



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN
SMALL TO MEDIUM MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN BINDURA,
ZIMBABWE**

MSc. THESIS

FADZAI SALOME PIRORO

NICOSIA

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July 2022


Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Fadzai Salome Piroro titled **Knowledge management and employee commitment in small to medium manufacturing companies in Bindura , Zimbabwe** and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Educational Sciences.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that all the information, documents, analysis, and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of the Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

FADZAI SALOME PIRORO

01/07/22

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Firstly, I would like to thank God for giving me the strength of pursuing this research and I am grateful for his love and mercy upon my life. I want to also give my utmost gratitude to my supervisor who has greatly encouraged me and been like a mother figure away from home, for her patience and resilience towards me Prof. Dr Serife Eyupoglu. Finally, I want to thank my family for giving me hope and encouraging me by cheering me on during this entire study.

Abstract

Knowledge management and employee commitment in small to medium manufacturing companies in Bindura , Zimbabwe.

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The quantification and analysis of Knowledge Management practices is not a very simple task, but passes through various complex ways of understanding the variations in the organizational behaviour and dynamic changes in organizational management. Knowledge is the latent for action based mostly upon knowledge, data, perceptions, instinct and skill it's the numerous association that joins along all the human, scientific and clerical resources accessible at the disposal of the organization, and resembles its constant endurance, performance and competitive advantage. This study evaluated knowledge management and employee commitment in small-medium manufacturing companies in Bindura Zimbabwe. This study was modelled using a descriptive survey research design where data was collected through questionnaire surveys in five selected companies. A sample of **102** respondents was picked to provide data for the study, where 2% turned down the questionnaires and **98%** were returned offering confidence to the study. Findings of the study indicated that the aggregate mean score for knowledge management was (average mean score= **3.07**), while for the relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment was (average mean score=**3.05**) and for employee commitment was (average mean score= **3.26**). This therefore implies that the scores were moderate, denoting a deficiency of enough information on the significance of knowledge management on employee commitment and organizational performance. There is therefore a need for more investment in knowledge management by manufacturing industries to increase their competitive advantage.

Key words: Knowledge management, knowledge, employee commitment

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List of Abbreviations

KM: Knowledge Management

EC: Employment Commitment

KAS: Knowledge Sharing

KAP: Knowledge Application

KAQ: Knowledge Acquisition

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The business environment has been changing rapidly over the years and knowledge management has turned out to be the foundation that organizations and companies based on in trying to develop in order to obtain a distinct competitive advantage. Knowledge refers to the blend of various important aspects, including intuition, experiences, insights, and a fair judgement that an individual possesses. Knowledge management is the process of capturing, sharing and using processed information to improve the operations of the business and enhance performance. Organizations usually have to make efforts to keep up with the high demands and needs of employees, customers and at times shareholders, therefore knowledge management has been a great tool that has been used to keep organizational performance abreast, especially under pressure. Organizations always put in place structures and strategies that aid development, retrenching, and internal reorganization (O'Dell and Hubert, 2011). The goal and main objective are that organizations have knowledge management embedded in their business systems and operations (Sandhawalia and Dalcher, 2011).

Meyer and Rowan (1977) discussed the concept of incorporating knowledge management in corporations and they pointed out that in order for employees to get proper knowledge, the organization should allow the employees to engage in activities that help them acquire knowledge continually. DeCarolis and Deeds (1999) defined knowledge as a resource that is rare and essential, difficult to duplicate that is used as a method to enhance an organization's competitiveness. That being said, organizations should make sure that when employees have been let off from the company, they do not leave with the knowledge that is rare and difficult to replicate. The business executives should have strategies in place and see to it that employees who possess certain expertise are retained in the organization especially when they retire. There should be strategies implemented in the organization that are readily available to convert individual knowledge into an organizational assets that can be easily used by other employees.

Riege (2005) alluded that if the application of knowledge is respected in an organization, business success and high competitive advantage will be maximized. Most companies are directing their attention to certain practices that enhance knowledge distribution. Another essential aspect that helps the decision-making process is the ability of an organization to align the correct employees with the right knowledge together with correct timing(O'Dell and Hubert 2011). The knowledge management programs facilitate the movement of knowledge management among employees. Wiig (1997) made the conclusion that the main aim of knowledge management is to ensure smooth operations and ensure that the assets of knowledge are used effectively. Knowledge management practices have great potential and thus should be adopted by organizations for greater benefit.

Employee commitment has been somewhat linked to job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Idua (2014) concluded that organizational commitment from the employees and the rate at which the employees are satisfied with their jobs have a great impact and effect on the company's performance. Mulabe (2013) noted that management practices motivate employees to increase their efforts at assigned tasks and have high impact on the commitment of employees and how they are satisfied with their jobs. Employees generally have a strong desire to remain a member of organization which brings forth organizational commitment, Meyer and Allen (1991).Mowday,Porter ,Steers (1979) alluded that people that are part of an organization usually gain a sense of belonging which results in them not leaving the organization abruptly. They were also convinced that employee commitment is a result of employees sharing the same values and beliefs and goals of the company. For the most part, employees get highly committed to an organization if there are certain costs that come with exiting the company at any point Becker (1960). That's where the theory of side bets was described which will be explained in detail later in detail in other chapters.

Affective, continuance and normative commitment are the main components as proposed by Meyer and Allen (1991). The whole idea of commitment was in relation to the connection that is between employees and the organization and this relationship is usually determined by the level or rate of turnover in an organization. The emotional attachment that employees may have called towards the organization is referred to as

affective commitment. When employees avoid exiting the organization it is continuance commitment. Normative commitment is when employees have no choice but to resume working in an organization.

Statement of the Problem

As an evolving subject, knowledge management is gradually getting vibrant to establishments in quest of enhancing their competence and competitive aptitudes (Davenport & Prusak, 1999). It is the acknowledgement of deficiency of organizational friendly culture and lack of worker-participation to corporate success particularly to organizations looking for improvement in their performances at a first impression motivated this study. There is a need to evaluate the contribution of key aspects of employee commitment, in this case looking at knowledge management. Another key issue surrounding Knowledge Management in countries like Zimbabwe revolves around the deficiency of literature and evidence on the importance and contribution of Knowledge Management and employee motivation on employee commitment. This also motivates the need to look into knowledge management and employee motivation in Zimbabwean manufacturing industries, using Bindura town as the study area.

Objectives of the study

1. Examining the importance of knowledge management in the manufacturing companies within Zimbabwe.
2. Investigating the effect of knowledge creation on employee commitment in manufacturing companies in Zimbabwe.
3. Understanding the relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment in manufacturing companies in Bindura Zimbabwe.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment in manufacturing companies in Bindura, Zimbabwe?
2. What is the importance of knowledge management in the manufacturing companies in Bindura, Zimbabwe?
3. What are the effects of knowledge creation on employee commitment in manufacturing companies in Zimbabwe?

Significance of the study

The study's worthiness cannot be overemphasized, given its ability to provide significant benefits to various groups of people and organizations. This study can be justifiable to manufacturing industries, industrial and corporate associations, policymakers as well as the intelligentsia.

Manufacturing industries.

The study findings could be of paramount significance to the manufacturing industries in Zimbabwe and across the globe, given that they will have a point of referencing for learning and improving their organizational performance. The output and productivity of these organizations might depend on organizational practices and the effectiveness of the knowledge management practices.

Policymakers

The inferences of the study might also be of great use to the policymakers in countries focusing on industrial growth as it may be vital to incorporate some of the requirements of these knowledge practices into industrial policies. All better practices should be backed up by best-supporting policies to ensure that industrial growth is significantly enhanced in both growing and developed economies.

Academia

Following the deficiency in research evidence over the significance of knowledge management, this study might also contribute immensely to the literature base; extending the availability of referral literature based on research evidence.

Definition of terms

Knowledge management

O'Del and Garrison (1998) described knowledge management and concluded that it should use various ways of gathering and understanding the uses of knowledge in order to gain value. Petrash (1996) pointed out that when people or individuals acquire knowledge at a certain time, they make the best decisions. Knowledge management is

also referred to the various processes and strategic ways that a company employs in an organization with the aim to generate and create knowledge that members can access and use effectively.

Knowledge

Gammelgaard and Ritter(2004) defined knowledge as a liquified mixture of consistent skills, and expertise that is highly useful in decision making contributes to the outcomes in the company.

Employee Commitment

A connection that exists between an organization and employees that causes the employees to stay in the organization and are less likely to abruptly exit the organization.

Limitations of the study

Given the global challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, the study has been limited by the global restrictions, reducing interaction between people, at the same time reducing the time for timely addressing all the needs for the research. However, the study could find some measures to ensure that the objectives are met in the face of challenges. Under, the set regulations, the protocols for prevention of disease spread were strictly adhered to.

Conclusion

This chapter introduced the concept of knowledge management in relation to employees' commitment and explained how these two variables affect each other and all looked into the problem statement that brings about the research components.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

This chapter is based on the variables discussed in the scope of my research. It will be greatly supported by relevant literature. The relationship between the two variables namely knowledge management and employee commitment is of great concern in this chapter in relation to reviewing relevant literature on each variable accordingly in order to validate the need for this study in Bindura on the manufacturing industrial sector. It is therefore imperative to note that the literature reviewed in this chapter is only related to the objectives and purposes of this study.

