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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW.

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Abstract

This systematic review is an analysis of the effect of knowledge management on the performance of sports organizations. It is a synthesis of quantitative and mixed-methods evidence from 2005 to 2026, and is conducted using a rigorous methodology. The study explores different entities including federations, professional clubs and mega event committees. The goal is to determine if cognitive abilities create competitive advantage and organizational success. The findings indicate that overall performance is mainly positively related to knowledge processes. Human capital and knowledge sharing emerge as important indicators of organizational success. Innovation, culture and organizational learning are key mediators. This relationship, however, depends on the institutional context, governance and integration practice. In professional soccer, intangible assets can have a major impact on both performance and profitability. On the other hand, temporary companies have a hard time moving tactical learning into lasting strategic enhancements. The study underscores the importance of objective measures and longitudinal studies to validate these relationships. To sum up, knowledge management is a key factor in performance and its effectiveness relies on knowledge retention.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Sports Organizations, Organizational Performance, Systematic Review, Intellectual Capital

1. Introduction

Knowledge management (KM) is the organizational processes and capabilities to create, acquire, share, transfer, store, retain, protect and apply knowledge. In sports organization, these processes are carried out by athletes, coaches, administrators, volunteers, technical staff, governing bodies, sponsors and event stakeholders. The literature retrieved also employs related concepts such as organizational learning, unlearning, knowledge transfer, intellectual capital, human capital, resource orchestration and team-specific human capital. Sport organizations offer a valuable context for the study of KM as they are reliant on the expertise of people and organizations being spread across the organization. When coaches, athletes, administrators or volunteers leave, knowledge can be lost. It can also be challenging to transfer between clubs, federations, countries and temporary event committees. The performance impacts of KM are multi-faceted, including studies on sporting performance, profitability, organizational effectiveness, innovation, brand value, event achievement, human-resource performance, and strategic learning (Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Qin et al., 2022). This review aims to determine if there is a relationship between more effective KM processes and knowledge-based capabilities and the performance of sport organizations, and how. The question is structured in the PICO format:

Population: sport federations, professional clubs, leagues, national teams, national Olympic committees, sport-event organizing committees, nonprofit clubs and related sport organizations.

Intervention/exposure: KM processes, organizational learning, knowledge transfer, intellectual capital, human capital, and related knowledge-based capabilities. **Comparison:** KM present vs absent, more intense vs less intense, different organizational settings, or other historical or interorganizational comparisons.

Outcome: sporting, financial, governance, innovation, organizational-effectiveness, event, or composite performance.

The main research question is: **What is the relationship between KM processes and organizational performance in sport organizations with the absence or lower intensity of KM?**

Secondary questions focus on the most consistently associated KM processes with performance, the mediating and moderating processes, and the differences between permanent sport organizations and temporary or complex sport organizations. The review will include only quantitative empirical and eligible mixed-methods evidence and systematic review articles. This scope allows for explicit comparisons of variables, statistical examination of relationships, mediation, moderation, longitudinal association, and objective performance outcomes. Although qualitative studies are still relevant for the understanding of tacit knowledge, trust, political barriers and local adaptation, they do not provide direct evidence of a quantitative KM–performance relationship, but rather answer different questions.

2. Methodology :

The present article is a systematic review of quantitative evidence based on the evidence-based management review approach of Tranfield et al. (2003). The literature search is conducted in the main research databases of Scopus, Web of Science Core Collection, and Google Scholar. Undermind is not the source database, but rather a workspace used to organize, extract and analyze the retrieved studies.

The search strategy is a combination of sport organizations and knowledge management and performance. The following are the principal concept blocks: (“sport organization” OR ”sport federation” OR “professional club” OR league OR”Olympic committee” OR “event organizing committee”) AND (“knowledge management” OR “knowledge sharing” OR “knowledge transfer” OR “organizational learning” OR “intellectual capital” OR “human capital”) AND (performance OR effectiveness OR innovation OR profitability OR “sporting performance” OR governance). Search is limited to publications 2005-2026, with emphasis on 2015-2026. The search records from Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar should be reported before submission, including the search dates, number of results, removal of duplicates, and screening totals for the database.

