KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE TOOL IN MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICE INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY OF KINGSWAY TYRES LTD

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OCTOBER, 2010
DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of degree in any other university or institution for any other purpose.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To my family for support and understanding especially to my father who left me with not only knowledge but wisdom that has continued impacting my life.
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My foremost gratitude goes to God Almighty who renewed my strength at every single stage of doing this proposal.

A lot of thanks go to my supervisor Ms. Florence Muindi who have relinquished without complain many hours of positive criticism, comments and suggestions that have enabled me to come up with a refined proposal.

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Despite all the ups and downs, working on this proposal has been a great learning experience.
ABSTRACT

In today's fast-changing competitive environment, firms' competitive positions are constantly challenged by the emergence of new technologies, products, markets and competitors. As a result, organizations have to respond strategically to environmental factors in order to be sustainable. Quickness to accurate, relevant and precise information is crucial to the success of firms operating in such a competitive environment. Such competitive advantage emanates from resources unique to a firm such as key competencies, assets, capabilities, resources, information, and knowledge. Knowledge management has been found to be such a great resource to a firms obtaining sustainability.

The study aimed at determining the how Kingsway Tyres has utilized knowledge management as a competitive tool. In attempting to get the objective, a case study research design was adopted. Five departmental Heads were interviewed and gave information that helped in arriving at the research objective and conclusion. The Content analysis study established that organisation objective in introducing KM was to leverage implicit knowledge and at the same time retaining knowledge of employees as they exit the organisation. With the introduction of the knowledge management process, the organizations ability to act has been enhanced due to the increased competency of the employees.

Several challenges were identified that was going to impact the implementation of knowledge management in the firm. This included; situations where the managers in some cases implemented some KM strategies that was not the one suitable in the
circumstance. In addition it was found out that top managers need to realize the internal and external environments for the knowledge management thoroughly for enacting proper strategies for enterprises to successfully implement the knowledge management programs. Therefore it can be concluded that knowledge management can be used as a competitive advantage tool.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

The shifting winds of change in today's business environment, where the market place is increasingly competitive and the rate of innovation is rising, have made enterprises realize that knowledge is their key asset. Drucker (1993) rightly points out that the most valuable assets of the 21st century enterprise are its knowledge and knowledge workers. The ability of enterprises to exploit their intangible assets has become far more decisive than their ability to invest and manage their physical assets. Hence, to remain at the forefront and maintain a competitive edge, organisation must have a good capacity to retain, develop, organise, and utilise their employee competencies (Gronhaug and Nordhaug, 1992).

One of the more vibrant and effective tools used by organizations to maintain their competitive hedge is the maintenance of a good knowledge management of the organisation. However, efforts to deploy KM group-ware in some organizations are frequently met with employee reluctance to share their expertise. The likely reason for this is that employees are competitive by nature and may be more inclined to hoard than share the knowledge they possess. In addition, employees realize that their knowledge would be valuable to others and hence will be reluctant to share with others. So important is the attribute of sharing the knowledge gained by employees by virtue of their position that Mayo (1998) feels that recruiters should look for capabilities to share knowledge
with new employees, as well as assessing what new knowledge they can bring to an organisation.

As was pointed out by Kim et al (2003), in order for enterprises to be successful in the exploitation of their knowledge assets, an appropriate "fit" between the organization's mission and objectives and its knowledge management strategy should be found. This means that the goals and strategies of knowledge management should be reflective of those of an organization. Strategists (strategic business managers and knowledge managers) should therefore take note of the major impact of knowledge on the formulation of corporate strategy and organizational success. Furthermore, enterprises need to ensure that their knowledge strategy and knowledge program is consistent with corporate ambitions, and that the techniques, technologies, resources, roles, skills, culture, etc. are aligned with and support the business objectives. When such alignment between the knowledge management strategy and the business strategy is clearly established, the knowledge management system will be moving in a direction that holds promise for long-lasting competitive advantage.

1.1.1 Competitive advantage

Adding values for customers, employees, and owners has become a central theme in strategic management for service companies. To create values for these stakeholders, a firm should achieve a competitive advantage over its competitors by adapting itself to the uncertain industry environment, understanding the changing needs of customers, and responding to new market entries. Achieving competitive advantage is presently recognized as the single most important goal of a firm (Porter, 1980). Thus, organisations
need to identify how to secure an advantageous competitive position where other players have not. Without achieving a competitive advantage, a firm will have few economic reasons for existing and finally will wither away.

According to the resource based view of gaining competitive advantage, firms' resources reside within a firm and therefore an advantageous competitive position of a firm is built on value-creating resources that are critical inputs into the production and distribution of its products and services (Barney, 1991). However the heterogeneity of the resource bases of different firms suggests that firms are presented with different opportunities for sharing and adapting their portfolios of assets. As was observed by Barney (1991), competitive advantage stems from internally-developed resources with characteristics of value, rareness, inimitability, and non-substitutability and because resources with such characteristics can neither be commonly traded nor easily acquired by their competitors (Barney, 1991). Thus, the theory argues out that a firm's competitive advantage emanates from resources unique to a firm such as key competencies, assets, capabilities, resources, information, and knowledge.

Based on the foregoing, it cannot be over emphasized that one of the key competitive advantage that a firm possess is the knowledge of its employees gained before and after joining the organisation. In medium sized firms such as Kingsway Tyres, it becomes even more important that the firm identifies its core competitive advantage especially the knowledge based advantage so as to be sustainable and meander itself through the uncertain business environment that it currently faces.
1.1.2 Knowledge Management

Knowledge management is usually concerned with capturing an organization's know-how and knows-what through creation, collection, storage, distribution, and application (Miller, 1999). It thus mean identifying and harnessing the collective knowledge of the organization gained through experience and competencies. According to Pillania (2005), knowledge management (KM) is defined as a systematic, organized, explicit and deliberate ongoing process of creating, disseminating, applying, renewing and updating the knowledge for achieving organizational objectives.

As a strategic management concept, knowledge is recognized as a key strategic resource and also because, like strategic management, it is a unifying concept drawing from various disciplinary areas like information systems, human resource management, economics, operations management, etc. According to Gopal and Gagnon (1995), knowledge cannot easily be stored -Knowledge is something that resides in people's minds rather than in computers. Unlike raw material, knowledge usually is not coded, audited, inventoried, and stacked in a warehouse for employees to use as needed. It is scattered, messy, and easy to lose Galagan, (1997).