Knowledge Management

An organization or company's ability to employ proper knowledge management in their operations may not be a difficult and hard task but failure to acquire the proper tools and strategies makes it a tedious task that may result in the discontinuity of the entire organization. Knowledge has been defined a number of times by various personnel with the aim of the willingness to understand it and how it works. Awad and Ghaziri(2007) referred to knowledge as an understanding that is gained through either experience or study. They explained that it is related to the know-how and familiarity with how something is done that gives the enablement to perform an assigned task. Knowledge is outlined as a combination of values, framed expertise, and skilled insight that creates a framework for the exploitation of new experiences and even data (Davenport and Prusak 1998). These two raised questions regarding knowledge and derived that knowledge originates and is present in the mind of knowers. In essence, when human knowledge and know-how is put to effective use in a corporation, it becomes an essential tool for strategizing and also gaining a competitive advantage (Alavi and Leidner , 2001 ,Carneiro 2000). Hall and Adriani (2002) concluded that knowledge management is a managerial function that identifies important data and converts the data into essential information which is relevant to the formulation and implementation of the most important decisions.

Certain organizational actions and methods are said to have been compromised by the failure to handle knowledge management and acknowledge, share and leverage the data needed to survive and possess a wonderful competitive advantage (Pena 2002, Hall and Adrian 2002, Lepak and Snell 1999). Frost (2014) argued that identifying the right employees at the right and most appropriate time is the meaning of knowledge management in his ideology. Drucker (1995) alluded that knowledge management is an essential organizational resource and the main source of competitive advantage. Quite a range of individuals have dominated that organizations will improve the event and creation of freshly established innovative concepts through the correct management of information and by efficiently managing the current intellects, which might be enforced by ceaselessly obtaining, sharing, and applying data with the data among the organization. Gold et al,(2001) came up with the idea that identified knowledge management as a structural combination for managing knowledge management with effectiveness and efficiency.

Regardless of the arguments by Alavi and Leidner (2001) that stated that knowledge management is in stages and it involves stages such as storage, usage, knowledge creation and sharing. Knowledge management is therefore about utilizing knowledge at hand by encouraging innovative ideas which result in the enhancement of performance in an organization. Numerous students have noted that identifying, acquiring, storing, retrieving, sharing, creating and applying of knowledge are some of the dimensions of knowledge management (Liao and Wu 2009, Wang and Ahmed, 2004 etc.)

Wang and Ahmed (2004) in their research came up with the notion that knowledge management consists of organizational memory, knowledge systems, a learning culture and knowledge benchmarking but in this study, acquiring, converting and applying knowledge were identified as fit and so were used as dimensions of knowledge management (Liao and Wu 2009). The process of acquiring knowledge is a procedure that secures knowledge. Huber (1991) described knowledge acquisition as a process by which knowledge is obtained. Kraai Jenbrint et al (2006) pointed out that knowledge originates from a particular source of an organization through physical objects, people, written information, courses and outsourcing. The process of converting knowledge involves transforming generated knowledge into forms that can

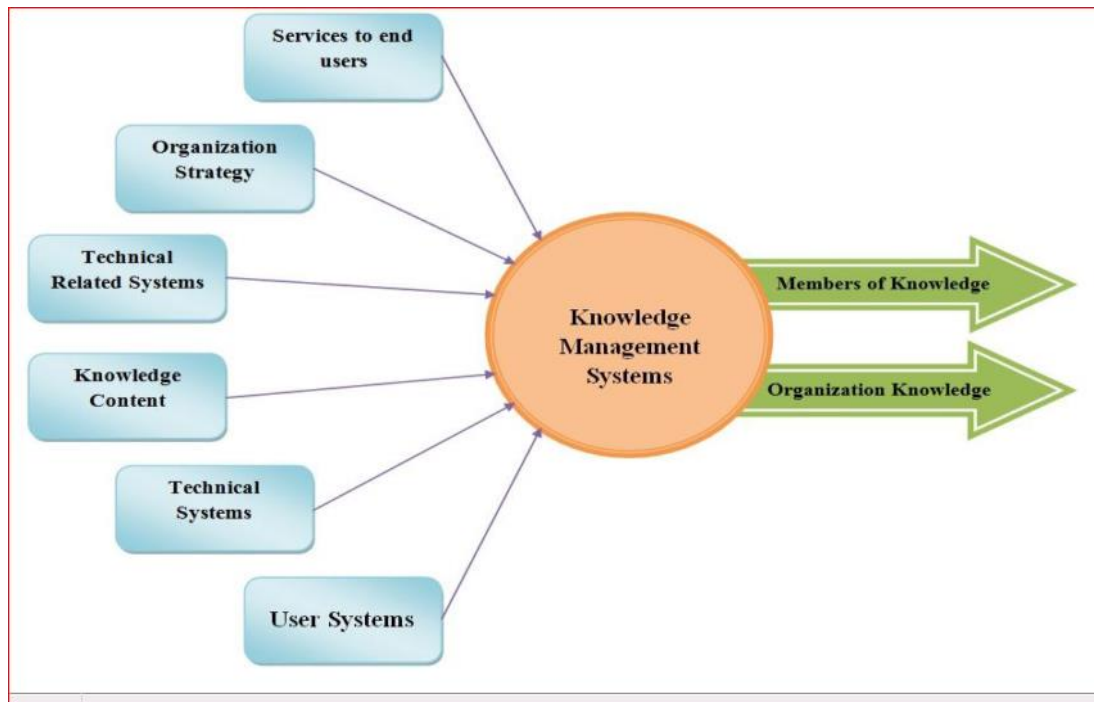
easily be accessible and that can be applied in certain settings (Davernport and Prusak 1998). It was also defined as the capturing, expressing and storing of knowledge by Nevo et al (2007). Knowledge application is referred to the steps that are geared towards a correct usage of the knowledge obtained (Gold et al, 2001). Saisuthanawit, Wayuparb and Burunajarokorn (2013) reported that knowledge application refers to the ability of an individual to learn from other people in an organization.

Models of knowledge management systems

Models of knowledge management systems are models that are used by companies and organisations to assist them with the skills and expertise needed in order to succeed and be above the competition and survive in their business operations. The various models include the general model of a knowledge management system which suggests a basic structure of knowledge in manufacturing and service industries Debowksi (2006). At a glance, this model explains that knowledge management systems are a result of organizational strategy and therefore assist the conversion of these strategies into organizational knowledge. Users add their knowledge to the system versus the advantages brought about by the system and thus enriching their knowledge in the process. Furthermore, the system is informative and makes available the prospect of knowledge-making which is important for users. Fig 2.1 shows that there is a relation between knowledge management and organizational strategy. This clearly means that an organization's knowledge management systems are supposed to be directly connected to the culture of an organization in order to maximize the contribution that this has to the organizational competitive advantage and performance.

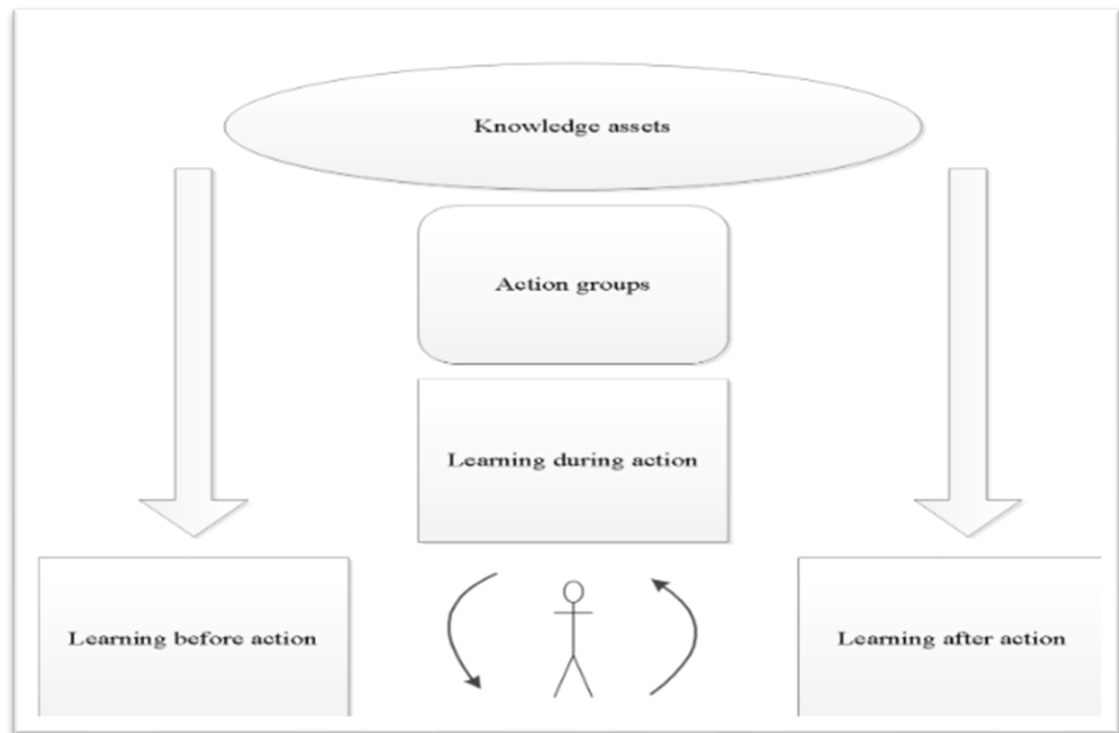
Figure 2.1

General Structure of the Knowledge Management Systems. (Source: Debowski, 2006)



Another model of management would be the model of Milton knowledge management which was made based on two complementary attitudes that people might have towards knowledge management in the organization which are connecting and collecting values derived from knowledge (Arvin , Akbari and Maghimnejah 2004). According to this model, connecting is defined as the connection of personnel one to another and making communities that have the ability to learn to share their acquired knowledge. Perfect examples would be email and face to face informational group types that clearly describe this narrative. The concept of a team assists and helps as a method of encouraging interaction of groups and sharing of knowledge in a work setting environment and is highly probable to be beneficial (Arvin ,Akbari and Moghimnijad 2004). Collection is a method that brings about a valuable knowledge criteria and involves most company operations and obtains the ability of acquiring long term efficiency.