Only quantitative empirical studies, based on surveys, regression, structural equation modeling, partial least squares, correlational analysis, panel data, archival data, or similar statistical designs, were eligible for inclusion. Mixed-methods studies were also included if they included relevant empirical quantitative data that could be separated out. Systematic reviews, meta-analyses and bibliometric reviews were eligible. Studies that did not provide quantitative data or were conceptual papers with no empirical testing, or records that were not sufficiently detailed to interpret were excluded from the core evidence synthesis or were marked with a verification flag.Evidence was synthesized narratively because the studies differ substantially in population, construct definition, outcome measurement, comparison condition, and statistical design. The analysis proceeded through a concept matrix, research-question clusters, and finding clusters. The absence of a common effect metric prevented a pooled meta-analysis.

3. Descriptive overview

The concept matrix identified four dominant combinations of variables. First, direct KM-process studies examine knowledge creation, acquisition, sharing, storage, application, or KM effectiveness in federations, public sport organizations, nonprofit clubs, and community organizations (Allameh et al., 2014; Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Omidi et al., 2012; Reisi et al., 2013; Vaziri, 2017; بهار et al., 2015). Second, several studies examine KM or organizational learning as a pathway to innovation, creativity, or competitive advantage (Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Jaberi, 2020; Pujianto et al., 2025; Salimi & Nazarian, 2022). Third, a large archival literature treats intellectual capital, human capital, team-specific human capital, or knowledge-resource orchestration as predictors of financial, sporting, or brand performance in professional football (Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Lanza et al., 2016; Massaro et al., 2019; Mnzava, 2013; Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018). Fourth, the mega-event literature focuses on tacit knowledge, knowledge transfer, absorptive capacity, and the difficulty of retaining learning across temporary organizing committees (Ansar et al., 2026; Qin et al., 2022; Zhou, 2023).

The populations are unevenly distributed. Direct KM studies are concentrated in Iranian sport federations, public sport organizations, and nonprofit or community clubs (Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Jaberi, 2020; Omidi et al., 2012; Reisi et al., 2013; بهار et al., 2015). Archival evidence is concentrated in European football clubs and leagues, where financial statements, player values, league points, rankings, and market indicators are available

(Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Lanza et al., 2016; Leitão & Baptista, 2018; Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018). Evidence for national Olympic committees, leagues outside football, and permanent event-governance bodies is limited. The mega-event evidence is mainly Olympic and is more developed in descriptive and review research than in quantitative tests of performance effects (Qin et al., 2022; Zhou, 2023).

The outcomes are also heterogeneous. Survey studies commonly use composite organizational-performance or effectiveness scales (Allameh et al., 2014; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Omidi et al., 2012; بهار et al., 2015). Football studies use profitability, return on assets, brand value, market value, league points, UEFA rankings, FIFA rankings, and related archival indicators (Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Lanza et al., 2016; Leitão & Baptista, 2018; Massaro et al., 2019). Mega-event studies use event achievement, knowledge-transfer effectiveness, host-region legacy, or cost overruns as indicators of organizational learning or performance (Ansar et al., 2026; Qin et al., 2022; Zhou, 2023). These outcomes should not be treated as interchangeable.

4. Thematic and cluster synthesis

Table 1 summarizes the six research-question clusters identified from the concept matrix. The clusters are organized by the primary Population–Intervention–Outcome combination; the evidence-pattern column summarizes the direction and limits of the findings.

