The Investigation of relationship between knowledge management processes and strategic thinking Factors in Organization level  
(Case study: Governor of Guilan)

Mohammad Taleghani  
Department of Industrial Management, Faculty of Management and Accounting, Rasht Branch,  
Islamic Azad University, Rasht, Iran  
M.taleghani454@yahoo.com

Sedigheh Kobra Sarollahi  
M.A. Executive Management, Faculty of Management and Accounting, Rasht Branch, Islamic  
Azad University, Rasht, Iran  
Se.sarollahi@gmail.com

Abstract

In this research it has been tried to consider the relationship between each knowledge management processes and factors of strategic thinking in Governor of Guilan. This research regarding goal is applied and regarding nature and method of research it is descriptive-correlation and surveying type and sampling method is simple random sampling that periodically was done in 2015 on 330 managers and experts of Guilan governing as sample of research the based on Cochran formula 177 ones were chosen as statistical sample through random method. Method of data collection in his research is library and field methods. Tool of data collection is questionnaire of knowledge management of Newman model by 21 questions and strategic thinking with 29 questions; for considering validity of questionnaire content validity was used and total reliability of questionnaire was obtained 0.948 through Cronbach alpha method. For considering hypothesis by applying SPSS software correlation analysis test and linear regression was used. Findings of research showed meaningful relationship between professor of knowledge management and strategic thinking factors of managers and experts of Guilan governing office.

Keywords: strategic thinking, knowledge management, systemic thinking, Governor of Guilan.
1. Introduction

Organizations at increasable changing era use new managerial tools, techniques and new principles in order to acquire competitive excellence and for continuing life with varied environmental conditions. The word knowledge management includes different subjects in the world of management. The reason of creating this attitude is due to transferring and moving economic systems toward society based on knowledge and development of knowledge-oriented economy. Pioneering organizations that have leadership of global markets are those who are able to get the most reliable and updated human knowledge in the area of their business and benefit using it. Nowadays knowledge management has been identified as a proper competitive tool in the direction of achieving success at knowledge-oriented economy as many organizations have implemented and used knowledge management. On the other hand basis of planning strategic thinking, predicting environment (opportunities and threats) in the future and where there is much difference between prediction (at the time of planning) and reality (at the time of implementation), its effectiveness diminishes. In fact strategic planning needs constant environment, environmental factors at balance with continuous changes, understandable and predictable action and reaction.

Nowadays we observe a rapid displacement of industrial society. Knowledge society has been established based on increasing importance of knowledge as a vital factor of production and service. Many products and administrative services have extensive cost of research and development; however cost of production and service is lower. Based on above cases and briefly we can count environmental changes, change in factor of production, changing management paradigm, existence and manifestation of discussion of competitive excellence and change of organization’s expectation, customer and applicants as the necessity of investment at increasing knowledge and doing knowledge work (technically and specialty), creating knowledge network at organizational level. In this direction authorities of knowledge management a key and future predicting strategy in planning and strategic and tactical decision-making, dynamic learning, solving problem and realizing full potential of organizations’ asset; and one vital factor of improving performance of staff was success or failure of managers and competitive excellence of an organization and claimed that if organizations have capability of learning and creative use of knowledge process, they achieve new pattern of thinking that can define affair again and present new methods. When such co-direction is done, system of knowledge management moves in the direction that create hope about long-term competitive advantage in varied environment. In addition to mentioned cases this knowledge management through exact reaction toward environmental changes, acquiring, keeping, distribution and applying knowledge causes staff work more intelligent, present more creative productions and services and meet need of customers in the best form and generally help making decisions and strategic thinking and do actions (Lee et al, 2010).

In other word organizational success is achieved when process of knowledge management is benefited in the direction of creating strategic thinking in organizations. However many organizations because can’t benefit knowledge for achieving competitive excellence, important updated and continuous information and also necessary resource for development in the direction of long-term thinking of managers and organizational strategies they suffer. On the other hand most organizations that in current competitive situation imitate pioneering organizations beside facing changes they confront dynamic competitive process. Therefore by omitting an opportunity or creating a change in knowledge flow, another opportunity occurs that challenges the organization that is reminded as the process of creative destruction.