Figure 2.2

Model of Milton Knowledge Management

Milton's model gives clarity on three certain aspects which are learning before action, learning during action and learning after action. Based on Milton, the assets of knowledge are highly reliable knowledge that has been stored and saved for use in the future. Learning before action results in increased levels of confidence in creating a project based on knowledge and awareness (Arvin, Akbari 2004). Learning during action based on action teams results in the sharing of knowledge between people who do similar activities and perform better at their assigned tasks. Learning after actions assists in the gathering of knowledge for future use.

Employee Commitment

The level of employee commitment to the business is a significant issue that contributes to the overall performance of human resources and the general success of organizations. Therefore, it is quite significant to view employee commitment in manufacturing industries in relation to the goals of the organizations and how they handle their knowledge management processes. Dunham et al (1994) stated that the task that employees have and the way they relate with the administration of the organization has been seen as a motivator to keep employees keen to archive the goals of the organization. Considering the acceptable notion by companies, a committed employee does not have to be pushed in order to complete tasks and usually requires minimum supervision and is usually displayed to be of great value to the organization together with effectiveness and efficiency in their assigned work. Richards (2004) defined employee commitment as the willingness that workers have to fulfill the aims and objectives of the company.

Mullens 2010 described employee commitment as a list of values that a worker should possess in order to prove their commitment which includes loyalty, high involvement in company operations, and trust in the organization. Mullins (2010) came up with a concept in regards to employee commitment where he viewed commitment to be a two-way thing and the company must clearly state their expectations from employees for them to fully understand the company objectives. Therefore it is not only the commitment of the employees to the organization that is vital but that of the organization to the employees as this is a great drive for employees in the organization to stay motivated and also get an emotional and behavioral reaction in return. There have been a lot of issues in organizations when a company intentionally decreases their level of commitment to their employees by retrenching, outsourcing or even downsizing with the goal to induce commitment among employees.

The three classes that have been put into theory by Meyer and Allen which are affective, normative, and continuance commitment are all connected to one basis which entails that an individual is stuck with an organization (Meyer, Vandenberghe and Becker 2004). In, the same light, companies, teams and managers are also various categories that can benefit greatly from the use of the theory of employee commitment(Meyer, Vandenberghe and Becker, 2004). Meyer, Irving and Allen,(1998) carried out

studies that highlighted the importance of hiring and induction procedures in its creation which in turn proves the linkage between employee commitment and positive experiences in an individual's career.

Categories of employee commitment

There are three categories of employee commitment as discussed in this literature which I will further expand in this particular section, namely affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The employees' actions and behavior are not solely dependent on one component but rather each element contributes to the commitment of the employees as a whole towards the company.

Affective Commitment. J.P.Meyer and N.J.Allen (1990) concluded that whenever employees in an organization possess a certain level of affection or are entangled emotionally towards an organization, to the extent that they recognize themselves as a big part of the organization and are excited to be a member. When an employee is affectionately committed to an organization, he /she will grow a positive emotional connection with tasks and activities that take place in the workplace. Another point to note would be the sense of belonging that can develop when they are affectionately committed to an organization. Employees will recognize themselves as part of the organization with gladness because they have a strong desire to continue working and giving their utmost best to the organization.

Continuance Commitment. H.S.Becker (1990) brought about the theory of the side bet, where certain employee investments or side bets would result in the organization incurring certain costs that will, in turn, dilute the willingness of externals employment choices and investments. The employees are attached to the benefits they receive in the company and therefore will not decide to leave the organization abruptly. N.J.Allen and J.P.Meyer (1990) also pointed out that most employees may have a desire to remain in an organization due to the effects of the psychological attachment that cohesively comes with continuance commitment and hence decide to stick to the organization in order to avoid costs and save the benefits that they would have accumulated.

These findings imply that the employee will remain disciplined if the advantages of deviating from the norm do not surpass the disadvantages from side bets incurred by and for the individual. The concept of continuance management was founded and expanded further theoretically to incorporate cohesiveness and control management. Members of a social group are most likely bound by the social aspect of cohesiveness. The assumption that the workers will adhere to rules and regulations and obey the group is derived from the authoritativeness of the aspect of control. The idea of employees' organizational commitment was derived from empirical research (Meyer and Allen 1991). The reason the employees may act consistently is actually the continuance concept as brought about by the two scholars (Beckers 1960 and Kanter 1968). In conclusion, employees will essentially remain in the organization if they have a strong and rigid ongoing commitment.

Normative commitment. D.M.Randall and M.P.Driscoll (1997) referred to normative commitment as; when workers are committed to an organization in a moral manner that usually comes in handy when the employees receive provision financially or morally to develop themselves. Wiener (1982) alluded to his theoretical findings initially when the idea of TCM was brought about and the normative aspect of TCM was based on his work. The aspect of employees actually feeling obligated to stay in the organization and not having a choice to leave the organization is well explained by this concept. It is clearly the result of actions taken before the time of employment service. Normative commitment can be highly enhanced by interaction processes as well as crediting efforts of employees in the organization from time to time. In a nutshell, the employees that obtain a strong normative commitment tend to remain in the organization for long because they feel they have to.

The relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment

Knowledge management highly influences employment commitment in an organization. The way a firm or organization is structured in terms of its knowledge management practices determines how the employees are committed to their work in the organization. The most successful organisations have an ongoing implemented knowledge management system in place usually which keeps the company abreast. Khoa and Hoa (2021) evaluated the relationship between the two, establishing a causal nexus. In their assessment, they measured the critical components of knowledge

management against the commitment of employees to sustain their stay in organizations. Figure 2.3 down below provides a conceptual framework for a closer look and analysis of the relation between knowledge management and employee commitment.

The process of knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation, storage, and application brings about an understanding of the entire concept and sheds more light on the subject as well as enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of this tool (Aujirapongpan et al). This model defines knowledge management as a constant process of creating, transferring, using and storing knowledge. The absorption of knowledge by which employees can get access to knowledge sources is defined as knowledge acquisition (He et al). The sources of information that will enhance employees' knowledge could be internal such as procedure and process instruction, documents and knowledge transfer from other workmates. External sources of information can sometimes be used which include the use of customer data, market data and competitor information.

The process of transforming knowledge aspects to make it useful to other people or a team in an organisation is called knowledge conversion. Normally knowledge can be designed and set up for certain users in order for them to use the information to meet their task objectives in their jobs. Gold et al(2001) highlighted that the conversion process of knowledge involves the expanding of knowledge, coordination, restructure and essentially the distribution of knowledge. He also implied that the use of information by employees in their day-to-day operations is the meaning of knowledge application where the decoded information is applied in certain aspects of work to solve and enhance the quality of work produced by employees. Razzaq et al(2019) alluded that the product of an organization fully utilizing knowledge application is them being able to innovate a new product or develop one which in turn will uplift the business with outstanding performance and hence fewer costs in production.

In the past, these two aspects, knowledge management, and employee commitment were treated independently and analyzed separately as unrelated fields. Thompson and Heron (2005, p.385) noted that practitioners are the ones who pointed out the significance of employee commitment to knowledge creation. Moreso, in this regard there has not been any development on these employees leaving the organization who

are the knowledge workers. Losing the knowledge workers according to these authors' theories affects the success of the company relationship, both theoretically and empirically. For starters, a company can retain its employees and get them to commit to the organization. Kinnear and Sutherland(2000), said the organization is at risk of losing a focused competitive advantage and tangible and intangible knowledge if there is a high rate of employees leaving the organization by knowledgeable workers.

Losing the knowledge workers according to these authors' theories affects the success of the company in the long run which means in the short term it affects the efficiency of the company. The way that employees in an organization behave towards knowledge management initiatives has a very direct relation to the level of feelings and attitudes that employees have to the company. This means that the willingness or unwillingness to distribute knowledge in the organization amongst other employees can be interrupted by the levels of commitment from employees.

In order for knowledge to be effectively passed through the organization, mainly tacit knowledge, the persons who are distributing the knowledge should have a certain attitude to the organization as highlighted by the authors. Storey and Quintas(2000) alluded that, in order to manage knowledge workers in an organization, there has to be an ongoing level of motivation and trust including employee commitment. Workers who are highly committed to an organization, have lower rates of turnover and are greatly motivated and usually go out of their way to complete tasks and normally will voluntarily share knowledge across the organization. Thompson and Heron(2005), concluded that for there to be knowledge created effectively, employees have to be highly committed to their organization since the essentiality of employees has been in the spotlight through creation and knowledge sharing.

