Barriers to external knowledge transfer
between Sweden and Uganda

A case about development projects

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There comes a time when the mind takes a higher plane of knowledge but can never prove how it got there. Describing what I have learned during the period of writing this thesis is in its self knowledge that will be kept forever.

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Abstract

Problem: The desire for development in less privileged countries like Uganda has created the need for the privileged countries like Sweden to embark on external knowledge transfer through different projects, as one of the objectives to achieve development. However, some factors tend to limit the success of this external knowledge transfer process.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to find out the factors that lead to the barriers and limitations of knowledge transfer in development projects. Since there are differences in objectives between nonprofit and profit making projects, the research is also aimed at highlighting the extent to which the affecting factors hinder the achievement of objectives and goals.

Method: Qualitative methods were used in this research. Telephone interviews were conducted after sending questionnaires to four respondents from different organizations that were actively involved in the projects. In order to have balanced results, two respondents each from Uganda and Sweden were interviewed. Trustworthiness and ethical issues were put into consideration while conducting the interviews, in a bid to create a desirable atmosphere for conducting the study.

Result: External knowledge transfer is affected by factors like culture, individual factors, and knowledge management factors. Apart from the mentioned factors, research found that instead of organizational factors that would affect profit making projects to a greater extent, factors like the political will, ownership and local needs are the ones that affect development projects.

Conclusion: The factors that affect the external knowledge transfer process are to a greater extent human, and are controllable. In development projects, the recipient country should identify the needs that would initiate the external knowledge transfer process. Most of the affecting factors would be controlled through building of relationships and strong ties, local ownership, and political considerations. All this put into consideration, external knowledge transfer between developed and developing countries stand a high chance to succeed.
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1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the reader will find the description and the discussion of the problems of external knowledge transfer from Sweden to Uganda. Cultural difference issues, individual factors, knowledge management factors, as well as organizational factors are discussed.

“If you do it right 51 percent of the time you will end up a hero”
(Alfred P. Sloan, Jr.)

1.1 Background

Almost all the economies of the world are currently facing situations that require cooperation and coordination with one another for, this is the key to economic progress and prosperity, business and corporate success, as well as political stability. These are the real aspects, through which the economies of the world operate from time to time and without which, what would be happening in the world today is very much unimaginable and unthinkable. Views from Barack Obama, who is the newly elected president of USA, envisage this particular opinion during the recent G20 summit as regards the need for cooperation and coordination by the economies of the world in order to solve the problems that are affecting mankind today.

We are committed to forging a consensus instead of dictating our term, and
The United States acting alone would only be halfway effective, not even half.
It is very important for us to be able to forge partnerships as opposed to dictating solutions.” – Obama (2009).

The above quotation was in response to the ongoing economic crisis that is hitting the economies of the world, and from which a lot of un-certainty and anxiety has been created due to the high levels of insecurity. Depicted from the quotation above therefore, there was a genuine message that was meant to rally the world, in making a strong and coordinated international response to growth by the leaders of the strongest economies of the world (Obama, 2009) as well as having a strong and coordinated regulatory response. Although this is happening on the national level within different countries, most organizations and companies
from various economies this time round do share a common view as well, of working together in order to find feasible solutions to the current problem.

The centre of this research is in external knowledge transfer from developed countries to developing countries, which has also been badly affected by the economic crisis. Specifically, this thesis will focus on external knowledge transfer between Sweden and Uganda, in a study that will target nonprofit making development projects. Many companies and organizations are in a state of anxiety for the fact that they see it as a risk to invest or open up businesses or organizations in other countries that may also be facing similar economic woes. For instance in Uganda, multi-national telecom giants such as Warid Telecom and Zain Telecom are being affected so much, to the extent that they have decided to cut jobs in order to balance up their costs and stay in business (Monitor, 2009). Many of such multinational companies have been involved in businesses in developing countries like Uganda, and have contributed greatly to the economy through the transfer of knowledge to the people of Uganda. Nevertheless, the competitiveness of such organizations tends to dwindle when the economy is in trouble, and when the consumer spending decreases (Porter, 1985). However, while organizations and companies are aware of the current situation and how they are affected they still retain the mind-set of achieving their set objectives and goals, which is always possible when there is limited competition in the market.

In that respect, the relationship between knowledge transfer and competitiveness is highlighted by Nonaka and Teece (2001), who opine that knowledge is the key to economic progress, as well as business and corporate success. By employing strategies such as mergers and acquisitions, alliances, outsourcing, etc companies and organizations transfer knowledge, which in the end would have long term effects on their competitiveness and success (Nonaka and Teece, 2001). Another view that is in support of such a notion is from De Wit and Meyer (2004) who opine that competitiveness is at the core of the success or failure of firms, for it determines the appropriateness of the firm’s activities that can contribute to its performance such as innovation, a cohesive culture, or good implementation.