In this direction understanding multiple process of knowledge management in the organization with content factors and strategic thinking process, useful information about correct use of an organization from knowledge management for achieving constant and strategic competitive
resources and finding answer of this question that how is relationship between process of knowledge management and strategic thinking factors(that leads to strategic planning and strategic decisions) is the problem that researcher tries to pay it.

The importance of doing this research is in the point that knowing degree and type of relationship between each process of knowledge management(creation and new knowledge, saving knowledge, transferring and applying knowledge) by content factors and strategic thinking process as an innovation can lead organizations in the direction of strengthening relations that lead to developing strategic thinking(and fallowed by strategic decisions and long-term planning); on the other hand any research hasn’t been done with current comprehensiveness that simultaneously considered relationship between process of knowledge management and content factors and strategic thinking process.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Knowledge management

Knowledge management means an strategy for optimizing business through systematically and commitment that choose, save organize and collect necessary information for business that improve performance of staff and competition of company (Brojron, 2007).

Knowledge management is acquiring accurate knowledge for proper people at the accurate time and proper place, as they can achieve organization’s goals to the best way (Afrazeh, 2007).

2.1.1. Process of creating and producing new knowledge: The world in which an organization leaves is full of data that are dispersed in their atmosphere. Organizations for achieving goals should assess goals for achieving creativity and innovation and assess new ways. Production or creation of knowledge in the organization includes production and distribution of information interpreting processed information and changing them to knowledge for the organization (Samiei Nasr, 2008).

2.1.2. The process of saving knowledge: Saving knowledge includes saving them in the form that saves its components and is accessed by knowledge staff in the organization. In the view of user time of accessing that is time of reviewing specific knowledge from the position of saving is usually the most important point in daily application. Duration of surviving information is in saving a function of controlled environment, plan of keeping at the place and presence of a person for supervision on the process of saving. Saving knowledge, preservation, accessing on time, reuse and constant convergence of information of the organization will be guaranteed (Brojron, 2007).

2.1.3. The process of transferring or sharing knowledge: It includes different behaviors such as communication, translation, and interpretation, processing and presenting knowledge. Chosen methods for transferring knowledge affects this field. Transferring knowledge is not done through convergence but other auto systems exist that have moderating role. Sharing knowledge is called transferring knowledge and points the process through which knowledge is transferred from one person to groups and from one group to another one (Newman and Conrad,1999).

2.1.4. The process of using and applying knowledge: Using knowledge is the activity in applying knowledge for generalizing new knowledge or using external production of knowledge (Jahanian, 2009). In this process cycle of life of knowledge management is used for specific goals of an organization. The key point at the process of using and applying new knowledge includes capability of using, accessibility, security, saving thinking proposition and possibility of searching (Borojron, 2007). Coding knowledge and personalization of knowledge are two approaches in applying correct
knowledge that the first approach relies technological support and second one relies people and interaction between them. Approach based on coding knowledge looks knowledge management at the limit of information management and neglects human values that is one important factor of knowledge conformation whereas approach of personification of knowledge knows knowledge dependent to human and counts knowledge as the most important factor of applying and using knowledge (Abtahi and Salavati, 2006).

2.2. Strategic thinking

Strategic thinking is a method that causes staff of an organization think, assess, observe and create favorable future for themselves and their colleague. This is the thing that is more than daily and long-term problems, opportunities and new realities and it is creating better future (Kaufman et al., 2003).

2.2.1. Content factors

2.2.1.1. Systemic thinking: In strategic thinking in the view of Kaufman et al. (2003) systemic thinking denotes change in a view to the organization. Change in the strategy of an organization as combining unrelated section (or staff) competing for resources, as organization say as a general system, that each section is paid attention by the whole system and integrated. This needs ability of furthering people from attention to daily operational problems (Gertz, 2002) and attention to these subjects that how different problems connect each other, how they affect each other and how a solution in a part of organization affects other parts (Lidteka, 1998).