The biggest influence on employees that drives them to want to distribute their knowledge has been disputed by McKenzie et al(2001) and Scarbrough and Carter(2000). Lin (2006) went on to conclude that employee commitment is vital to tacit knowledge sharing. On the other hand, Peltokorpi(2006) shared that knowledge sharing is a drive that comes or stems from organizational commitment. Moreover, Alvesson(2005) implied that the ability of organizations to successfully generate and distribute knowledge is connected to the highest levels of employee commitment in an

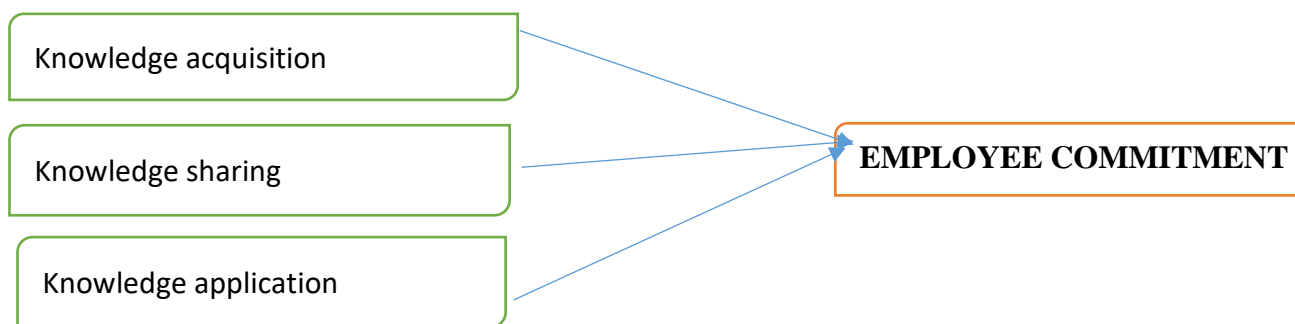
organisation. Dyer and McDonough(2001) concluded that the level of employee motivation and commitment determines the ultimate success or downfall of the systems used in knowledge management.

The implementation of the systems of knowledge management is succeeded by motivation and commitment, Malhorta and Galletta(2003). This means that the overall culture in an organisation should be developed in a way that knowledge is regarded as of paramount importance and is related to the motivation and level of commitment of an individual. These authors are of the notion that employees have to be involved and be willing to take part in the transformation of resources put in by an organisation into organisational performance in order for knowledge management systems to be effective.

Figure 2.3

Conceptualizing the Relationship Between Knowledge Management and Employee Commitment

Knowledge Management



Research Hypothesis

The study is crafted on the following research premise;

H1: There is a positive relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment in manufacturing industries.

H1a: Knowledge acquisition has a positive impact on employee commitment in manufacturing companies.

H1b: Knowledge sharing has a positive impact on employee commitment in manufacturing companies

H1c: Knowledge application has a positive impact on employee commitment in manufacturing companies

Empirical literature review

Robertson and Hammersley(2000) also carried out an extensive study of a certain number of consultancy firms and they concluded that employees that are highly committed to any organization are the most likely to want to share their work-based knowledge with other employees. Employees who individually choose to commit to an organization easily share useful information across the organization, Cabrera, Collins and Salgado (2006). These authors discovered that there is a strong effect of personal commitment on the levels of knowledge management sharing. Van Der Bij, Song and Weggeman (2003) noted that personnel in the organization that independently are highly committed to an organization will usually voluntarily want to share the knowledge they have obtained in their work.

Hoof and Ridder(2004) carried out research that investigated the relationship between knowledge sharing and employee commitment. These two authors alluded that employees' commitment and effective communication are two things that affect the positivity and negativity of knowledge being shared in an organization or amongst groups. Bontis and Fitz-enz(2002) stated that human capital development stems from the relationship that exists between employee motivation and commitment and employee satisfaction. Even the level of business performance that can be shown in an organization has been highly influenced by employee commitment and also the strength of generating new knowledge.

Villar, Alegre and Pla-Barber (2014) carried out studies with the aim of finding out the major role of knowledge management practices that were related to the export intensity on small to medium enterprises. An examination was carried out that brought clarity on the significance of knowledge management in manufacturing industries and the result highlighted the significant impact of knowledge management in a manufacturing organization. Nnabuike and Ojukwu (2015) carried out an examination of how knowledge management can be able to improve employee commitment in the banks in Awka Nigeria. The aim of the study was to determine whether there is a

critical connection between knowledge management and employee commitment. Moreover it inspected the degree to which acquisition of knowledge affected the performance of an organisation. This investigation utilized a descriptive design. Pearson's product-movement was utilized to investigate the knowledge. The findings of their studies uncovered that knowledge management was positively related to the commitment of employees of an organization. Wright et al (2001) who noted that set of predictor practices are better than singular ones. Wright and Snell alluded that a company has to possess and acquire certain skills and behaviors from their employees which are usually brought into play with the management team of leaders.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter discussed and reviewed the literature that is connected to knowledge management and employee commitment in organizations. It also highlighted and pointed out in detail the relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment after critically looking at each concept individually.

CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

This chapter is based on the research methodology of this study and it comprises of the research design, the population targeted, and the procedures that were carried out in collecting relevant data. This chapter basically illustrates the main course of this particular study. The specific variables will be discussed in greater detail in this chapter as well as different ways of analyzing data for the hypotheses tested in the scope of this study.

Research Design

This research study was modeled by the use of a descriptive survey as a method of research design. Cresswel (2009) defined research designs as tactical steps that can be taken while making inquiries and examining methods of data anthology. It has been concluded that descriptive research may have somewhat been used in the wrong way when defining three diverse scenarios, Best and Khan (2007). Describing and interpreting according to a given situation is what is referred to as descriptive research, Best (1982). When researchers conduct a particular survey to a certain group of people or to a specified sample in order for people to give out their opinions or describe certain characteristics, it's a procedure referred to as a survey research design. This method used in research design highlights how a certain variable reacts or even the relation that may be amongst two or even more variables. This research design is vital as it brings focus to challenges that come with the overall analysis and assessment of the variables in the entire study. Quantitative and qualitative data collection is made viable by a descriptive research design and therefore it is safe to use tools for the collection of data such as interviews and questionnaires which I also used in this study. The accuracy and exactness were a result of the design which assisted in observing the participants in their day -to -day living.

Sampling and sampling methods

This study targeted small to medium manufacturing companies in Bindura Zimbabwe to delimit the study, in the interests of resources and time. Springer (2010)

promulgated that, the examination that is carried out on a specific group of people is referred to as a study population. Small to medium enterprises are being used in this study because they dominate in the city of Bindura and Bindura being the city that has the main manufacturing companies just outside of the city is viable to use for my study. The major reason for this decision and choice of the selected firms, in particular, is the number of employees and their likeliness to have well-developed and fully functional knowledge management systems and practices. The whole and entire population frame was drawn from the Zimbabwe Association of Manufacturers, ZAM (2015). Their directory showed 15 companies in the manufacturing industry and 8 of them are classified as small to medium. In this study, 5 companies were considered and the other 3 companies were not qualified to be part of the study.

The categorisation of small to medium companies and industries in Zimbabwe as classified by Zimbabwe Revenue Authorities (ZIMRA) are businesses that employ 5-40 people with a revenue of \$50 000 to \$2million. The study population is described as a collection of people or entities, assumed to possess the exact beliefs in certain areas, Khan et al, 2013. When a set of people are being asked to give out samples that will be used for measurements in statistics, it basically defines population, Wilkinson (2012). Green and Carmone,(2011) described a research population as an entire group of members or subjects that possess similar characteristics pertaining to the relative study. . In this regard, the study focused on the employees of the targeted companies to draw inferences.

A total of five (5) small-to-medium manufacturing companies were selected to draw the study sample. A total of 400 non-managerial employees were selected from 5 companies and the sample was collected from these 400. The choice was done in order to congregate the research purpose and objectives defined in the first chapter. Sample refers to a subdivision of larger populations used where it is not feasible to include all populations (Prabhat and Pandey, 2015). According to Leedy and Ormond (2013), sufficient sample size is important for valid and reliable results. The following formula suggested by Kothari (2006) was therefore used to calculate the sample size;

$$n = \frac{n\epsilon}{1 + \frac{n\epsilon}{N}} \quad (1)$$

Where;

n = Sample size

$n\epsilon$ = Expected sample size (When population is below 10000)

N = Estimated total population

Therefore;

$$\Rightarrow n = \frac{138}{1 + \frac{138}{400}}$$

$$\Rightarrow n = \frac{138}{1 + 0.345}$$

$$\Rightarrow n = \frac{138}{0.345}$$

Sample size = 102 respondents

The study used stratified random sampling to select the respondents of this study from the five manufacturing companies which were used. The table below shows the sample strata.

Table 3.1

Sample Strata

FIRM	The total number of workers	The proportion of the target population	Sample selected from the firm
1	45	0.11	11 respondents
2	100	0.25	26 respondents
3	60	0.15	15 respondents
4	95	0.24	24 respondents
5	100	0.25	26 respondents
Total	400	1	102 respondents

As indicated in table 3.1, the sample was distributed based on the size of the company being involved in the survey. The size of the company in relation to the approximated target population in the small-to-medium manufacturing sector was used to determine the proportion of the sample size to be randomly picked from each company.

Data collection instruments

Kumar (2011) described the questionnaire as the assemblage of questions with the aim of acquiring answers relating to the study topic. A semi-structured questionnaire was used in the process of collecting the primary data and adopted from Cooper and Schindler (2006). The questionnaire was divided into four (4) major sections- general characteristics of the company and demographic statuses of respondents; KM practices in selected organizations, the impact of KM on organizational performance and the impact of KM on employee commitment. The questionnaire made use of five-step Likert scales to gather information on the variables. The questionnaire comprised of 6 questions on the first part about demographics and part B had 13 questions in total with 3 sections in relation to knowledge application, knowledge sharing and knowledge acquisition respectively. Part C had 20 questions and the questions were in relation with employee commitment.