The process of knowledge management depicts the primary activities of the KM value-adding chain. To ensure effective KM processes, organizations must dedicate effort to building infrastructures that enhance knowledge systems, knowledge culture, organizational memory, knowledge sharing, and knowledge benchmarking. However, KM processes and their enabling capabilities do not automatically lead to performance outcomes. KM efforts must be effectively directed towards building and improving
organizational capabilities, such as responsiveness to customers, new product development, organizational learning, and strategic flexibility.

1.1.3 Kingsway Tyres

Kingsway Tyres can be said to one of the indigenous firms established prior to independence that have stood the test of time ever since. Having opened its windows in 1962, in the then Kings Street (now University way), the firm has expanded from the then single outlet to the current 15 branches. The branch network of the firm is spread in the seven out of the eight provinces in the country with North Eastern province being the only region not penetrated by the firm though it is in its strategic plan for the years 2010-2015. It has not only grown in the branch network but also in terms of sales volume. The sales over the last three years has averaged kshs 500m up from a sales volume of less than Ksh200m in the last ten years. Due to the above remarkable growth rate, the Kingsway Company that was then a small retail firm has now grown to the current Kingsway Group of companies. In 47 years of business, perhaps the greatest achievement for Kingsway Tyres has been the conversion of its network branches from 'simple-retail-outlets' to 'state-of-art' fully computerized outfits better known as the 'Kingsway TyreExpert Centres'. These are professionally equipped modern outfits (read as 'workshops & service facilities') designed to provide not only tyres, but all related services, advise, accessories and catering virtually for any customer requirement all under one roof. All the TyreExpert Centers are strategically located, covering all the main business towns (and their environs) in Kenya - i.e. 9 branches in Nairobi, 2 in Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Eldoret and Meru. Today, Kingsway Tyres holds over 25% of the Tyre market share in Kenya. Currently, the firm is the largest Tyre distributors in East Africa.
with the largest network in the whole of East and Central Africa. As a matter of recognition of its achievement and the quality of its services, Kingsway TyrExpert Centres were the first Tyre Centres in East and Central Africa to be awarded the coveted Automobile Association of Kenya Approval.

The firm employs staff from different races and currently has a work force of over 250 employees of whom around 100 of them are technically endowed. These category of staff constitute some of whom have worked in the firm for over twenty years and have mastered the art of the business. However in the recent years and with the opening up of other firms offering the same services, the firm has lost some of its valuable workforce to the competitors leading to disruption of its services. This has been partly due to the firm lacking good management of its employee's knowledge gained.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The increasing importance of knowledge in the modern and competitive business world has initiated a need to focus on managing knowledge as an organizational and competitive asset (Gupta et al., 2002)) as well as a source of wealth. In addition, a well-implemented knowledge management (KM) program may lead to reduced operating costs, a faster new product development cycle and better customer service and thus giving a firm a competitive advantage in a particular sector. Despite the importance of the management of knowledge, the ability to share knowledge and collaborate is all too often missing in many organizations (Mayo, 1998).
The dominant market share that Kingsway Tyres has been enjoying over time is currently under threat from increasing number of players. Knowledge management is one of the strategic tools that the organisation can utilize in gaining the competitive edge necessary for its sustenance in the competitive environment. However implementation of knowledge management system in the organisation is facing various challenges ranging from lack of time to implement the system, inflexible organizational structure, a lack of senior management commitment and too much emphasis on individuals rather than on teamwork. The firm has no commonly held model for knowledge creation and dissemination of the same to other employees is therefore limited. As a result the loss of an employee by the firm comes with great economic loss especially in situations where the employees carry a lot of wealth of experience relating to the businesses of the firm. This loss could be in form of corporate memory, network with suppliers and customers and generally a firm will spent many man hours before a proper replacement and competence level is achieved. Hence it is imperative that an organisation put in place proper mechanisms to safeguard knowledge gained by an employee to avoid loss of the vital knowledge with the movement of the employee. Hence, knowledge management and the practices associated with it have become accepted -by managers - in all forms of organizations as one of the most important strategic levers to ensure continuing success (Boxall and Purcell, 2003).

Recent studies done on knowledge management include: Wangari (2009) who studied on the linkage of critical success factors and knowledge management systems at Olivado Kenya (EPZ) ltd She found out that once the role between strategy and knowledge is
defined, then other aspects of strategic management such as resources allocation, organization design, product development and market segmentation can be configured to bolster knowledge strengths and reduce knowledge weaknesses. In addition Asara (2009) carried out a research on Knowledge Management for competitive advantage within commercial banks in Kenya. He found out that learning opportunities for an organisation that already has a knowledge advantage may be more valuable than for a competitor having similar learning opportunities. Murianki (2008) researched on knowledge management structure among internet service providers (ISP) in Kenya. He found out that to ensure success, KM programs must have horizontal cohesiveness, from the business needs to the improved processes that are supported by appropriate technology and human factors. As can be evidenced from the above studies, there has been know research on motor vehicle service sector with less automation in its processes and hence this begs the following research question: how can knowledge management be applied as a competitive advantage tool in motor vehicle service sector firms?

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study will be:

(i) Establish how Kingsway Tyres uses Knowledge management as a competitive tool.

(ii) Determine the challenges that Kingsway Tyres faces in the use of knowledge management as a competitive tool.

1.4 Importance of the Study

The study will be important to the following stakeholders:
To Kingsway Tyres, it will form the basis of setting up a vibrant knowledge management system and facilitate the firm competing much more effectively in the terms of cost reduction and being able to develop new products fast because of the available knowledge. It will also assist the organisation in structuring the hiring and induction process of employees to the firm due to the available knowledge. With a vibrant Knowledge management practices, the senior management of the firm will be able to set a clear vision that can be achieved within a given time frame. This is because with the available knowledge, the managers can more accurately set objectives that will be possible to attain. This is more on establishing a knowledge base of what the organization's reality looks like.

To the government, this research will form an invaluable source of reference especially the ministry of labour in coming out with policies to guide employers in the management of employees affairs and also bargaining agreements between employers and employees. This research therefore will lend a hand in employee conflict resolution mechanism of the government.