Table 1: Summary of research-question clusters identified from the concept matrix

Cluster	Population and intervention	Main outcomes	Studies	Synthesis of evidence
1. Federations and general sport organizations	Sport federations and public sport organizations; KM processes, knowledge sharing, KM effectiveness, and intellectual capital	Organizational effectiveness, innovation, HR, and composite performance	(Allameh et al., 2014; Jaberi, 2020; Omidi et al., 2012; Piątkowska et al., 2024; Reisi et al., 2013; Salimi & Nazarian, 2022; Vaziri, 2017; Zaborova et al., 2024)	Eight studies report positive relationships, one reports dimension-specific null findings, and one is unclear. The positive pattern is substantial but geographically concentrated

				and partly dependent on verification-flagged records.
2. Nonprofit and community sport clubs	Nonprofit clubs, community clubs, and dojangs; KM, unlearning, learning organization, and KM capability	Organizational performance, innovation, and competitive advantage	(Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Pujianto et al., 2025)	Two studies support positive KM–performance pathways, while one finds innovation without significant performance or mediation effects.
3. Professional football organizations	Professional football clubs; intellectual capital, human capital, knowledge-resource management, intangible assets, and governance	Financial, sporting, brand, and market performance	(Abdelmawla et al., 2026; Derun & Mysaka, 2020; Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Fattakh, 2016; Fauzi, 2019; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Guseva & Rogova, 2016; Lanza et al., 2016; Leitão & Baptista, 2018; Macedo et al., 2023; Mnzava, 2013; Ricci et al., 2015; Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018; Setyawan, 2019; Trequattrini et al., 2017; Verónico et al., 2024; Yasar et al., 2015)	Positive evidence is dominant, especially for human capital, but component-level, measurement-dependent, null, and verification-flagged findings prevent a uniform conclusion.
4. Temporary sport teams	National football teams and teams undergoing personnel or	Sporting and team performance	(Massaro et al., 2019; Trequattrini et al., 2018)	Both studies support positive or conditional effects, but the evidence is

	knowledge-resource transition; intellectual capital, knowledge transfer, and integration mechanisms			preliminary and methodologically heterogeneous.
5. Sport mega-events and event organizations	Olympic Games, international mega-events, and event organizations; KM programs, knowledge transfer, absorptive capacity, and organizational learning	Event achievement, host-region legacy, knowledge-transfer effectiveness, and strategic learning	(Ansar et al., 2026; Qin et al., 2022; Zhou, 2023)	Local event achievement has preliminary positive evidence, but systematic reviews and Olympic evidence show limited support for durable cross-event or host-region performance gains.
6. Sport leagues and organizational learning	Professional sport leagues; organizational learning and performance feedback	Rule modification and organizational adaptation	(Copeland & Babiak, 2025)	A single study indicates adaptive rule change, but it does not directly test conventional organizational-performance outcomes.

Source : compiled by the author based on the literature

4.1 Cluster 1: Federations and general sport organizations

Ten studies focus on federations, public sport organizations or general sport management organizations. Eight report positive relationships between KM-related constructs and organizational, innovation, HR or composite performance (Allameh et al., 2014; Jaberi, 2020; Omidi et al., 2012; Piątkowska et al., 2024; Reisi et al., 2013; Vaziri, 2017; Zaborova et al., 2024). The pattern is similar to the one that suggests that KM capability, knowledge sharing, organizational culture, and intellectual capital are associated with better organizational functioning.

There is also evidence that the process is important. The Iranian–Polish federation comparison revealed that the two modes of knowledge-creation were significantly linked to the performance in the two national contexts, namely internalization in Poland and socialization in Iran (Piątkowska et al., 2024). Knowledge sharing was found to be positively related to federation performance and to be a mediator between creativity and federation performance (Jaberi, 2020). The results suggest that KM is not a one-size-fits-all and that the process most likely to be effective might vary depending on the cultural or institutional context.

Qualifications are included in the cluster. Some of the KM dimensions were shown to predict HR performance in one study, whereas knowledge extension and application did not. The other record is insufficiently informative to make a confident assessment (Salimi & Nazarian, 2022). The intellectual-capital federation study shows a high positive coefficient, but there are significant anomalies in the journals, countries, and reports (Zaborova et al., 2024). So the positive pattern is significant but not necessarily exact or universally applicable.

4.2 Cluster 2: Nonprofit and community sport clubs

Three studies focus on nonprofit, community or club-level organizations. Two reports find positive correlations between constructs related to KM and performance (Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020). The first one focuses on direct KM impacts on organizational performance and innovativeness, and sequential impacts via attitude toward innovation and innovativeness, and via open innovation and innovativeness (Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020). The second study reveals that unlearning context is a predictor of KM and performance, and KM partially mediates the relationship between unlearning and performance (Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020).