As this thesis research will highlight in the empirical findings, the process of external knowledge transfer is affected by a number of factors and barriers that are experienced by managers from both sides of the knowledge giver, and knowledge receiver (Ang and Massingham, 2007). These factors are; cultural, individual, organizational, and knowledge management. In that respect, leaders that get involved in the external knowledge transfer process
always very much have to apply some sense making, for sense making (Weick, 1995) means talking about reality as an ongoing accomplishment that takes form when people make retrospective sense of the situations in which they find themselves. Weick (1995) contends that sense making clearly involves the ongoing retrospective development of plausible images that rationalize what people are doing. While it is viewed as a very significant process of organizing (Weick, 1995), sense making unfolds as a sequence in which people concerned with identity in the social context of other actors engage ongoing circumstances from which cues are extracted, hence making plausible sense retrospectively, while enacting more or less order into those same ongoing circumstances. Weick’s (1995) views are consistent with Ang and Massingham (2007) reasoning that factors such as culture, absorptive capacity, management factors, etc have to be put into consideration by the managers while carrying out the process of external knowledge transfer.

Nonaka and Teece (2001) idea that knowledge is the key to economic progress creates the need for external knowledge transfer which of course as a process, is dependent on many factors for its success. In the opinion of the researcher therefore, knowledge transfer should not only be for profit, but also for non profit making purposes. Hence this research is focused on projects that take place between Sweden and Uganda for nonprofit development purposes. The initial opinion that there is need for cooperation and coordination (Obama, 2009) makes the researcher to believe that external knowledge transfer would help poor (developing) economies to survive in some sectors when relations with rich (developed) economies are built. However, much as this knowledge transfer is desired, the above mentioned factors like cultural, individual, organizational, and knowledge management factors would create barriers and limitations to the smooth and successful achievement of the external knowledge transfer objectives.

1.2 Discussion of the problem at hand

Lahti and Beyerlein (2000) contend that for any organization to be able to enhance performance, key knowledge must be able to be shared, disseminated, and used on an organization wide basis so that it becomes a potential asset. Since knowledge transfer involves conveying and diffusing knowledge within a firm or among different firms, as well as between separate external organizations (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000), there are quite many problems that occur as of when the process is taking place. This research is therefore meant to high-
light those barriers and limitations that may affect the process of external knowledge transfer.

In the perspective of the researcher, if a need to relocate from the country of origin to another country arises, the first thing that would come in mind is the distance between the two locations. The geographical distance in the opinion of the researcher would therefore become an issue to consider provided there would be a requirement to return from the original point. Similarly, the external knowledge transfer that takes place between organizations in two different countries would first of all have the geographical distance as a factor that these organizations have to deal with (Hutchins and Michailova, 2003). Due to cultural differences that are caused by the geographical distance therefore, the conditions through which individuals share knowledge with other groups, organizations or groups external to the organization would as well be different (Hutchins and Michailova, 2003). Practically, as Hofstede (1980) stated, knowledge transfer between different cultures is a result of an evolution of a relationship of trust between local employee/business people and the international managers.

Initially, the process of external knowledge transfer is usually a result of globalization, international trade, development projects, etc between developed and developing countries. As argued by Perrons and Posocco (2008), globalization is a concept metaphor used to encapsulate the contemporary transformation of economic, social and political relations across the globe arising from the increased intensity, frequency and speed of interconnections between people and places via flows of money, goods, services, people and ideas. Additionally, Weick and Kathleen (2005) contend that globalization as well as the advancements in information and communication technology (ICT) has been some of the main contributors of modern structuring of an organization for, they both require a high degree of communication that would enhance synergies, proper geographical positioning, learning, smooth development activity, etc.

In the researcher’s opinion, much as it is theoretically evident that opening up successful communication and coordination modes would yield positive results especially during these difficult economic times, there are quite a lot of factors that would lead to the creation of barriers and limitations to the process of external knowledge transfer. As depicted from the literature, cultural factors, individual factors, organization factors, and knowledge manage-
ment factors are the ones from which the barriers and limitations originate (Ang and Massingham, 2007), and are the ones that the researcher uses as a guide to empirical findings.

1.3 The Research Questions

The research questions are modified in a way that fits the purpose of the study. These limitations are based on the projects that are or were carried out between Swedish organizations and Ugandan counterparts.