To Scholars: This study is expected to increase body of knowledge to the scholars in the service industry and make them in be touch with how knowledge management can act as a competitive advantage tool in the service industry.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the review of literature related to the study. An overview of the theoretical origins to knowledge management, organizational knowledge as a strategic tool, ways of managing organizational knowledge, knowledge management enablers, types of knowledge management, factors to consider in knowledge management strategy, the knowledge management process cycle, organizational capabilities and performance and barriers to effective knowledge management were all discussed.

2.1.1 Core themes for knowledge management

Knowledge management is certainly attracting attention, but much of the literature is in agreement that there are few, if any, demonstrations of the consequences of the adoption of knowledge management as a company wide concept or implementation. On the other hand, there is an agreement that the knowledge-based society has arrived, and that those organisations that will succeed in the global information society are those that can identify, value, create and evolve their knowledge assets. Many argue that knowledge has become the main competitive tool for many businesses. Drucker (1993) has described knowledge, rather than capital or labour as the only meaningful economic resource in the knowledge society, while Senge (1990) has warned that many organisations are unable to function as knowledge based organisations, because they suffer from learning disabilities. As a result companies must innovate or die, and their ability to learn, adapt and change
becomes a core competency for survival. The forces of technology, globalisation and the emerging knowledge economy are creating a revolution that is forcing organisations to seek new ways to reinvent themselves (Drucker, 1993).

Davenport et al. (1998) studied a number of knowledge management projects and identified a range and nature of the knowledge management projects that were then implemented by various organisations. Many organisations, like, for example, Dow Chemical, have sought to demonstrate that knowledge management can affect the bottom line by starting with quick fix solutions, rather than attempting to embed knowledge management in a holistic manner throughout the organisation. Davenport et al. (1998) were able to categorize these projects on the basis of the project's objectives. As a result they identified three major objectives underlying knowledge management. These according to Davenport et al (1998) were to improve knowledge access, to enhance knowledge environment, to manage knowledge as an asset and finally to create knowledge repositories.

2.1.2 Knowledge Management

Knowledge management is concerned with the exploitation and development of the knowledge assets of an organisation with a view to furthering the organisation's objectives. The knowledge to be managed includes both explicit, documented knowledge, and tacit, subjective knowledge. Management entails all of those processes associated with the identification, sharing and creation of knowledge. This requires systems for the creation and maintenance of knowledge repositories, and to cultivate and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and organisational learning. Organisations that succeed in
knowledge management are likely to view knowledge as an asset and to develop organisational norms and values, which support the creation, and sharing of knowledge (Davenport et al, 1998).

According to Galagan (1997), knowledge management processes should among others incorporate generating new knowledge, accessing knowledge from external sources, representing knowledge in documents, databases, software and so forth, embedding knowledge in processes, products, or services, transferring existing knowledge around an organization, using accessible knowledge in decision making and measuring the value of knowledge assets and the impact of knowledge management.

Demerest (2003) developed a model in which he identifies four phases of knowledge management within an organisation: knowledge construction, knowledge dissemination, knowledge use and knowledge embodiment. The model emphasises the construction of knowledge within an organisation, with both scientific and social contributions to this construction process. According to the model, constructed knowledge is then embodied within an organisation, both through explicit programs, but also through social interchange. Following embodiment there is a process of dissemination of the espoused knowledge throughout the organisation and its environments. Ultimately the knowledge is seen as being of economic use in respect of organisational outputs. There is also a recognition that the process moves back and forth between the different phases.
2.1.3 Theories of Knowledge Management

A number of frameworks have been developed with regard to the issue of converting knowledge into improved performance. The stream of research on "organizational learning" is diverse in terms of the meaning of the organizational learning concept. Furthermore, it is not very attentive to strategic implications of learning (Crossan et al., 1999). March (1991), stipulates that organizational learning requires a balancing of "exploration" and "exploitation" of knowledge. Organizational learning studies have their relative advantage in the in-depth discussion about the dynamics of knowledge, rather than strategy.

Another field of knowledge management is the "knowledge-based view of the firm" as advanced by (Grant, 1996; Conner and Prahalad, 1996; Spender, 1996), which is strategic in its orientation, focusing the mechanisms that drive relative performance and competitive advantage. It rests intellectually on the ideas of the resource-based view as advocated by (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993), focusing explicitly on knowledge as the ultimate resource. A central feature of the knowledge-based view is the notion of "tacitness" (Grant, 1996), because tacit knowledge is a potential source of competitive advantage due to its limited transferability. Thus the knowledge-based view partly approaches the management of knowledge conversion. But although the knowledge-based view clearly suggests that knowledge can be a source of sustained competitive advantage, it is relatively unclear about the ways in which knowledge is utilized in order to contribute (Spender, 1996). However, the four key managerial heuristics proposed by Spender (interpretive flexibility, boundary management, identification of institutional
influences, distinguishing between systemic and component features) do not say much about the issues associated with the materialization of knowledge, but rather about how new knowledge is created and organized.

Another similar approach is the "competence-based view", primarily represented by (Sanchez et al. (1996); Heene and Sanchez (1997), Sanchez and Heene (1997), and Sanchez (2001). They argue that firms utilize competence in order to reach set goals, regardless of whether it is reduced costs or competitive advantage. But the core of the competence-based perspective lies in its approach to the nature of knowledge, and of its discussion of learning processes (Sanchez, 2001). For instance, the difference between data, information, knowledge and interpretive frameworks is highlighted, as is the difference between learning and sense-making. A key feature of this school of thought is the transformation of knowledge into competence, which is made through learning cycles, encompassing individual, group and organizational learning (Sanchez, 2001).

Within the "capability perspective", knowledge is identified as a link between capabilities and performance. Winter (2000) states that a capability is a "high-level routine (or collection of routines) that, together with its implementing input flows, confers upon an organization's management a set of decision options for producing significant outputs of a particular type" (Winter, 2000). Leonard-Barton (1992) further suggests that capabilities consist of particular skills, technical systems, managerial systems, all of which are grounded in the norms and values that the firm has built during its existence. Teece et al. (1997) along with Eisenhardt and Martin (2000), claim that capabilities comprise the abilities to create and utilize resources so as to improve performance. Like
many of the other perspectives mentioned, the capability perspective suggests that knowledge is important, that it can contribute to improved performance. However, despite identifying the link between capabilities and performance, it is not very clear on how this link is managed and whether there is automatic causality between capabilities and performance.

