study emphasizes the importance of fostering a knowledge sharing culture within commercial banks. Leaders should encourage employees to acquire, share, and apply knowledge through initiatives such as incentives, collaborative teamwork, and ongoing learning opportunities. These efforts can enhance operational efficiency and improve customer satisfaction. Investing in advanced KM systems, including digital platforms for knowledge sharing and centralized repositories, can further optimize knowledge acquisition and utilization. The study also highlights the need to tailor leadership and KM strategies to address industry-specific challenges. For instance, adopting digital tools like artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics can enhance decision-making and innovation, while customer-focused KM practices can improve marketing and service delivery. Furthermore, 21 leadership development programs should integrate both transformational and transactional leadership styles to balance innovation with operational effectiveness, ensuring the cultivation of adaptable and resilient leaders.

For policymakers and regulatory bodies, the study underscores the value of capacity-building initiatives in the banking sector. Policies that promote knowledge sharing, leadership development, and the adoption of advanced technologies can enhance organizational adaptability and support sustainable growth. Public-private partnerships can play a key role in fostering collaboration between banks, academic institutions, and technology providers to develop innovative KM solutions. Additionally, funding leadership training programs and implementing policies that encourage digital transformation can further improve KM practices and operational efficiency. These measures are particularly vital for banks in emerging economies like Nepal, enabling them to thrive in a knowledge-driven economy and secure long-term competitive advantage.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Although this research offers important insights into the connection between Knowledge Oriented Leadership (KOL), Knowledge Management (KM) processes, and organizational outcomes, it does have certain limitations. First, the study is focused on a particular context or sample, which may limit the applicability of the results to other sectors or cultural environments. Second, since the research depends on self-reported data, there is a possibility of biases, such as social desirability or common method variance. Third, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to establish causal links between the variables. Future investigations could overcome these limitations by using longitudinal approaches, expanding the sample to include a variety of industries and cultural settings, and integrating objective performance indicators alongside self-reported data.

Additionally, future research could examine the influencing role of factors such as organizational culture, technological infrastructure, or employee characteristics (e.g., age, tenure) in shaping the relationship between KOL, KM processes, and organizational outcomes. Exploring the impact of emerging technologies, like machine learning and advanced data analytics, on enhancing KM practices could also offer important insights. Finally, qualitative methods, such as case studies or interviews, could provide a more profound understanding of how KOL impacts KM processes and organizational success. By addressing these aspects, future studies can further enhance the comprehension of the interplay between leadership, knowledge management, and organizational performance.

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