The 4 sections in the questionnaire included part A to part D. Part A consisted of general basic information, to do with the demographics of respondents and the company in question. This part of the questionnaire helps to expand and expagorate the outcomes that do not align with the hypothesis. The remaining parts B, C and D concentrated on the variables of this entire study which are knowledge management, employee commitment and firm performance respectively. The questionnaire adopted the five-pointer Likert- type for clarity and easier analysis from 1= not at all, 2= little extent, 3=some extent, 4= large extent, 5=large extent. In this study, the researcher distributed the questionnaires and the respondents voluntarily filled the questionnaires without the researcher's assistance. The company's management approved the distribution of the questionnaire by the researcher before distribution was conducted.

Data collection procedures

According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), in order to improve the pace and rate at which participants respond and to attain the best quality of data, the questionnaire

should be distributed in person. The researcher set up a team 3 which assisted in the collection of data. The researcher emailed the respective companies before sending out the questionnaires by the research representative to each of these companies. A semi-structured questionnaire is one that was used to collect primary data as indicated earlier, through which the questionnaires were distributed randomly to the selected manufacturing companies in Bindura town.

For starters, this study was fully explained to the participants, including its purpose and thus asking for their input. To enhance the weight of my questionnaire, it was accompanied by the ethics approval from the Scientific Research Ethics Committee so that participants can respond comfortably and with the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. In-person visits, calls over the phone and text messages were used in order to follow up on some of the respondents, in turn, some chose not to participate in the study for various reasons such as busy workloads, and some had their hands tied due to company policies. Each questionnaire was given at most three trials before it was considered non-response or declined. 128 copies of the questionnaire were printed and distributed by the researchers face to face to each of these companies in a 45day period of time, from January 15 to 2 March. The questionnaires were then collected and data were collated and summarized to draw lessons and codes for analysis.

Reliability & Validity / Trustworthiness

Cooper and Schindler (2006) referred to reliability as the measurement that is characterised by how accurate and consistent tests can be, which doesn't necessarily mean the validity of the tests. When a concept is measured and it shows that it is stable and consistent it is regarded as reliable. Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the questionnaire and according to Pallet (2007), results between 0 to 1 which are above 0.6 will only be considered for this study as recommended. The adopted instrument had registered good validity in the previous studies, for instance, Wang and Ahmed (2004), and Liao and Wu (2009). Nevertheless, in this research, the reliability - and information validity were guaranteed by subjecting the instrument to scrutiny through a pilot study in the manufacturing industry where a few questionnaires were tested before the actual research.

Table 3.3

Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number
Knowledge management	0.61	13
Employee commitment	0.783	20

The table 3.3 illustrates a Cronbach's Alpha value of Knowledge management and employee commitment which is 0.61 and 0.783 respectively. From 13 items of knowledge management, and from 20 items of employee commitment it is more than 0.5 (50%) which is also above 60% according to Pallent (2007) which is accepted for both variables.

Data analysis

The analysis of data was carried out using descriptive statistics and these included mean scores, percentages and standard deviation, regression, and correlation analysis. The mean scores and standard deviation calculations were made with the aim of summarising the characteristics of the people who responded to the questionnaires and the manufacturing companies in question. The relationship between variables was tested using hypothesis and the nature and magnitude of the variables were also hypothetically tested. The regression analysis was used to test how the variables were significant to the study and the correlation was done to determine how closely related the variables were. Data were coded from the questionnaires and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 16 and Microsoft Excel statistical packages. Descriptive statistics were mostly used to evaluate the results of a descriptive survey that was conducted.

Conclusion

This chapter expanded and gave detail on the research methodology of the entire study, this included the data collection and analysis which will protrude into the next chapter where these findings will be analyzed.

CHAPTER IV

Research Findings

This chapter compiled the research findings for this study as highlighted in the research objectives. Based on the questionnaire survey that was conducted in the selected five small-to-medium companies, the chapter presents data in four main sections, the general demographics and company characteristics, and other indicated variables.

Questionnaire Response Rate

A total of 128 questionnaires were distributed and 100 were successfully returned. Data were collected from 15 January to 2 March 2022 which was a period of 45 days of data collection. 128 questionnaires were distributed and 104 copies were filled and returned and 4 questionnaires were incomplete so they were not used for this analysis. The sample used in my analysis was 100 which results in a 78.1% response rate. Despite any conclusive information on a successive response rate, Saunders et al (2007) pointed out that the response rate differs according to the particular questionnaire. Kuo(2011) analysed data with a response rate of 37.2 5 as well as Khadra and Rawabdeh (2006) got a 54.7 % in response rate at that time. This concludes that considering international standards my analysis is considered in this study is comparatively high at 78.1 % which makes it acceptable for use. The study could therefore rely on the findings after having confidence in the response rate for the questionnaires.

Demographic and Organizational Characteristics

The study looked into the demographic characteristics of the respondents as well as the attributes of the companies, including gender, experience, years of operation, as well as the ownership status of the organizations as illustrated in the table below.

Table 4.4

Demographics and Organizational Characteristics

	Description	Frequency	Percent	Number
Gender	Male	64	64	64
	Female	36	36	36
	Total	100	100	100
Work experience	0-2 years	8	8.0	8
	3-5 years	37	37.0	37
	6-8 years	26	26.0	26
	9-11 years	17	17.0	17
	12-14 years	7	7.0	7
	Above 15 years	5.0	5.0	5
	Total	100	100	100
Years of operation	0-5 years	14	14.0	14
	6-10 years	11	11.0	11
	11-15years	26	26.0	26
	21-25 years	24	24.0	24
	Above 25 years	25	25.0	25
	Total	100	100	100
Ownership	Public	14	14.0	14
	Private	86	86.0	86
	Total	100	100	100

Gender of Respondents

Males dominated the respondents drawn from selected companies with the proportion of women to men in the manufacturing industries indicating an unbalanced hiring status by manufacturing companies, where male workers seem to be highly preferred compared to women. Nevertheless, the purpose of looking for the gender of

respondents was to ensure that all groups were represented in avoidance of skewed responses favoring one gender and leaving out the other. As put across in table 4.1, females constituted 36% of the total responses that were successfully returned while 64% were male workers. This means that 36 were female and 64 were males.

Experience

To establish the authenticity of some information provided by the respondents, the study also looked into the number of years worked in the manufacturing organizations by the workers who supplied the information. Table 4.1 illustrates the work experiences by the respondents. The above information indicates that the majority of the respondents were between 3-11 years of experience in their respective organizations. 37% had at least 3-5 years of experience, 26% had 6-8 years of experience while 17% had 9-11 years of experience. It also clearly shows that 8% had acquired experience below 3 years with 5% having been exceeded 15 years serving their respective manufacturing organizations. About 7% had 12-15 years of experience.

Industry Type

The study also inquired about the type of industry, to which each organization belonged to. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the industry types for the organizations which were investigated. 11% of the respondents worked in the wood manufacturing industry, 26% were from building and mining, 14% came from pharmaceutical production, while metal engineering was represented by 24% and food and beverages had 25%. It is imperative to note that, these respondents came from similar companies as mentioned per each industry since the sample selected, was targeting only five companies that would belong to any one of the mentioned industry types.

Years of Operation

Given the similarity in the views of workers drawn from similar companies, the study found results similar to those of the industry type. Table 4.1 illustrates the responses on the years of operation. The study discovered that one of the companies had fallen between 0-5 years of operation as supported by 14% of the respondents who all were from that particular company, 11% from another company indicated that their company was in operation for 6-10 years, 26% from a different company also alluded

that, their company was between 11-15 years of operation while, 24% indicated that theirs operated for 21-25 years and 25 % showing that their company existed for over 25 years.

Ownership

The study also inquired into the ownership of companies, to understand the sectors in which the companies operated between the public and the private sector. The Fourteen percentile (14%) of the respondents have shown that their company was in the public sector, while 86% highlighted that their companies were privately owned.

Knowledge Management Practices

The study evaluated various aspects of the processes of knowledge management, encompassing all the attributes of knowledge within the organizations that were analysed. Table 4.2 highlights the findings on the knowledge management aspects in the manufacturing organizations in Bindura.

Table 4.2

Knowledge Management Practices (Mean, Std. Dev & Vvar) (Primary Data, 2022)

N=100

	N	Mean		Std. Dev.	Varian ce
	Stati stic	Stati stic	Std. Error	Statist ic	Statisti c
Knowledge Acquisition					
My organization acquires knowledge from external sources for developing new products	100	3.32	.118	1.180	1.392
My organization acquires market development skills from business partners	100	3.12	.098	.977	.955
My organization acquires new technologies from business partners	100	2.80	.108	1.082	1.172
My organization obtains information from its research and development activities	100	3.16	.128	1.285	1.651

Table 4.2 continued

My organization collects information on consumer needs and preferences	100	3.24	.116	1.156	1.336
Average Mean Score	3.13				
Knowledge Application					
My organization uses knowledge to solve new problems	100	2.81	.105	1.051	1.105
My organization uses knowledge to respond to consumer needs and preferences	100	3.05	.120	1.201	1.442
My organization utilizes different sources and types of knowledge for decision making	100	3.30	.133	1.330	1.768
My organization encourages employees to utilize knowledge to solve work-related problems	100	3.39	.134	1.340	1.796
Average Mean Score	3.14				
Knowledge Sharing					
In my organization supervisors share knowledge with subordinates	100	3.08	.103	1.032	1.064
In my organization employees share knowledge through learning by doing and learning by watching	100	2.95	.110	1.104	1.220
In my organization knowledge is shared across units/departments	100	2.98	.103	1.035	1.070
In my organization knowledge is shared among business partners	100	2.78	.105	1.050	1.103
Valid N (listwise)	100				
Average Mean Score	2.95				
Mean Score of knowledge management	3.07				

The table summarized the mean, standard deviation and variance statistics for the three aspects of knowledge management in the surveyed manufacturing industries in Bindura. The aggregate mean for knowledge management was 3.07.