2.2 Knowledge management and a Firm's Performance

Over the last two decades, advocates of the resource-based view have tried to explain "why firms differ and how it matters (Hoopes et al., 2003). According to the resource-based view rival firms compete on the basis of the heterogeneity and immobility of their resources and capabilities (Peteraf and Bergen, 2003). Resources can be physical, human and organizational in nature, and they can be used to implement value-creating strategies. As was suggested by Barney (1991), resources which are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable, have the potential to provide firms with a sustainable competitive advantage. A set of resources that seem to match the above criteria are knowledge assets. However, a number of scholars have questioned whether the mere possession of bundles of these strategic assets is sufficient to sustain any competitive advantage, especially in situations of rapid and unpredictable market change, termed high velocity or dynamic markets (Teece et al 1997 and Eisenhardt and Martin 2000). It is believed that a competitive advantage in today's economy depends upon the way firms manage their knowledge assets, and how effective and efficient their knowledge management processes are applied to accumulate, articulate, codify, and use knowledge assets to
create value and enhance performance over time (Teece, 1998; Boisot, 1998; and Wiig, 1997).

Carlucci et al. (2004) showed how the management of knowledge assets impact business performance. It is argued that business performance equates to value generated for the key stakeholders of an organization. The generated value is the result of an organization's ability to manage its business processes and, on the other hand, the effectiveness and efficiency of performing organizational processes are based on organizational competencies. Finally, the management of knowledge assets enables an organization to grow and develop the appropriate organizational competencies. Therefore, the fact that organizational competencies are based on the effective and efficient management of knowledge assets puts it at the heart of business performance and value creation. Similarly, the effectiveness of knowledge asset management provides firms with an ability to constantly reconfigure, accumulate, and dispose of knowledge resources to meet the demands of a shifting market (Zott, 2003). Dynamic capabilities are therefore the organizational and strategic routines which firms use to achieve new resource configurations as markets emerge, collide, split, evolve and die. Dynamic capabilities are unique to individual firms, reflecting their individual idiosyncrasies, their specific path-dependencies, and hence are considered the source of sustainable competitive advantage and long-term superior performance (Teece et al, 1997).

2.2.1 Knowledge Assets

Grant (1999), argues that "resources are inputs into the production function - they are the basic units of analysis. A capability is the capacity of a team of resources to perform
some task or capacity" and as thus Knowledge is seen as a "resource" that supports capabilities, activities, and products, and that in turn arises from experience. Hall (1992) focused on intangible resources and classifies them into "assets" (e.g., intellectual property rights and reputation) and "skills" (i.e. know-how of employees as well as suppliers and advisers and the collective aptitudes which add up to organizational culture). The concept of knowledge assets refers to these intangible resources. The intangibility of knowledge was also considered as an important characteristic of knowledge assets.

Dawson (2000), identified three groups of intangible assets, which are human capital (i.e. the skills and know-how of the people in the organization, working individually and in teams); structural capital (i.e. organizational infrastructures, and processes which do not depend on key staff); and, relationship capital (relationships with clients, suppliers and others, as well as organizational image and brands). Thus the concept of intangible assets, is synonymous to what many authors have referred as "intellectual capital" (Marr et al, 2003) that can be considered as a "the group of knowledge assets that are attributed to an organization and most significantly contribute to an improved competitive position of this organization by adding value to the defined key stakeholders".

### 2.2.2 Knowledge management and firm performance

A number of contributions on the relationship between knowledge assets and firms performances can be highlighted. Barthe et al (2003) state that, brand value estimates are significantly associated with equity market values (share prices) and market returns. Also, Deng (2003) pointed out that patent measures, reflecting the volume of companies'
research activity, the impact of companies' research on subsequent innovations, and the closeness of R&D to science are reliably associated with the future performance of R&D-intensive companies in capital markets. This was further emphasized by Hand (2003) who observed that stock markets only attribute future benefits to intangibles (i.e. marketing and R&D assets) when intangibles play a dominant role in the firm's business strategy. By focusing on human capital, Hitt et al (2001) demonstrated that the prestige of partners in service firms, their tacit knowledge gained through experience, and their social capital can be helpful in the implementation of their firm's strategy. Seethamraju (2003) further observed that internally developed trademarks are considered to be valuable and value-relevant, as they explain future sales, current stock prices, and future stock returns.

Knowledge assets represent the "Crown Jewels" of companies and their strategic role to create value and improve business performance has incited organizations to invest heavily in methodologies, processes, and technologies to enrich, nurture, and renew them over time (Grant, 1991). He argues that "the competitive advantage of companies in today's economy stems not from market position, but from difficult to replicate knowledge assets and the manner in which they are deployed". Hence, knowledge management practices have emerged as the processes to accumulate, articulate, codify and effectively use knowledge assets and enhance their value continually (Grant, 1991).

2.2.3 Managing knowledge assets

Knowledge assets are dynamic in nature, interact and depend on each other to create value. This interconnectivity is enabled by learning mechanisms and knowledge
management processes. Knowledge assets are often organization specific, and organizations can employ strategic interventions through developing and implementing programs and procedures to develop, enhance, or protect those knowledge assets (Aaker, 1989). Thus, the overall purpose of knowledge management is to maximize the enterprise's knowledge-related effectiveness of its knowledge assets and to renew and leverage them constantly. As was noted by Marr et al 2003), knowledge management is recognized as the fundamental activity for obtaining, growing and sustaining knowledge assets in organizations, and the successful management of knowledge assets is closely linked to knowledge management processes an organization has in place.

Knowledge is about learning and development. Development facilitates learning processes and as such increases knowledge generation. Also, knowledge creation is the final result of learning process and conversely, learning occurs when knowledge creation, sharing, and use take place (Loermans, 2002). While organizational learning generates new knowledge, the organization that is skilled in knowledge management efficiently and effectively manages knowledge which has been created. Thus, the knowledge management discipline takes the output from organizational learning, manages it and ensures that an appropriate environment to perpetuate the generation and management of knowledge assets is being properly maintained.

Knowledge creation in firms cannot only rely on technology and technical knowledge. Knowledge develops if the firm acts as a social community, and specific skills of orienting, communicating, translating, and diffusing "how to know;" are developed . These skills, in the form of visions, cognitive models, and idiosyncratic interpretations of
reality, are built up over time and they give a firm its own specific character and path of development (Turvani, 2001).