The third study gives a contrasting result. In Indonesian Taekwondo clubs, KM and learning organization predicted innovation, but neither KM nor learning organization directly predicted organizational performance, and innovation did not mediate the relationship (Pujianto et al., 2025). This paradox implies that the process of knowledge and innovation capability development can not guarantee immediate performance improvement. This null result is preliminary and should not be used to reject the larger positive pattern, as it is from one study with reporting and publication quality issues.

4.3 Cluster 3: Professional football organizations

Seventeen studies examine professional football clubs or football organizations. Ten provide positive evidence that intellectual capital, human capital, knowledge-resource management, or governance conditions are associated with financial, sporting, or brand performance (Abdelmawla et al., 2026; Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Guseva & Rogova, 2016; Lanza et al., 2016; Leitão & Baptista, 2018; Mnzava, 2013; Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018; Trequattrini et al., 2017; Yasar et al., 2015). Human capital is the most recurrent positive component. Human-capital efficiency predicts profitability in European clubs (Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015), team-specific human capital predicts English Premier League performance (Gerrard & Lockett, 2018), and intellectual capital contributes to financial performance in European professional clubs (Abdelmawla et al., 2026).

The archival evidence also supports a dynamic interpretation. Newcomer experience in Italian Serie A teams has a U-shaped relationship with performance, while releasing co-specialized employees strengthens the ability to exploit existing routines (Lanza et al., 2016). This suggests that knowledge acquisition and knowledge retention cannot be evaluated independently of timing, team composition, and the removal of obsolete routines. Governance mechanisms also condition the financial value of human-capital investment (Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018).

The positive pattern is not uniform. The efficiency of human capital is positive in some studies, while the structural efficiency or the efficiency of capital employed is negligible or negative in others (Fattakh, 2016; Setyawan, 2019). One study does not report any overall relationship between intellectual capital and financial performance (Fauzi, 2019). Other finds that VAIC-based measures are more closely aligned with sports performance than market-based indicators, which produce conflicting results (Derun and Mysaka, 2020). Also three other mentions cannot be evaluated with confidence due to the unavailability of summaries or detailed methods (Macedo et al., 2023; Ricci et al., 2015; Verónico et al., 2024). The literature of professional football therefore supports a conditional knowledge-resource effect rather than a universal coefficient of intellectual capital.

4.4 Cluster 4: Temporary sport teams

There are two other papers on temporary/quickly constructed sport teams (Massaro et al., 2019; Trequattrini et al., 2018). Both papers confirm either the positive or conditionally positive correlation between knowledge resources and sports performance. The intellectual capital is a predictor of national team performance, and the experience of coaches and players contributes to this relation by helping members of a team to combine knowledge from their source organizations (Massaro et al., 2019). Another study using QCA found that there were certain combinations of managerial transfer, staff mobility, player investment, and competitiveness that contributed to better team performance (Trequattrini et al., 2018).

The evidence base is weak, consisting of two papers only and using different research methodologies. Still, the evidence suggests that there may be one common mechanism: temporary teams benefit from knowledge integration, but the value of transferred knowledge depends on coordination and experience.

4.5 Cluster 5: Sport mega-events and event organizations

Four empirical studies deal with sport event organizations and mega events. The first quantitative event study relates knowledge management infrastructure, knowledge management strategy, organizational culture, and performance capabilities to knowledge sharing or knowledge creation, which then lead to event success. Thus, initial evidence emerges that knowledge management could facilitate performance of local events.

Two systematic reviews have recognized the challenging issue on the cross-event level. Knowledge management for Olympic Games and mega events focuses on tacit knowledge, individuals, diversity of stakeholders, absorptive capacity, local adaptation, and the paradox between knowledge sharing and knowledge protection (Qin et al., 2022; Zhou, 2023). Nevertheless, the systematic reviews reveal that there is no empirical evidence that knowledge transfer contributes to the results of host regions.