In a bid to get more clarification, the researcher sees the need to discuss more about the key words in the research questions. According to the World Bank (2009), developed economies (industrial countries or industrially advanced countries) are high-income countries in which most people have a high standard of living. Standard of living is the level of well-being of an individual, group or population of a country as measured by the level of income or by the quality of various goods and services consumed. Developed countries are sometimes also defined as countries with a large stock physical capital in which most people undertake highly specialized activities (World Bank, 2009). Since this research is going to focus on knowledge transfer, Swedish organizations will be researched about in representation of developed countries. As an example, Sweden is an export oriented market economy featuring a modern distribution system, excellent internal and external communications, and a skilled labor force (World Bank, 2009). According to statistics from the World Economic Forum 2008, the competitiveness index ranked Sweden 4th most competitive, which has been due to the fast GDP growth since reforms in the early 1990’s, especially in manufacturing (INSEAD, 2009).

On the contrary, World Bank (2009) also describes developing countries as ones with low or middle levels of GNP per capita. Despite their high per capita income, countries like Hong Kong (China), Israel, Kuwait, Singapore, and the United Arab Emirates are also classified as developing countries because of their economic structure or the official opinion of their governments (World Bank, 2009). As a representative of developing countries in this research, Uganda’s economy is based on agricultural products that bring in 90% of export earnings (B.O.U, 2009). Although Uganda posted growth rates in GDP of 6% from 1998 to 2003, it’s still the poorest countries in the world (Encyclopedia of Nations, 2009). The economy is very much dependent on the country’s flow of aid from external donors. INSEAD (2009) statistics shows Uganda rank 122nd out of 134 countries that have the latest
technologies. This is tantamount to the view that Uganda has not yet received the advantages of technological knowledge transfer.

Depicted from the above figures, there is a very wide gap between developed and developing countries, and there has always been a belief that it is problematic to transfer knowledge. The research questions below are therefore designed with a background view that there are many problems that may occur during the process of external knowledge transfer.

1. Discuss the barriers and limitations that are faced by the organizations during the process of external transfer of knowledge between developed and developing economies?

2. To what proper extent are these barriers or limitations handled in order to achieve the set objectives of organizations?
1.4 Aim and Purpose of the study

Since there is a huge geographical distance between the people who would engage in the process of knowledge transfer, many barriers and limitations arise and the need to tackle them as fast as possible is usually imminent due to the fact that there is a need to achieve the objectives that are outlined before the whole process of knowledge transfer unfolds. This thesis is therefore aimed at finding out the barriers and limitations that arise during the process of external knowledge transfer between a developed and developing country.

Most literature that will be used in this research does hint on the process of knowledge transfer, and knowledge sharing between organizations, individuals, etc with a purpose of being competitive, as well as realizing business profits (Nonaka, 1994). However, although the issue of competitiveness and profitability is inevitable and makes sense when discussing external knowledge transfer, there isn’t a lot of literature that specifically tackles the issue of knowledge transfer between developed and developing countries by nonprofit making organizations for the purpose of development. For that particular matter, this research is also aimed at finding out the pending barriers and limitations especially during the process of carrying out non-profit development projects. It’s noteworthy that the limitations and barriers would threaten one of the most important goals of carrying out external knowledge transfer— sustainability, due to the fact that if any organization or company cannot sustain the projects through monitoring and evaluation, the chances of failure would be really high. This research is also aimed at academically contributing to the field of knowledge transfer. The researcher hopes that this research would help researchers and practitioners in pointing out possibilities for future research on knowledge transfer.
1.5 The Scope and Limitations

This thesis research is meant to target external knowledge transfer in organizations, regarding projects that are not for making profit. This being said, it does not mean that the organizations from which this research gets information are not profit making. However, although the targeted companies or organizations do not bear intentions of making profits out of the implemented projects, the extent to which their popularity would soar, or the benefits that would be realized by organizations in the developing country due to the involvement in such development projects would not be tackled and detailed in this research. In actual sense, some of these organizations or companies are rather competitively doing business, but the projects in which they were involved and from which this research gets information are for development purposes. Nevertheless, this research has a limitation of not targeting the effects that the barriers of external knowledge transfer would have towards the profitability and competitiveness of an organization or company.

In this research, only organizations/companies in a developed country (Sweden) and a developing country (Uganda) will be researched about. It would have made much more sense, and hence realize more results if a number of developed and developing countries are researched about. Nevertheless there may be some limitations to knowing the barriers of external knowledge transfer if it is between two developed countries, as well as between two developing countries.

1.6 The research paper disposition

This paper is composed of different chapters that complement each other in order to have a clear flow of the research, as well as having a clear path towards the aim of the research.