2.3 Knowledge management and business processes effectiveness

Knowledge management integrates processes, people, and technology to enhance the effectiveness of an organization's operational processes and competencies through learning. While knowledge assets are grounded in the experience and expertise of individuals, firms provide the physical, social, and resource allocation structure so that knowledge can be shaped into organizational competencies (Adams and Lamont, 2003). A firm's ability to act is based on its competencies, which in turn are based on the firm's knowledge base and the effectiveness of learning mechanisms that enable the generation of new competencies. Hence, a company's competencies are seen as a combination of all knowledge assets and cognitive processes that allow an organization to carry out its business processes. These competencies reflect the firm's ability to repeatedly perform a coordinated set of tasks which relates either directly or indirectly to a firm's capacity for creating value through effecting the transformation of inputs into outputs (Helfat and Peteraf, 2003).

Leonard-Barton (1992) observed that knowledge creation activities are essential for the generation as well as for the maintenance of competencies. New knowledge is created through learning mechanisms and knowledge management processes. This knowledge is then used to support the firm's activities, processes, and products acquired through learning, and include technological skills, complementary assets, as well as routines. Organizational competencies together with firm-specific organizational routines are the
result of an internal learning process and that organizational routines are the key building blocks under the concept of organizational competencies. When firm-specific assets are assembled in integrated clusters spanning individuals and groups so that they enable distinctive activities to be performed, these activities constitute organizational routines (Ulrich and Smallwood, 2004). Organizational routines are defined as behaviors that are learned, highly patterned, repetitious, or quasi-repetitious, founded in part in tacit knowledge, that characterize organizational reactions to variegated, internal and external stimuli (Winter, 2003). Hence, organizational competencies are defined as a collection of organizational routines that provide an organization's management with a set of decision options for producing significant outputs of a particular type. Therefore, these competencies represent the organizational activities geared towards the operational functioning of the firm (Zollo and Winter, 2002).

Organizational competences also condition the way activities fit and reinforce one another, which in turn sustain the operational effectiveness. As they are built internally through complex social and learning processes, organizational competencies are causally ambiguous (King and Zeithaml, 2001). As a result, they are difficult to trade or imitate, scarce, valuable, and non-substitutable. These characteristics make them the source of sustainable competitive advantage, and thereby the basis of "long-term profitability" and "above-average performance in the long run" In fact, organizational competencies, when leveraged into products and services, generate value and abnormal profitability and impact consequently the overall firm performance (Rouse and Daellenbach, 2002; Acquaah, 2003).
2.3.1 Concept of dynamic capabilities

According to Teece et al (1997), the concept of "dynamic capabilities;" has recently emerged in the strategic management literature to denote "the firm's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to address rapidly changing environments". A dynamic capability is a learned and stable pattern of collective activity through which the organization systematically generates and modifies its operating routines in pursuit of improved effectiveness. Building dynamic capabilities relates especially to the environmental and technological sensing apparatus that the firm has established the choice of organizational form, and the ability to strategize (Zott, 2003).

Dynamic capabilities are developed through learning mechanisms, which continually shape the firm's organizational competencies. As was further noted by (Zahra and George, 2002), dynamic capabilities allow a firm to assimilate new knowledge from their business environment, and configure their knowledge sets, operating routines, and organizational competencies to meet the new market needs.

Effective patterns of dynamic capabilities vary with market dynamics (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000). In moderately dynamic markets, dynamic capabilities resemble to traditional conception of routines as they are complicated, detailed, analytic, and linear. However, in high-velocity markets, dynamic capabilities are simple, experiential, unstable, and iterative. Dynamic capabilities are especially relevant in a Schumpeterian world of innovation-based competition, price-performance competitive advantage, rivalry, increasing returns, and the "creative destruction;" of existing competencies (Teece et al., 1997) in dynamic capabilities shape markets, as markets shape firms. Put
simply, dynamic capabilities enable the co-evolution of firms and markets (Chandler, 1990).

However, in recent years the idea of analysing firm's competitive advantage from an intra-organizational perspective according to its own capabilities has made the targeting of business strategies easier (Ray et al, 2004). It is likely that this model presents a more solid basis for analysis a firm competitive advantage than one entirely based on the need of the company to meet the demands of a given economic activity.

This intra-organizational focus began to gain general acceptance towards the end of the 1980s and was fully taken on board by firms in the 1990s. It involved a switch towards an introspective search for the origin of and an explanation for competitive advantage. From the perspective of a resource based theory, the firm is regarded as a unit; a single, organized group of heterogeneous assets that is created, developed, renewed, evolved and improved with the passage of time. The acceptance of the concept of the firm as a unit of resources and capabilities has prompted interest in identifying the nature of these varying resources and in evaluating their potential for generating profits.

This heterogeneity in the firm's assets appears as the central factor in explaining varying performance between one firm and another. For this reason, the RBV gives special attention to studying the factors that cause these differences to persist (Barney, 2001). It does not, however, analyse their causes or the process which determines them; increasingly essential aspects of analysis in a dynamic context. The diverse nature of resources is an essential element in the development of economic activity and also plays a key role in the evolution of technology and organizational structures. In this way,
Dynamic capabilities are formed as a subgroup of the firm's capabilities, allowing the creation of new products and processes, permitting the company to respond to changing external conditions. In this sense, dynamic capabilities lead the company to achieve a complex fit between activities that exploit their resources to the full and capabilities that assure good short-term results. At the same time, enough resources must be designated to the task of exploration (innovation) that ensures the development of the necessary resources for future strategies and the capacity to adapt to changing external conditions. In short, these exploratory activities should generate assets which guarantee the organization's future viability (March, 1991).
3.1 Introduction

The chapter describes the research design, the target population, sampling design, data collection instruments and procedures, and the techniques for data analysis that was used in the study.

3.2 Research Design

The study was modeled on a case study design. Kothari (1990) defines a case study as a powerful form of qualitative analysis and involves careful and complete observation of a social unit be it a person, family, cultural group or an entire community and/or institution. The study focused on knowledge management as a competitive advantage tool in motor vehicle service industry, a case study of Kingsway tyres. The results are expected to provide an insight in understanding how the organisation uses knowledge management as a strategic tool. The researcher held in-depth interviews with members of the management team who were considered as the key informants for the research.