The longitudinal Olympic analysis reinforces this limitation. Across 23 Games from 1960 to 2024, cost overruns show no sustained improvement in frequency, magnitude, or variance, despite evidence of tactical learning within individual Games (Ansar et al., 2026). The result suggests that temporary organizational form, geographic distance, and the dissolution of host

committees may prevent tactical learning from becoming strategic organizational learning. The cluster therefore distinguishes local event achievement from durable cross-event performance improvement.

4.6 Cluster 6: Sport leagues and organizational learning

One study examines organizational learning and performance feedback through an archival analysis of 10,277 NFL rules (Copeland & Babiak, 2025). It finds that sport organizations modify different types of rules in response to performance deviations and strategic goals. This is evidence of organizational adaptation, but the study does not directly test whether KM improves financial, sporting, governance, or composite organizational performance. The finding is therefore adjacent and preliminary rather than direct evidence for the primary PICO question.

5. Outline of the Results

5.1 Finding synthesis: direct positive effects

Twenty-two records report positive significant direct relationships between KM, intellectual capital, human capital, knowledge resources, or related capabilities and a performance outcome (Abdelmawla et al., 2026; Allameh et al., 2014; Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Guseva & Rogova, 2016; Jaberi, 2020; Lanza et al., 2016; Leitão & Baptista, 2018; Massaro et al., 2019; Mnzava, 2013; Omidi et al., 2012; Piątkowska et al., 2024; Reisi et al., 2013; Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018; Trequattrini et al., 2017; Vaziri, 2017; Yasar et al., 2015; Zaborova et al., 2024). This is the dominant directional pattern in the corpus. It is strongest for composite organizational performance in survey studies and for human-capital or intellectual-capital measures in football archives.

The pattern should not be interpreted as a single pooled effect. The studies use different populations, measurement scales, outcome domains, and comparison conditions. In particular, many direct KM studies are cross-sectional and self-reported, whereas the football studies often use archival data and financial or sporting proxies. The agreement is therefore directional, not quantitative.

5.2 Finding synthesis: mediated, moderated, and conditional effects

Knowledge-based resources influence performance through mediating and moderating mechanisms is based on 10 empirical studies (Abdelmawla et al., 2026; Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Jaberi, 2020; Lanza et al., 2016; Massaro et al., 2019; Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018; Trequattrini et al., 2018; Vaziri, 2017). This is more insightful compared than the direct effect alone because it specifies the organizational conditions that change knowledge into performance.

The evidence also indicates that mediation is not mandatory. In the Indonesian Taekwondo study, although there were positive KM and learning effects on innovation, there was no significant innovation mediation (Pujianto et al., 2025). This paradox suggests that innovation ability could be a requirement but not a sufficient condition for performance improvement. The findings concerning mediation and moderation should therefore be viewed as mechanisms that need to be further tested longitudinally, and not as causal pathways.

5.3 Finding synthesis: null, mixed, and contradictory effects

Eight records report null, mixed, or outcome-dependent findings (Ansar et al., 2026; Copeland & Babiak, 2025; Derun & Mysaka, 2020; Fattakh, 2016; Fauzi, 2019; Pujianto et al., 2025; Setyawan, 2019). The paradoxes are focused in three points. First, the different components of intellectual capital do not act in the same way; human capital is consistently positive, while the structural and capital-employed components are sometimes insignificant or negative (Fattakh, 2016; Setyawan, 2019). Second, KM innovation does not necessarily lead to organizational performance (Pujianto et al., 2025). Third, tactical learning in temporary events does not necessarily lead to strategic improvement in events (Ansar et al., 2026).

These findings support, but do not challenge, the prevailing positive direction. They suggest that knowledge is useful only if it is integrated, stored, applied and transformed in appropriate organizational procedures and governance settings.

6. Research gaps and future research agenda

6.1 Stronger causal designs

Most of the direct KM literature is based on cross-sectional surveys and perceptual performance measures (Allameh et al., 2014; Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Omidi et al., 2012). Future research should employ panel data, repeated organizational measures, natural experiments, or quasi-experimental changes in KM systems. In multi-respondent designs, the risk of one informant reporting KM and performance should be minimized.