2.2.1.2. Viewpoint: Another preneed of strategic thinking is having viewpoint and goal. Viewpoints are attitude or speculations that people have in their heart and mind. Having goal in an organization causes dieting works and activities and helps us in doing unusual activities in the direction of achieving goals. In an organization there are three factors and are combined with each other to create strategic thinking for a person. Strategic thinking should originate from deep perception of organizational goals and a viewpoint for favorable future of the organization. A real viewpoint denotes a good idea. Viewpoint distinguishes long-term goals and manifest direction of movement (Ghafarian and Kiani, 2010).

2.2.1.3. Creativity: It is the factor that creates difference between people and organizations. Creative managers have creative thinking that is they are fallowing new solution and idea. Strategic manager should be a creative person. He should see different conditions and achieve his creative solution by combining different solutions. Strategic thinking because being a comprehensive thinking it has fundamental need to creativity. Thus a manager can’t be strategic manager without creativity.

2.2.2. Procedural factors

2.2.2.1. Strategic communication: Strategic communication can be known as all interactions and conversations and strategic connections having potential excellence for strategic choosing in the direction of developing capabilities of strategic thinking. At strategic level it can be said that much speed means not being strategic. For example limited communicative levels or short timetable for discussion and key opportunity or learning new thing or for change and for clarity of organizational roles are samples that farthest us from being strategic and strategic thinking. In the view of “Bon” strategic communication if is done through constructing method it benefits potential excellence of various mentalities and will be toward a separate mind (Rahman Seresht and Kafcheh, 2008).
2.2.2.2. Strategic analysis: In the view of Lidteka (1998) hypothesis-orientation shows “scientific method” and creates hypothesis and testing as main and axial activities in his viewpoint for manager of business being hypothesis oriented toward other components of strategic thinking has external mode. However in an environment that information is increasing and time of thinking is decreasing, ability of growing good hypothesis and its efficient test is vital. This part of strategic thinking is scientific aspect of strategic process that was emphasized by porter (1980, 1985,1990) states and is related to procedural factors of strategic thinking. As it was said in the belief of Heraclius (1998) strategic thinking and strategic planning should be located at dialectic process related to each other; because both are necessary for strategic management. Each of them are alone necessary condition but are not sufficient. Strategic thinking and planning are done periodically and repeatedly along time. Whereas there is demands for creative strategy that can be bearded in the mind of strategic specialties or by colleague and low level people, simultaneously process of analyzing feasibility and favorability of strategies and plans for their realization is considered. Therefore strategic analysis is one important factor of strategic thinking during which creative idea are analyzed through reasonable process and with scientific reasoning (Armstrong, 2006).

2.3. Research model

![Diagram of Research Model](image)

**Fig 1. Analytic model of modified research (Rahman Seresht and Kafcheh, 2008)**

**Hypothesis of research**

**Main hypothesis**

There is meaningful relationship between processes of knowledge management with strategic thinking factors.
Subordinate hypothesis
H1: There is meaningful relationship between creating knowledge and content factor of strategic thinking.
H2: There is meaningful relationship between creating knowledge and procedural factor of strategic thinking.
H3: There is meaningful relationship between saving knowledge and content factor of strategic thinking.
H4: There is meaningful relationship between saving knowledge and procedural factor of strategic thinking.
H5: There is meaningful relationship between transferring knowledge and content factor of strategic thinking.
H6: There is meaningful relationship between transferring knowledge and procedural factor of strategic thinking.
H7: There is meaningful relationship between knowledge application and content factor of strategic thinking.
H8: There is meaningful relationship between knowledge application and procedural factor of strategic thinking.