3.3 Data Collection

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a face to face interview by the researcher. An interview guide was used to collect data on knowledge management practices used as a strategic tool in the organisation. The respondents consisted of 6 members of management team. These respondents were
involved in the management of the company and others were involved in the day to day running of the company. The Board is involved in overseeing the implementation of policy issues while the management team comprised of the Manager, Deputy Manager and all the departmental directors. Secondary data was collected from organization's documents such as annual reports, strategic plan and end term evaluation.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data collected was qualitatively analyzed by use of content analysis techniques. The information was analyzed and evaluated to determine their usefulness, consistency, credibility and adequacy. The content analysis technique was used because it assists in making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specific messages and then relating them with their occurrence trends. Kandie (2001) and Njuguna (2009) used this technique of content analysis to analyze data collected from a case study.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The research objective was to establish how Kingsway Tyres uses knowledge management as a strategic tool and also determine the challenges that its faces in using knowledge management as a strategic tool. This chapter presents the analysis and findings with regard to the objective and discussion of the same.

4.2 Respondents Profile

The respondents comprised the top management of Kingsway Tyres. In total, the researcher interviewed five respondents that had been intended to be interview in the research design. Two of the respondents were not available during the interview period with one of them having gotten a new job while the other one earmarked for the interview had been transferred to the organisation branch in Mombasa. As a result the response rate was around 71%. The respondents comprised two senior staff members from the human resource department, one from the sales department, one from the operations department and a director engaged with the formulation and implementation of the firms' policies. Three of the respondents had university degrees while the other two had risen through the ranks in the organisation by virtue of the experience gained in the organisation. All the respondents, representing 100%, had worked in the organisation for over six and the two respondents from the HR department had prior to joining the firm worked with other organizations. With their solid background in the affairs of the organisation, the
respondents were found to be knowledgeable on the subject matter of the research and thus help in the realization of the research objective.

4.3 The extent of Knowledge Management at Kingsway Tyres

The set of question under this area of the interview guide were tailored in establishing whether the firm has a knowledge management process in place and if indeed the organisation has the same then how is the process undertaken.

The respondents were unanimous that until only four years ago, the firm did not have in place and elaborate mechanism of managing this intangible asset-knowledge. The firm was until then the major player of selling tyres of different manufacturers as well as undertaking the high technology repairs and maintenance. The major clients were corporate bodies and multinational organizations and thus felt that their market was secure. However, the competitive business environment took a turn more recently when the organisation, lost some key employees to competitors that offered the same service and plied the same trade. With the loss of this critical group, the organisation found it challenging to maintain the service level because the new employees did not have the competency and more so did not have reference point to pick from. As a result, three respondents noted that organisation took a deliberate move to put in place a mechanism of generating and storing new knowledge and finally putting in place system of sharing the same within the organisation.

Four of the respondents, observed that the introduction of KM in the firm involved the construction of knowledge within the organisation which involved both scientific and
They highlighted that the scientific process involved the creation of a software and incorporated the input of the IT and HR specialist in the organisation and also some consultants that were contracted to come and aid in the development of the system. The developed knowledge was then embodied within the organisation through both explicit programs developed and through social interchange. Three of the respondents noted that after the incorporation of the same KM in the organisation, the knowledge was espoused throughout the organisation and its environments. Here the emphasis is on connectivity, access and transfer, and technologies such as video conferencing systems, document scanning and sharing tools and telecommunications networks between branches. From this process, the respondents acknowledged that KM has become useful economically to the organisation in form of increased outputs.

The respondents also noted that the development of KM in the firm involved much time and dedication on the part of the managers in the firm. The all process required intensive consultation and tailoring the same KM to the mission and vision of the organisation. The respondents observed that the organisation objective in introducing KM was to leverage implicit knowledge and at the same time retaining knowledge of employees as they exit the organisation. The other challenge that the organisation had to answer was the extent of the level to which the same KM could be implemented. The firm had three levels of employee hierarchy namely; senior managers, middle level managers and the subordinate staff. With this categorization, the firm agreed that the KM process was to be restricted to only the top and middle level management.
Development of an effective KM on its own in an organisation is not adequate enough. The respondents observed that organizational roles were and still needed to support KM. The firm also specified the core competencies that were needed to acquire. The commitment of top management and contribution of experts was also enlisted. They noted that success with improved knowledge access will not be achieved without addressing organizational norms and values and confrontation of the relationship between knowledge and power. Asked on the attitude of top management in relation to KM in the organisation, there was an overall impression that top management has a positive attitude as it sees knowledge management as very important and provides full support.

4.4 Effect of Knowledge Management on Kingsway Tyres Performance

This set of questions sought to find out the extent at which Knowledge management can be used to give feedback on performance of the organization.

The respondents on this particular research did indicate that the organisation has achieved several changes as a result of the adoption of the KM practices in the firm. They indicated that, the prestige of partners in service firms, their tacit knowledge gained through experience, and their social capital can be helpful in the implementation of their firm's strategy. As a result of this, the availability of this knowledge readily in the firm was recognized to go a long way in the development of strategies and also its implementation. Employees in the firm that are engaged in the formulation and implementation of strategies are specialized and are limited. As a result the knowledge they are privy with; gained through experience in the firm or other organisation will be quite invaluable. Hence the recognition of the firm that they can loose the same knowledge through natural attrition or movement of employees to other greener pastures.
necessitated the development and implementation of KM. The firm has thus with the implementation of the KM improved its process of strategy development and implementation and also quality thereof.

In addition with the adoption of KM by the organisation, the respondents noted that the organizations ability to act has been enhanced due to the increased competency of the employees. The increased competency in the firm was attributed to the increased knowledge base of the employees and the effectiveness of learning mechanisms that enable the generation of new competencies in the firm. One of the respondents explained rightfully that combination of all knowledge assets and cognitive processes has allowed the organisation to carry out its business processes. These increased competencies of the firm as a result of the improved KM, is reflected by the firm's ability to repeatedly perform a coordinated set of tasks that create value.