Knowledge Management on Employee Commitment

Apart from looking at the knowledge management indicators, the study also assessed knowledge management with regards to employee motivation. Thus, the analysis focuses on employee commitment. Table 4.3 highlights the summary of statistics on organizational commitment.

Table 4.3

Employee commitment(Mean, Std. Dev &Var (Primary data, 2022) N=100

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic
Employees readily accept increasingly challenging performance standards	100	2.94	.108	1.081	1.168
Employees make no plans to work elsewhere	100	2.94	.104	1.043	1.087
Employees willingly accept any type of job in order to keep working for this organisation	100	3.24	.097	.965	.932
Employees talk about this organization as a great organisation to work for	100	3.25	.099	.989	.977

Table 4.3 continued

Employees are reluctant to change to another employer if the organisation was not doing well	100	3.48	.090	.904	.818
Employees are willing to continue working in this organisation	100	3.51	.096	.959	.919
Employees look for developmental opportunities that enhance their value	100	3.66	.117	1.174	1.378
Valid N (listwise)	100				
Average mean score	3.34				

The average mean score for KM on organizational commitment was 3.34 which is moderate, indicating that the employees for the investigated companies had a fair understanding of the role of KM on commitment

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis was carried out on all the variables in order to check if a regression analysis is necessary. The Pearson correlation was carried out in the correlation of variables.

Table 4.4

The correlation of the variables

		KAQ	KAP	KAS	OC
KAQ	Pearson Correlation	1			
KAP	Pearson Correlation	.311**	1		
KAS	Pearson Correlation	.454**	.670**	1	
EC	Pearson Correlation	.601**	.521**	*453	1
Sig (2 tailed)		.000	.002	.000	.000
Number		100	100	100	100

Table 4.4 above shows the correlation relationship between knowledge acquisition (KAQ), knowledge application (KAP), knowledge sharing (KAS) and employee commitment (EC) as illustrated above. The correlation analysis of SPSS indicates the direction of the linear relationship and the strength of the four variables of the thesis model. As alluded by the guidelines of Cohn (1988) it was concluded that the meaning of correlation analysis when it is 0.10 to 0.29 shows a weak correlation relationship among variables, 0.30 to 0.49 shows medium correlation and 0.50 to 1.0 shows a strong correlation relationship. Table 4.4 indicates two variables have a strong correlation between Knowledge acquisition and employee commitment with 0.601. The correlation is medium between knowledge sharing and employee commitment with 0.453. There is a strong correlation between knowledge application and employee commitment of 0,521. This means that a regression analysis can be conducted.

Regression Analysis

A regression analysis was done for the variables in order to test the hypothesis and give a clearer understanding of the relationship between variables. The regression

analysis was carried out on four variables namely knowledge application and employee commitment, knowledge acquisition and employee commitment, knowledge sharing and employee commitment, and knowledge management and employee commitment.

Employee Commitment and Knowledge Acquisition

Table 4.5

Regression Analysis for Employee Commitment and Knowledge Acquisition

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.375 ^a	.458	.450	.37455		
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	43.028	1	43.028	142.198	.000 ^b
	Residual	95.748	99	.322		
	Total	138.776	100			
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.239	.227		14.292	.000
	KAQ	.236	.041	.276	13.445	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EC

b. Predictors: (Constant), KAQ

Table 4.5 shows the value of R-square is 0.458 showing that 45.8% of the variation in employee commitment is due to knowledge acquisition, with a standard error estimate of 0.37455. The table also shows the linear regression Anova which determines if Knowledge acquisition has an impact on employee commitment. The P-value is .000

shows that it is less than 0.05 which is considered significant according to (Pallent, 2007). Table 4.5 shows unstandardized beta coefficient of 0.236. This means that for every one-unit increase in knowledge acquisition, employee commitment will increase by 0.236.

Results from Table 4.5 indicates that hypothesis (H1a) is significantly positive and supported. It also indicates a linear connection between knowledge acquisition and employee commitment.

Knowledge Application and Employee Commitment

Table 4.6

Regression Analysis for Knowledge Application and Employee Commitment

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.311 ^a	.096	.087	.35638		
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.329	1	1.329	10.467	.002 ^b
	Residual	12.446	99	.127		
	Total	13.776	100			
Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.761	.182		15.179	.000
	KAP	.184	.057	.311	3.235	.002

a. Dependent Variable: EC

b. Predictors: (Constant), KAP

Table 4.6 shows the value of R-square is 0.096 showing that 9.6% of the variation in employee commitment is due to knowledge application, with a standard error estimate of 0.35638. Table 4.6 also shows the linear regression Anova which determines if

knowledge application has an impact on employee commitment. The P-value is .0002 shows that it is less than 0.05 which is considered significant according to (Pallent, 2007). It shows the unstandardized beta coefficient of 0.184. This means that for every 1 unit increase in knowledge application, employee commitment will increase by 0.184.

The results shown in Table 4.6 indicates that hypothesis (H1b) is significantly positive and supported. The table above also indicates a linear connection between knowledge application and employee commitment.

Employee Commitment and Knowledge Sharing

Table 4.7

Regression Analysis for Knowledge Sharing and Employee Commitment

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.263 ^a	.304	.302	.47319		
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.365	1	15.365	38.968	.000 ^b
	Residual	172.648	99			
	Total	188.013	100		.386	
Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.124	.227		13.787	.000
	KAS	.372	.076	.296	5.956	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EC

b. Predictors: (Constant), KAS

Table 4.7 shows the value of R-square is 0.304 showing that 30.4% of the variation in employee commitment is due to Knowledge sharing, with a standard error estimate of 0.47319. Table 4.7 also shows the linear regression Anova which determines if knowledge sharing has an impact on employee commitment. The P-value is 0.000 shows that it is less than 0.05 which is considered significant according to (Pallent, 2007). It shows an unstandardized beta coefficient of 0.372. This means that for every 1 unit increase in knowledge sharing, employee commitment will increase by 0.372.

The results in Table 4.7 indicates that the hypothesis (H1c) is significantly positive and supported. The table above also indicates a linear connection between knowledge sharing and employee commitment.

Knowledge Management and Employee Commitment

Table 4.8

Regression Analysis for Knowledge Management and Employee Commitment

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.189 ^a	.286	.276	.43860		
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.654	3	2.654	15.751	.000 ^b
	Residual	17.030	97	.234		
	Total	19.684	100			
Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.058	.364		8.232	.000
	KM	.312	.099	.434	4.781	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EC

b. Predictors: (Constant), KM

Table 4.8 shows the value of R-square is 0.286 showing that only 28.6% of the variation in employee commitment is due to knowledge management, with a standard error estimate of 0.43860 Table 4.8 also shows the linear regression Anova which determines if Knowledge management has an impact on employee commitment. The P-value is 0.000 shows that it is less than 0.05 which is considered significant according to (Pallet, 2007). Table 4.8 shows the unstandardized beta coefficient as 0.312 This means that for every one-unit increase in knowledge management, employee commitment will increase by 0.312.

The results from Table4.8 indicate that hypothesis (H1) is significantly positive and accepted. The table above also indicates a linear connection between knowledge management and employee commitment.

Hypothesis Summary

The hypothesis summary shows if the results of the hypothesis tests carried out were supported or not supported. The results indicated that knowledge acquisition has more influence of employee commitment compared to knowledge application and knowledge sharing.

Table 4.9

Summary of the Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Results
KAP was positively related to EC	Supported
KAS was positively related to EC	Supported
KAQ was positively related to EC	Supported
KM was positively related to EC	Supported

Conclusion

The final chapter presented the findings and analysis of the demographics data and also the regression and correlation analysis of the variables that were involved in this study. The following chapter will be a summary of the findings and the conclusions and discussions.

CHAPTER V

Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, the findings and literature are put together to generate an inferential understanding of the research outcomes. Therefore, the focus is only on the discussion of findings related to the study problem and objectives. Also the main focus of this section of the study is to provide a conclusion and implications based on the overall findings of the entire study. The overall findings of the study are discussed in this section where the objectives and conceptual hypothesis are of major concern. The discussion is based on four hypotheses that has been attained from the review of the literature and the model of the conceptual framework. Explanations of results will be presented and also previous studies that may be in support or that differ from the findings of this study.

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study, based on the results will be summarised and discussed in full detail together with an interpretation of the results to aid operation in manufacturing companies.

Demographic characteristics

Although males dominated the respondents of this study with 64% of the total sample, women were also significantly represented with 36%. This implies that the results that were obtained from the survey were sensitive to gender issues and the social constructs separating men and women, thus, coming up with less biased inferences in terms of gender. Northouse (2007) noted the importance of ensuring that the study is representative of both women and men for the avoidance of biasness.