3. Methodology
3.1. Research Method
Method of current research is applied and method of data collection is descriptive and regarding type of analysis it is descriptive. Research is applied in this aspect that its result is applied for different groups of planners and managers and it is descriptive in this view that pays attention to current process and its observing effect at the time of present.

In this research for collecting data and required information field method was benefited. In some cases for better analysis of obtained data library studies has been used. Framework of statistical society is a list of all members of statistical society among which sample group are chosen. Statistical society of this research includes all manager and experts of Guilan governing office about 330 people that sample volume was obtained 177 people by using general formula of Cochran.

In this research in fact by determining patterns, testing hypothesis of research was done through correlation coefficient in fact regarding that the main goal of this research is considering relationship and effect of knowledge management and content factors and strategic thinking process at the level of an organization that for data analysis SPSS software was used and collected data were analyzed at three levels of description, explanation and multivariable analysis with proper techniques and for determine degree of relationship index of correlation coefficient that was a mathematic index and describes direction and amount of relationship between two variables were used. Also because data were collected in the form of distance among different index of correlation coefficient Pearson correlation coefficient has been used.it is necessary to mention that for considering degree of share linear regression was used.

4. Findings
4.1. Descriptive statistics
Based on obtained result of questionnaire about variable of knowledge management, creating knowledge, saving knowledge, transferring knowledge applying knowledge in considering society the fallowing results was obtained:

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics of dimension of independent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KM</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Knowledge creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge creation</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Knowledge saving</td>
</tr>
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<td>Knowledge saving</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Knowledge transferring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge transferring</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Knowledge application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge application</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on obtained result of questionnaire about variable of strategic thinking content factors and procedural factors in the view of respondent the following research was obtained:

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of dimensions of dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Variable</th>
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<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Content factors</td>
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<td>Content factors</td>
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<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural factors</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2. Regression analysis

Based on research model independent variable are creating knowledge and its sub-variables (creating knowledge, saving knowledge, transferring knowledge and applying knowledge) and also documenting variable is strategic thinking(content factors and procedural factors) that have been formed based on these variables and parameters of research hypothesis. For confirming hypothesis of research, degree of relationship between variables is assessed and then degree of effectiveness of each factor is considered.

Table 3. Result testing hypothesis of research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed number</th>
<th>Certainty percent</th>
<th>Sig. Predicting variable coefficient</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient</th>
<th>First subordinate hypothesis</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.486</td>
<td>Independent variable: creating knowledge Dependent variable: content factors of strategic thinking</td>
<td>Hypothesis accepted</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.232</td>
<td>0.236</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>95%</td>
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<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>Testing second subordinate hypothesis Independent variable: creating knowledge Dependent variable: procedural factors of strategic thinking</td>
<td>Hypothesis accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.01</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.097</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>Testing third subordinate hypothesis Independent variable: creating knowledge Dependent variable: procedural factors of strategic thinking</td>
<td>Hypothesis accepted</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.01</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Certainty percent
Sig. Predicting variable coefficient
Correlation coefficient
First subordinate hypothesis
Conclusion

Hypothesis accepted
Hypothesis accepted
Hypothesis accepted
Hypothesis accepted
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>square</th>
<th>square</th>
<th>Independent variable: knowledge saving</th>
<th>Dependent variable: content factors of strategic thinking</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.659</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.431</td>
<td>0.435</td>
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<td>Correlation coefficient square</td>
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<td>Dependent variable: procedural factors of strategic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.477</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.195</td>
<td>0.200</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Correlation coefficient square</td>
<td>Independent variable: knowledge transferring</td>
<td>Dependent variable: content factors of strategic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.533</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.302</td>
<td>0.306</td>
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<td>Correlation coefficient square</td>
<td>Independent variable: knowledge transferring</td>
<td>Dependent variable: procedural factors of strategic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.336</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.279</td>
<td>0.283</td>
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<td>Independent variable: knowledge application</td>
<td>Dependent variable: content factors of strategic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.536</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>0.287</td>
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<td>Dependent variable: content factors of strategic thinking</td>
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</table>
5. Discussion and Conclusion

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of knowledge creation has relationship about 48.6% with the variable of content factors of strategic thinking in Guilan province, that is two variables in considering society has positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of knowledge creation could predict variable of content factors of strategic thinking about 23.6%(confirming first subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between knowledge creation and content factors of strategic thinking).