6.2 Clearer construct boundaries

While there are overlaps between KM processes, organizational learning, intellectual capital, human capital, and resource orchestration, they are not the same. Research should separate the four aspects of knowledge creation, sharing, retention, and application, and not consider KM as a single score. Archival VAIC measures should be used as proxies of intellectual-capital efficiency, not as direct measures of KM processes (Abdelmawla et al., 2026; Derun & Mysaka, 2020; Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015).

6.3 More objective and multidimensional outcomes

Future studies should include both perceptual performance and objective indicators. Sporting performance can be measured in terms of ranking, points, qualification or competitive success; financial performance can be measured in terms of profitability, revenue, return on assets or solvency; governance performance can be measured in terms of transparency indicators of accountability, compliance and stakeholder outcomes. The measure of innovation should be based on outputs, not attitudes or self-reported capability.

6.4 Cross-national and cross-organizational comparison

The direct KM evidence is overwhelmingly focused on Iran, and the archival evidence is focused on European football (Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Piątkowska et al., 2024). Research should be conducted on federations, clubs, leagues, nonprofit organizations, Olympic organizations, and event committees in different institutional settings.

The Iran–Poland comparison indicates that the relevance of particular knowledge-creation modes could be different in national and organizational contexts (Piątkowska et al., 2024).

6.5 Temporary organizations and knowledge retention

When an organizing committee is dissolved, as is the case with mega-events, there are more rigorous tests for retention of knowledge. Future research should measure knowledge repositories, staff continuity, transfer quality, absorptive capacity, host-region learning, and later-event performance. The reviews and the analysis of Olympic cost show that the main challenge is not only the production of knowledge, but also the preservation and adaptation of knowledge across time and space (Ansar et al., 2026; Qin et al., 2022; Zhou, 2023).

6.6 Mechanisms and boundary conditions

The evidence suggests that the mediators and/or moderators may include innovation, organizational culture, unlearning, governance, managerial experience, and integrative mechanisms (Delshab, Winand, et al., 2020; Delshab, Pyun, et al., 2020; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Jaberi, 2020; Massaro et al., 2019; Scafarto & Dimitropoulos, 2018). Future research should explore these mechanisms in integrated longitudinal models and investigate if they are distinct in nonprofit, professional, public, and temporary organizations.

6.7 Evidence verification and reporting quality

Some records lack abstracts, the journal status is not clear, there may be duplication, or internal inconsistencies (Macedo et al., 2023; Ricci et al., 2015; Salimi & Nazarian, 2022; Verónico et al., 2024; Zaborova et al., 2024). Future reviews should confirm that indexing, publication, sample information, measurement instruments and statistical reporting are accurate before giving equal evidentiary weight to all records.

Conclusion

The reviewed literature generally indicates a positive association between KM and efficiency within sports organizations. Out of 22 research publications, 22 show direct correlations between both constructs, whereas, 10 research works acknowledge mediation, moderation, and/or conditional mechanisms. The most evident correlational evidence comprises knowledge sharing, KM relating to innovation, human capital effectiveness, human capital pertaining to teams, and integration of knowledge within temporary teams (Delshab et al., 2020; Dimitropoulos & Koumanakos, 2015; Gerrard & Lockett, 2018; Jaberi, 2020; Massaro et al., 2019). There is no unbounded causality in such relationships. The null or mixed results demonstrate differences in efficiency of strategic and employed resources from human capital, lack of innovative outcomes translating into short-term efficiency, and tactical learning failing to develop into strategic one in temporary mega-event organizations (Ansar et al., 2026; Fattakh, 2016; Pujianto et al., 2025; Setyawan, 2019). Similarly, some evidence is inconsistent across different populations, with the studies from Iran and European football dominating the subject domain.

The most defensible conclusion, therefore, is that sports organizations practicing more effective KM practices and knowledge capabilities achieve better results in terms of efficiency, but the strength of the correlation and the time perspective depend on the organizational context and the ways of measuring KM practices.

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