4.5 Challenges facing Implementation of KM at Kingsway Tyres

This part of the interview guide wished to determine the implementation gaps of KM. The implementation of KM practices at Kingsway Tyres has not been free from challenges. There were fundamental challenges that faced the firm and originated from lower degrees of fitness between the organizations knowledge management activities and the external as well as the internal environments confronting the enterprise. The results of the study show that the major external environment factors affecting the enterprises, as enumerated by 4 of the respondents included cost, quality of the product, time and flexibility, all of which are used for enhancing the competitiveness of an enterprise.
The role for top managers in implementing knowledge management is to review the internal and external environments of the enterprise in order to understand its strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats in conducting knowledge management activities. However, the research found out that in the case of Kingsway Tyres, the managers in some case implemented some KM strategies that were not the one suitable in the circumstance. One of the respondent noted that top managers should understand whether or not an enterprise can rely on itself to create specific types of knowledge that are components of core knowledge and if not if determine whether there will be need to enter into some form of alliances or joint ventures. Four of the respondents, representing 80% of the population, noted that the perceptions of top managers about the competitiveness that can be acquired from knowledge management may be too optimistic or too pessimistic to formulate a suitable goal for the knowledge management system. Hence as was noted, the knowledge required by the organisation to improve its competitiveness could differ with the KM strategy actually being implemented by the organisation.

External analysis is crucial from the strategic aspect of knowledge management, because it ensures that the enterprise can appropriately implement the knowledge management program to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. In this process, the weaknesses in competitors must be exploited and their strengths must be bypassed or neutralized. With this in mind, the respondents noted that the critical task of top managers is to identify the core knowledge which is necessary to achieve and maintain competitive
advantages. However, 60% of the respondents observed that the organization lacked a clear goal and blueprint of what the added value that can be fostered from the knowledge management system. With this challenge, the respondents noted that the organization was not able to launch its knowledge management system in for the organization to successfully implement the knowledge management programs. To counter this challenge, the respondents concluded that an organization conducts a complete self-diagnosis to help top managers thoroughly realize what knowledge the enterprise needs to sustain competitive advantages.

Although top managers recognize the need for the acquisition of knowledge, 2 respondents observed that some of the managers were not able to define the knowledge clearly due to their inability to effectively describe what they need. These managers were unable to perceive the knowledge that the enterprise needs to convey concretely into the implementation plan for the knowledge management system. This resulted in a misfit between the perception of the top managers and the enactment of the plan for the knowledge management system.

Another challenge that was noted by the respondents that affected the KM implementation at Kingsway Tyres was the lack of a comprehensive plan to define the steps needed to implement the KM system. Employees' were unwilling to share their own knowledge or their inability to understand exactly what knowledge management system will create. In the case of the organization the plan failed to include time frames, people involved, and resources required. The respondents thus noted that the firm needs to formulate an appropriate and full knowledge management plan which can holistically
integrate the knowledge capabilities of all departments to create value for the organization. At the same time, information technology acts as a supporting tool to provide a friendly environment to standardize and store the knowledge, as well as to do the communication for the knowledge between employees or different parties. Furthermore, knowledge management plans should also include the design of the business's workflow and its functions. The respondents recommended that before an enterprise decides to introduce a knowledge management system, it should provide a reasonable and comprehensive plan for the entire organization. However, in the case of Kingsway Tyres, the respondents unanimously agreed that there existed some discrepancies because employees did not fully understand what the knowledge management system is and were afraid that their personal value might be negatively affected after sharing their knowledge.

The introduction of change in an organization in most cases than not resisted by employees. When the KM process was introduced by Kingsway Tyres, several employees especially in the lower cadre were reluctant to share their knowledge and more so participate fully in the process. As a result, the respondents observed that when implementing knowledge management, the top managers must keep in mind that change is often not accepted, and it will take time before these changes become effective. During this period of change when implementation occurs, top managers must not be discouraged by the employees' unwillingness to accept this new culture. Thus before implementing KM, four of the respondents agreed that a plan for the knowledge management system needs to exploit all implementation issues based on the knowledge gained.
Effective implementation of knowledge management strategies includes a clear definition of what knowledge needs to be achieved and what motivations must be created. Two of the respondents noted that in the case of Kingsway Tyres, the organization did have a complete measurement system to evaluate whether the knowledge gained will enable the enterprise to enhance their competitiveness after the implementation of knowledge management activities. The measurement process will consist of identifying and recognizing value-adding processors and resources, assessing and comparing the execution of knowledge management activities, and evaluating the impact of an organization's knowledge management conducted based on bottom-line performance, which must have taken place to completely understand the present position of the firm.

Another challenge that the organization faced in its implementation of KM process was the existence of a gap between perceptions of top managers and that of employees due to the difference of position, role, and professional knowledge. Creating new knowledge is a common responsibility for each department or group of experts in a knowledge-creating company. Managers at all levels and frontline employees must also share this responsibility. The respondents found out that the perceptions of what type of knowledge employees will be different and depend on their positions and roles. Therefore, to match the perceptions of all employees in different positions, the goals and the plan that are committed by all levels of employees for the knowledge management system became a challenging issue. To mitigate against this challenge, 80% of the respondents suggested that the organization needs to provide training and leverage the resources for the employees.
Perhaps the most prominent challenge that was witnessed by the organization was the reluctance of the employees to share the existing knowledge in the organization. Some members of staff refused to participate in the implementation of knowledge management system. They argued that they had spend much time to accumulate their personal knowledge for enhancing their performance in the organization, and thus the organization should foster an atmosphere that emphasizes sharing knowledge and innovation explicitly. The respondents acknowledged that, knowledge workers usually do not want to share their intellectual assets with others, and the competition between knowledge workers often hinders sharing the knowledge. The power of knowledge comes from what workers know, and strong incentives promote sharing knowledge. As a result, they argued that if they share the same knowledge, they might be uncompetitive in the organization and hence there will be reluctance to sharing the knowledge to enhance the enterprise's competitiveness.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 SUMMARY

The results centered on determining the extent to which Knowledge management was being utilized as a competitive tool at Kingsway Tyres and also identifying the challenges that the organization faced while implementing the same strategy.

The results of the finding were that the Kingsway Tyres had incorporated knowledge management in its management process. This was evident from the level of internet, intranet, training, free interaction among employees and access to knowledge system as well as incorporation of knowledge communities and management support of knowledge creation, sharing, and storage. This means that Kingsway Tyres has strategically utilized knowledge management for their prosperity. For effective knowledge management system in the organization, the company needs to create a good culture at all management levels by ensuring that all employees are equipped with the right knowledge as well as being ready to share the same with other staff members. The development and implementation of knowledge management need to be driven by the top managers who appreciate that knowledge is a key resource.