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of knowledge creation could have relationship with variable of procedural factors of strategic thinking about 31.1% in Guilan governing office, that is two variables in considering society has positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of knowledge creation could predict procedural factors of strategic thinking about 9.7%(approving second subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between knowledge creation and procedural factors of strategic thinking).

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of saving knowledge has relationship about 65.9% with variable of content factors of strategic thinking in Guilan province that is these two variables in considering society have positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of saving knowledge could predict variable of content factors of strategic thinking about 43.5%(third subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between saving knowledge and content factors of strategic thinking).

Based on result it is inferred that variable of saving knowledge has had relationship with variable of procedural factors of strategic thinking in Guilan province about 47.7% that is these two variables in considering society have positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of saving knowledge could predict variable of procedural factors of strategic thinking about 20%(approving fourth subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between saving and procedural factors of strategic thinking).

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of knowledge transferring has had relationship with variable of content factors of strategic thinking in Guilan province about 53.3%, that is these two variables in considering society have positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of knowledge transferring could predict variable of content factors of strategic thinking about 30.6%(confirming fifth subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between knowledge transferring and content factors of strategic thinking).

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of knowledge transferring has relationship with variable of procedural factors of strategic thinking about 33.6% in Guilan province, that is these two variables in considering society have positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of knowledge transfer could predict variable of procedural factors of strategic thinking.
thinking about 28.35 % (approving sixth subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between knowledge transferring and procedural factors of strategic thinking).

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of knowledge application has relationship with variable of content factors of strategic thinking about 53.6% in Guilan province, that is these two variables in considering society have positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of knowledge application could predict variable of content factors of strategic thinking about 28.7% (approving seventh subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between knowledge application and content factors of strategic thinking).

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of knowledge application has relationship with variable of procedural factors of strategic thinking about 33.6% in Guilan province, that is these two variables in considering society have positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of knowledge application could predict variable of procedural factors of strategic thinking about 11.3% (approving eighth subordinate hypothesis: there is meaningful relationship between knowledge application and procedural factors of strategic thinking).

Based on obtained result it is inferred that variable of knowledge management has relationship with variable of factors of strategic thinking about 74% in Guilan province, that is these two variables in considering society have positive and meaningful relationship with each other. Also variable of knowledge management could predict variable of factors of strategic thinking about 64.8 % (main hypothesis of research: there is meaningful relationship between knowledge management and procedural factors of strategic thinking).

6. Suggestions

Knowledge management as systematic and organized strategy could direct organizations for optimized use of knowledge resources. Necessity of using this strategy. Necessity of using this strategy is cleared when organizations are aware of effects and result of using them.

Development of activities of knowledge management needs providing condition and proper infrastructures for it. Structure, technology, communication and strategy should form in the direction of developing and facilitation of organizational knowledge management and if necessary they should be redesigned ,based on result of this research for proper management and development of organizational knowledge providing an atmosphere in the organization full of reciprocal reliance, effective communication and proper interaction between members as become facilitating conflict of idea among staff and encouraging innovation in the organization by manager of the organization is necessary.

Providing a proper infrastructure is structural and technological dimension at development of knowledge management and is necessary. As a knowledge is created in the organization and transferred but it remains only in mind of people and is not recorded and there isn’t any condition for its application we can’t benefit this created knowledge properly ad practically it will not affect improvement of competitive situation of the organization and or this effect will be little. Attracting reliance of people in knowledge management is the most important basis and if it don’t support organizational culture it will not have favorable result.
References