The findings of the study also show that the respondents had significant experience with their organizations. This as a result could ascertain the reliability and the validity of their responses to the objectives of this study in particular. A greater part of the respondents was between 3-11 years of experience in their respective organizations. 37% had at least 3-5 years of experience, 26% had 6-8 years of experience and 17%

had 9-11 years of experience. Only 8 % had less than 3 years of experience with 5% having exceeded 15 years serving their respective manufacturing organizations. From this understanding, it can be guaranteed that the respondents had enough knowledge of the operations in their corresponding manufacturing organizations.

Findings also show that the companies were fairly distributed across various production sectors with 11% of the respondents coming from the wood manufacturing industry and 26% were from building and mining, 14% coming from pharmaceutical productions, while metal engineering was represented by 24% and the food and beverages having 25%. This means that outcomes could be generalized to model the impact of KM in the greater manufacturing sector.

Apart from that, the study also noted that private and public sectors were represented respectively and these companies had significant years in operation, thus, making the knowledge experience more sound and robust. One of the companies fell with a range of 0-5 years of operation as supported by 14% of the respondents who all were from that particular company, 11% from another company indicated that their company was in operation for 6-10 years, 26% from a different company also supported that, their company was between 11-15 years of operation while 24% indicated that theirs operated for 21-25 years and 25 % showing that their company existed for over 25 years.

Knowledge management and employee commitment

Most importantly, it was noted that most of the study participants had knowledge of KM and their responses could be relied upon. The study analysed three aspects and elements of knowledge which are acquisition, application and sharing and all of them had moderate scores. The score for knowledge acquisition was 3.13. This entails that, respondents fairly supported that their manufacturing organizations acquire knowledge from outside sources for developing new products in the organisation; market development skills and new technologies from business partners and acquiring information from its research and development activities as well as collecting information on consumer needs and preferences. For Aujirapongpan et al., (2010), the easiest way to acquire knowledge is when there is an advancement in information

technology and the leadership adapts as well as a culture of sharing information as part of an organisation.

For knowledge application, the mean score was 3.14 and 2.95 for knowledge sharing. This also means that the respondents moderately supported these two aspects of knowledge management. The moderate scores in the Zimbabwean manufacturing sector could be attributed to the deficiency of information on the significance of KM in their firms. He et al., (2013) alluded that knowledge that is gained from internal sources by employees includes documents, procedure and process instructions, and knowledge transfer from colleagues, as well as external sources such as competitor information, customer data, market data and they, apply the knowledge to the operations of the organizations towards competitive advantage. Therefore, the moderate scores of KM in manufacturing organizations in Bindura could also foretell mediocrity in terms of competitive advantage. Moderate mean scores imply that there is a deficiency of enough information on the significance of knowledge management practices by manufacturing companies to increase their competitive advantage. It also implies that employee commitment and knowledge sharing, knowledge application, knowledge acquisition does not necessarily lead to their willingness to exert extra effort.

The outcome of the research on employee commitment was moderate also in this regard the values were a bit elevated compared to the other variables of the study. From the earlier chapters, it can be noted that KM has a positive impact on employee commitment, particularly looking at organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The willingness of workers to continue in the organizations depends on the quality of the knowledge management practices. Employees become more satisfied as to the quality of knowledge management increases. Porter (1979) as highlighted earlier viewed commitment as, the strength that an individual possesses and their participation in an organization and them sticking in the organization as well as putting considerable effort into achieving company goals. This means that KM has an impact on the affective, normative, and continuance aspects of commitment. The feeling that an employee possesses to stay in an organization is correlated to the knowledge the person acquires about the organization and the risk of leaving.

H1: There is a positive relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment in manufacturing companies.

The study hypothesized that the joint effect of knowledge acquisition, knowledge application and knowledge sharing was greater than the individual effect of each independent variable on employee commitment. The results of the regression analysis that was carried out revealed that the findings were statistically significant. Wright et al , argued that independent practices put together may lead to a greater competitive advantage rather than the effect of individual independent practices.

Knowledge application and employee commitment

H1a: Knowledge application has a positive impact on employee commitment

The examination of the importance of knowledge management in manufacturing companies in Bindura Zimbabwe was the first objective of the study. The prediction was that knowledge management has a significant role in manufacturing companies. Knowledge management comprised of three components where knowledge application was one of them and regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the two variables. The overall model was significant statistically. The B value suggests that one unit change in knowledge application is associated with 1 unit change in employee commitment.

The above results provide substantial evidence to support the influence of knowledge application on employee commitment. The results of the study are in line with the findings by Gold et al (2001) that indicated a positive relationship between knowledge application and employee commitment. The study by Gold et al (2001) focused on the quality of work produced by the employees if they incorporated or applied knowledge in their day-to-day operations, Razzaq et al (2019). The dimensions of knowledge application that were suggested by Razzaq et al were used to measure performance and maximum utilization of knowledge application.

The strong and positive relationship between knowledge application and employee commitment that has been discussed in this study clearly provides more support to prior research that confirms that knowledge application has a significant impact on employee commitment.

Knowledge sharing and employee commitment

H1c: Knowledge sharing has a positive impact on employee commitment.

The other objective of this study is to examine the importance of knowledge management in manufacturing companies in Bindura Zimbabwe and knowledge sharing is a component of KM. As discussed and clarified earlier, linear regression analysis was used to test the relationship. The results of the study indicate that a percentage of the variance in employee commitment was explained by knowledge sharing. The findings of the study revealed that there is some sort of relationship between knowledge sharing and employee commitment. Hislop (2003) concluded in his study that there could be an interesting relationship between the levels of commitment and how knowledge is disseminated in the organization. Overall he was trying to communicate that the level of commitment that employees have or may have interfered with the level of willingness that employees will share knowledge. Also, the attitude that employees have towards the organization is a big determination of whether or not, they will share knowledge.

Thompson and Heron (2005) discovered with their team that knowledge sharing is mainly conducted when employees are highly committed to the organization and are willing to put more discretionary effort and are less likely to leave the organization abruptly. Other findings would be McKenzie et al (2001) and Scarbrough and Carter (2000) who defended that employee commitment most probably influences the need to share knowledge among employees. Lin (2006) from the studies she carried out suggested that employee commitment motivates employees to share their knowledge. Peltokorpi (2006) also came up with the same conclusion that knowledge sharing was vital for employees to be committed.

Knowledge acquisition and employee commitment

H1a: Knowledge acquisition has a positive impact on employee commitment

As part of the objectives of this study, the relationship between knowledge acquisition and employee commitment was tested. The results showed that a percentage of the variance in employee commitment was explained by knowledge acquisition. The Beta coefficient was statistically significant. The beta value suggests that for every one-unit

increase in knowledge acquisition, employee commitment will increase by the beta coefficient value. There is not much research done from prior studies that explain the relationship between these two variables that could support this notion.

Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to determine the nature and role of knowledge management and employee commitment in manufacturing companies in Bindura, Zimbabwe. The study sought to determine the relations between knowledge management and employee commitment where knowledge application, knowledge sharing, and knowledge acquisition are components of knowledge management. In order for these objectives to be achieved, a conceptual model was developed based on the review of the literature and thus the four hypotheses were brought about for testing. Simple linear regression was used to determine the influence of knowledge management on employee commitment. The relationship between the study variables was tested with employee commitment as a dependent variable and knowledge management as the independent variable on all the four hypotheses tests. The results supported that there was statistical significance to prove the relationship between variables on all four hypotheses.

The study came to the conclusion that knowledge management is an imperative aspect of competitive advantage and sustenance of manufacturing organizations. Knowledge Management has a significant impact on employee commitment where it can be a source of affective, normative and continuance commitment through organizational commitment. KM cannot be left out in successful organizations as it is a creator of both loyal and competitive employees. The study and analysis carried out support the hypothesis that knowledge management and employee commitment are positively related, but although the data and analysis support this relationship, knowledge management has no major influence on employee commitment because the relationship is not very strong. This means that employee commitment may be influenced by other variables which have a greater effect on employee commitment such as job satisfaction, customer perspectives, internal growth and learning and growth. Therefore, the study also concluded that there is still a need for more effort to fully embrace KM practices in Zimbabwe by manufacturing companies as evidenced

by moderate responses on the significance of KM in manufacturing organizations in Bindura, Zimbabwe. There have to be ways to alert companies on the importance and opportunities of KM for competitive advantage.

Implications of the study

This study makes a great and significant contribution to theories that pertain to knowledge management practices. The study also is an opportunity for expansion of theoretical and empirical development to shed more light on how knowledge management aid employee commitment.

Theoretical implication

The theoretical models and practical components of human resources management should be amalgamated to ensure that there are free and conducive environments for learning and knowledge sharing. Manufacturing companies should fully embrace KM in their organizations to boost their advantage over rivalries, at the same time guaranteeing employee commitment. Based on the theory, it would be challenging for competitors in copying the competitive advantage due to the sophisticated nature of a firm's resources. The study showed that individual effects of the independent variables were greater than the joint effect which contradicts Wright et al (2001) who noted that set of predictor practices are better than singular ones. Wright and Snell alluded that a company has to possess and acquire certain skills and behaviours from their employees which are usually brought into play with the management team of leaders.