Knowledge management to Kingsway Tyres has been a strategic tool. The company has been able to utilize Knowledge to create customer focus strategy where the various sales people in the branches have been able to share common knowledge between them to
develop customer strategy; it has enhanced innovation in the company through a much faster cycle of developing the products and services; employees growth and development; faster and better decision making; faster response to key business issues and generally improved service quality. All the above has helped the organization in improving its competitiveness and being able to strategically react to the changes in the business environment.

However, the implementation and operation of knowledge management in the organization has not been free of challenges. Several gaps were noted at Kingsway Tyres which included: a lack of congruence between the knowledge required to enhance the competitiveness of the company as perceived by top managers and the knowledge actually required to enhance its competitiveness; management inability to identify the correct knowledge required to enhance an enterprise's competitiveness and the difference in the plan to implement knowledge management; the difference between the plan to implement knowledge management as proposed by top managers and the implementation progress of the knowledge management plan; between the knowledge obtained after implementing the knowledge management system and the knowledge required to enhance an enterprise's competitiveness; the gap between the knowledge required to enhance an enterprise's competitiveness as perceived by the top managers and by other employees; the knowledge required to enhance an enterprise's competitiveness as perceived by the employees and the knowledge actually obtained after implementing the knowledge management system.
5.2 CONCLUSION

Knowledge is a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that is created by social interactions among individuals and organizations depending on a particular time and location. It is further accepted that knowledge comes from the meaningfully organized accumulation of information (messages) through experience, communication, or inference. This means therefore that in order to facilitate the accumulation process, enterprises should reform their culture and reward systems so that employees are encouraged and willing to share their experience and knowledge with others as they meanwhile accumulate their knowledge as an organizational asset. In addition, while knowledge assets are grounded in the experience and expertise of individuals, firms provide the physical, social, and resource allocation structure so that knowledge can be shaped into organizational competencies.

Knowledge assets of a company form an important strategic role to create value and improve business performance. The competitive advantage of companies in today's economy stems not from market position, but from difficult to replicate knowledge assets and the manner in which they are deployed. It is argued that business performance equates to value generated for the key stakeholders of an organization. The generated value is the result of an organization's ability to manage its business processes and, on the other hand, the effectiveness and efficiency of performing organizational processes based on organizational competencies. Management of knowledge assets enables an organization to grow and develop the appropriate organizational competencies. Therefore, the fact that organizational competencies are based on the effective and
efficient management of knowledge assets puts it at the heart of business performance and value creation.

Similarly, the effectiveness of knowledge asset management provides firms with an ability to constantly reconfigure, accumulate, and dispose of knowledge resources to meet the demands of a shifting market. Towards this end, knowledge management has emerged as an important process to leverage the organizational performance. While organizational learning generates new knowledge, the organization that is skilled in knowledge management efficiently and effectively manages knowledge which has been created.

However, while implementing, knowledge management in an organisation, the managers need to be aware of the challenges that might delay or affect the implementation of the same process. They need to consider what value the knowledge will generate, determine how the firm can exploit the special characteristic of knowledge to obtain a niche in the market, establish how the firm can avoid being imitated by other firms and also establish how the firm can organize the exploitation of resources in order to implement knowledge management.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

The study was able to clearly demonstrate the need to have organizations understand the concept of knowledge management to appropriately harness and leverage on knowledge assets to attain competitive advantage.
There is a great deal of competitive advantage that can be harnessed from knowledge management assets. In so doing, organizations' have to implement appropriate process of implementing knowledge management strategies in order to ably face the challenges from the uncertain business environment. As part of the organisation strategy, implementation of the appropriate structure would propel an organisation towards success. At the same time, implementation of knowledge management in any organisation should be backed by the support of the organizations top management. The organizations and staff level of awareness of knowledge management is critical to the success of the implementing the same in an organisation.

5.4 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research could be carried out in this area to determine the impact of implementation of knowledge management structures on the organisation performance, the market and its impact on the knowledge economy. Further, a research to measure the relationship between training and knowledge utilization by employees need to be undertaken.

5.5 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Despite the research having met its objectives, there were challenges that were experienced by the researcher. The respondents did not have enough time to answer the questions and thus led to the delay in receiving the same. This therefore might have comprised on the quality of the response from the researcher. Since this researcher was a
case study, perhaps a survey of more firms in different industries should be undertaken to get a much representative results of the effect of knowledge management practices to a firm's competitive advantage.
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APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Goal of the interview process

To establish how Kingsway Tyres uses Knowledge management as a competitive tool and also determine the nature of challenges that Kingsway Tyres faces in the use of knowledge management as a competitive tool.

Interview Questions

The following sections provide sample questions to be used in evaluating knowledge management as a competitive tool by Kingsway Tyres.

Respondent Background Review

• What is the highest level of education you have received?
• How long have you worked in this organization?
• What do/did you like best about the position/s you have held?
• What do/did you like least?

Knowledge Management as a competitive tool

1. Where is the value of knowledge in the firm?
2. How does the firm develop and exploit the special characteristics of knowledge and find a niche to obtain greater competitiveness?
3. How does the firm avoid being imitated by other firms of its special characteristics of knowledge management?
4. How does the firm organize the exploitation of resources in order to implement knowledge management?
5. What are the organisation strengths as knowledge is concerned?
6. What is the organisation weakness as knowledge is concerned?
7. What are the organisation opportunities resulting from the nature of knowledge management?

8. What approaches does the business have in instituting knowledge management?

9. What drives you to conduct business the way you do as far as management of knowledge is concerned?

10. Why should the firm be committed to perpetuating the status quo of the management of knowledge?

11. What is the vision of the organisation in the development and maintenance of knowledge management?

12. What are some of the external factors you consider before and during implementation of the knowledge management system?

**Challenges facing the implementation of the KM tool**

13. Are there some technological changes which have affected the operations of your firm on adoption of the KM?

14. Owing to technological adoption, has there been improvement in business performance?

15. What is the extent of the degree of fitness between the organization's KM and external as well as internal environments confronting the firm?

16. What gap exists between the knowledge required to enhance an enterprise's competitiveness as perceived by top managers and the plan to implement knowledge management?

17. What challenges is the firm facing in implementing knowledge management as proposed by top managers and the implementation progress of the knowledge management plan?

18. While implementing the knowledge management program has the results obtained after implementing the knowledge management system and the knowledge required to enhance an enterprise's competitiveness been achieved?