Implications for practice

Based on the study findings it was therefore recommended that managers should invest in knowledge to ensure that knowledge acquisition, application, and sharing are effective in their day-to-day operations. Policies should also be inclined toward knowledge sharing in manufacturing sectors, particularly in the public sectors for ensuring national growth and development. The relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment has not been supported enough by the literature. The fact that there is not enough research discourages leaders, mostly managers and even employees per-say from fully adopting knowledge management

practices. Therefore there is a great need to establish the relationship between knowledge management and employee commitment.

Top managers that are in manufacturing industries can apply the finding of this study to develop critical areas of human resources management so as to increase the competitive advantage of the company. These findings can be used to justify the dire need of implementing knowledge management practices. The number of problems faced by manufacturing companies such as high levels of crime, high cost of production, and high taxes take the most of the attention of management and thereby neglect knowledge management practices. If levels of commitment in employees increase, it could transform into low turnover and better performance.

When highlighting the importance of KM practices, there is a claim that there must be a constant investment in the people or individuals involved in the process with the aim to prepare and support them so that they can participate more actively in KM initiatives and understand their goals and act according to the new dispensation. Close collaboration between top management and human resource management is imperative and thus the management must provide necessary conditions regarding structure, policy and strategy. Human Resource Management must identify strategies and interventions that facilitate this process.

Organisations are advised not to neglect the human factor in KM projects and initiatives from the planning stage to implementation. When implementing KM initiatives or KM projects, the impact of this change on employees' commitment, satisfaction, turnover and productivity must be measured and analysed together with financial investment. Human Resource Management should take on an active role in promoting initiatives related to the link between collaborators and their corporations so as to facilitate the fulfilment of those that are related to KM practices. In this context, emphasis on the need to harmonise organisational strategies or structure and HRM policies and KM initiatives so as to meet individual organisational goals.

Managers of manufacturing firms should continuously improve their knowledge management practices in order to achieve superior performance. Manufacturing companies need to focus on KM as a key driver of performance in the industry. The most significant contribution this study has made to the existing body of knowledge is

the joint effect of KAS, KAP and KAQ are greater than the individual effect of the predictor variables. These findings suggest that organisations that combine these variables are likely to achieve superior performance, thus no single resource can be a source of competitive advantage.

Recommendations for further research

Concerning future research, exploring the possible mediator and moderator variables of this relationship such as satisfaction, involvement, confidence, willingness and motivation to work, customer perspectives, internal business processes, and learning and growth is a suggestion that should be considered by organisations. Also, investment in extensive studies about the relationship between KM and EC and simultaneously with other human-related variables. Another factor would be an analysis of the relationship between EC and KM in other sectors and cultures based on trans-cultural and non-sectorized perspectives. Finally, we suggest investing in the analysis and reviews of the literature to integrate and organise contributions already in existence. Moreover, other companies in Zimbabwe not just Bindura should allow for more research pertaining to knowledge management and employee commitment and also carry out knowledge management practices in order to ultimately carry out more research studies to this vital part of operations.

A needs assessment can be done and programs designed that effectively address all the gaps. Key areas to be addressed include how policies related to KM practices are adopted by manufacturing companies and the possibility of monitoring from the government to ensure that manufacturing companies definitely adhere to certain policies regarding these practices in particular. In addition, policy makers can use the findings of this study to evaluate how well the manufacturing sector can leverage KM practices in order to increase economic growth. Policy makers recognise the importance of the sector for long term economic development. The results of this study will assist policy makers in making informed decisions to adopt KM practices for sustained superior performance.

Chapter Conclusion

The chapter presented the discussion and conclusion of the entire study based on the objectives of the study.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Permission Letter by the Ministry of Education


07.01.2022

Dear Fadzai Salome Piroro

Your application titled “**Knowledge management and employee commitment of manufacturing companies in Zimbabwe**” with the application number NEU/SS/2021/1149 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee



Note: If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.

Appendix B: Questionnaire

I am, a student at Near East University. As part of my research process, the research team is supposed to collect data from respondents who are expected to participate willingly. I, therefore kindly request your time to complete this questionnaire, giving your independent views on each subject. Participants have the right to refuse to participate and you can also withdraw from the study any given time. The researcher or anyone would not in any way exert pressure on you to be a part of this study without your independent will. Your participation should be voluntary, without any coercion

Questionnaire

Knowledge Management and Employee commitment in Manufacturing Companies in Bindura, Zimbabwe.

This questionnaire is designed to collect data on Knowledge Management and Employee commitment of Manufacturing Firms in Zimbabwe. Kindly respond to each item in the questionnaire. The information provided will be used for academic purpose only and will be treated with strict confidence.

PART A: PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATION DETAILS

1. Gender: Tick one of the brackets Male () Female ()
2. How long have you worked in this organization: Tick one of the boxes

0-2 years	3-5 years	6-8 years	9-11 years	12-14 years	Above 15 years

3. Company size (No. of employees): Tick against the appropriate number of employees

100- 150	151- 200	201-250	251- 300	301- 350	351- 400	Above 400

4. Type of industry: Tick one of the boxes on the right to show the type of company you work for

Building, Construction and Mining		Motor Vehicle and Accessories	
Chemical and Allied		Paper and Board	
Energy, Electricals and Electronics		Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment	
Food and Beverage		Plastics and Rubber	
Leather and Footwear		Textiles and Apparel	
Metal and Allied		Timber, Wood and Furniture	

5. Tick one of the boxes to show the number of years the company has been in operation/business

0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	Above 25 years

6. Business ownership: Tick one of the brackets

Private () Public ()

PART B: KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (EMPLOYEES)

Indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements concerning knowledge management in your company

Key: 1=Not at all 2=Little extent 3=Some extent 4=Large extent 5= Very large extent

8.0	Knowledge Acquisition	1	2	3	4	5
8.0.1	My organization acquires knowledge from external sources for developing new products					
8.0.2	My organization acquires market development skills from business partners					
8.0.3	My organization acquires new technologies from business partners					
8.0.4	My organization obtains information from its research and development activities					
8.0.5	My organization collects information on consumer needs and preferences					
8.1	Knowledge Application					
8.1.1	My organization uses knowledge to solve new problems					
8.1.2	My organization uses knowledge to respond to consumer needs and preferences					
8.1.3	My organization utilizes different sources and types of knowledge for decision making					
8.1.4	My organization encourages employees to utilize knowledge to solve work related problems					
8.2	Knowledge Sharing					
8.2.1	In my organization supervisors share knowledge with subordinates					
8.2.2	In my organization employees share knowledge through learning by doing and learning by watching					
8.2.3	In my organization knowledge is shared across units					
8.2.4	In my organization knowledge is shared among business partners					

PART C: EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES (EMPLOYEES)

Indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements concerning employee outcomes in your company

Key: 1=Not at all 2=Little extent 3=Some extent 4=Large extent 5= Very large extent

9.0	Part 1: Organizational Commitment	1	2	3	4	5
9.0.1	Employees are willing to continue working in this organization					
9.0.2	Employees readily accept increasingly challenging performance standards					
9.0.3	Employees are willing to contribute much more to the organization than their formal contractual obligation					
9.0.4	Employees always look forward to coming to work					
9.0.5	Employees willingly accept any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization					
9.0.6	Employees make no plans to work elsewhere					
9.0.7	Employees respond positively to dynamic performance requirements					
9.0.8	Employees look for developmental opportunities that enhance their value to the organization					
9.0.9	Employees talk about this organization as a great organization to work for					
9.0.10	Employees are reluctant to change to another employer even if the organization was not doing well					
9.1	Part 2: Job Satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
9.1.1	Employees are satisfied with opportunities for advancement					
9.1.2	Resources/equipment provided by the organization are adequate					
9.1.3	Employees are satisfied with the chance to do something that makes use of their abilities					
9.1.4	Employees are satisfied being able to keep busy all the time					
9.1.5	Employees are satisfied with the working conditions					
9.1.6	Employees perceive their jobs to be highly meaningful					
9.1.7	Employees are satisfied with pay compared to the amount of work they do					
9.1.8	Methods used to resolve grievances are adequate					
9.1.9	Co-workers get along with each other					
9.1.10	Supervisors are competent in making decisions					

PART D: FIRM PERFORMANCE

COMPANY PERFORMANCE (EMPLOYEES)

Indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements concerning non-financial measures of performance in your company

Key: 1=Not at all 2=Little extent 3=Some extent 4=Large extent 5= Very large extent

10.1	Customer Perspective	1	2	3	4	5
10.1.1	My organization has received few customer complaints over the past five years					
10.1.2	My organization has retained most of its customers over the past five years					
10.1.3	My organization has attracted a large number of new customers over the past five years					
10.1.4	My organization focuses on specific market segments to provide better service than its competitors					
10.2	Internal Business Process					
10.2.1	Level of creativity and innovation of new products is high					
10.2.2	Ratio of good output to total output is high					
10.2.3	Rate of waste in the production process is low					
10.2.4	The number of defective products is low					

	10.3 Learning and growth					
	10.3.1 My organization has continually reduced time to market new products					
	10.3.2 The number of new product launches has increased over the past five years					
	10.3.3 My organization uses knowledge from research and development to develop new products					
	10.3.4 Employees perform tasks that allow them to acquire new skills and knowledge					
	10.3.5 Employee turnover has reduced over the past five years					

Source : Cooper, D. R. & Schindler, P. S. (2006). *Business research methods*. New Delhi: McGraw Hill.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN SMALL TO MEDIUM MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN BINDURA, ZIMBABWE by Fadzai Piroro (20204007)

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