Chapter 1: The Introduction; in this particular chapter, the reader will find the description and the discussion of the problems of external knowledge transfer from Sweden to Uganda. Cultural difference issues, individual factors, knowledge management factors, as well as organizational factors are discussed.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework; This chapter will give the reader the theories that the researcher uses while carrying out this research. A deeper insight about knowledge in gen-
eral will be given, as well as the strategies for managing knowledge, knowledge transfer, the creation of knowledge, and the factors that affect the process of knowledge transfer. From the literature, a model that shows the factors which lead to the barriers of external knowledge transfer is also discussed by the researcher.

**Chapter 3: Methodology;** methods for data collection will be discussed. The researcher outlines the deductive approach, together with the qualitative interview as the research method to be used in getting information that will be analyzed from respondents.

**Chapter 4: Empirical Frame work and findings;** in this particular part, an introduction to the selected organizations will be given, as well as the projects where knowledge transfer took place. The factors that lead to barriers in the model from the literature will also be analyzed, basing on the information from respondents. The findings show that the discussed factors affect external knowledge transfer to some extent. There are also new factors that are found out after the research.

**Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations;** the chapter gives conclusions about the researched topic and factors affecting external knowledge transfer, as well as recommendations for successful knowledge transfer. The researcher also hints about suggestions for future research within this chapter.
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the researcher will explain various literatures that are used in the research. In general, knowledge will be discussed, as well as giving the reader ways and strategies of managing knowledge. In order to get a much broader view, the knowledge transfer process will also be discussed in this chapter. The researcher will also discuss the factors that affect knowledge transfer, from which a model for the factors affecting external knowledge transfer will be drawn.

“Great minds discuss ideas; Average minds discuss events; Small minds discuss people”

(Eleanor Roosevelt)

2.1 Description of knowledge

Knowledge as a concept has received attention from a number of researchers, philosophers, practitioners, and scholars (Nonaka, 1995), and as it will be viewed in this theoretical frame section, several researchers have taken interest in the concepts of knowledge management, knowledge transfer, etc. For instance, Polanyi (1966) views knowledge or the process of knowing as being personal, and hence related to the individual. Knowledge can therefore be viewed as a type of intellectual capital that has the ability to change how individuals and organizations view and create the world around them (Polanyi 1966, Lahti and Beyerlein 2000). In a great contribution to the field of knowledge, Nonaka (1994) suggests that one of the best way of discussing and characterizing knowledge is by distinguishing it from data and information. In support of this view, Spender (1996) adds that data can be classified as raw numbers, images, words, and sounds derived from observation or measurement. Further still, unlike information which represents data arranged in meaningful pattern (Nonaka, 1994) knowledge is about beliefs, commitment, perspectives, intention and action. In a detailed opinion about knowledge and data, Liang (1994) opines that knowledge is one of the four entities in a theoretical model of processing information. A data element is the most basic entity due to the fact that it conveys only a single value and is indivisible (Liang
In that respect therefore, information is relevant data that is organized into a single message, hence knowledge is created by combining related pieces of information over a period of time (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000).

2.2 Generating of knowledge

Before any knowledge is transferred, the process of generating it becomes important for the companies and organizations. Knowledge generation is therefore driven by the people (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), who engage in learning activities and knowledge sharing through interactions. Weick (1995) links knowledge generation to sense making by arguing that sense making is a result of generating of knowledge in the sense that individuals within an organization make sense out of the available information. Individuals use their frame of references or schemata that is a result of prior experiences and knowledge in relation to the existing information to understand and form new knowledge that would in turn make them make sense of situations (Weick, 1995). In order to show some background, the ability of an organization as an open system to generate knowledge is due in part of what Cohen and Levinthal (1990) describe as its absorptive capacity, in contention that the ability to access and use knowledge is largely determined by the degree of prior related knowledge, which allows (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000) the capability to identify new and valuable information and understand how it can be turned into knowledge.

In a highlight about external knowledge transfer therefore, wisdom is a subset of new knowledge that is created when one uses one’s deductive ability given a certain base of knowledge (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000). In the taxonomy of this model therefore, knowledge is not the same as information for information is related to a message, while knowledge is developed and organized out of a procession of information based on the beliefs, values and commitment of the individuals involved (Liang, 1994). The above idea is supported by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) who distinguish knowledge and information. In the first incidence, unlike information, knowledge is about beliefs and commitment for the fact that knowledge is a function of a particular perspective, stance, and intention (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Knowledge is also about action and meaning whereby the similarities between knowledge and information are found in their characteristics of being context-specific and relational, for they depend on situations in which people interact among each other (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Nevertheless, Lahti and Beyerlein (2000) contend that
information becomes knowledge once it is understood and its value (including how it can be used) is learned, hence enabling the creation of knowledge via learning.

In order to get more clarifications and a background to external knowledge transfer, knowledge can sometimes be treated like as simple asset, and much of the discussion about the appropriateness, intellectual property rights, and the return to R & D investments reflects this conviction (Spender, 1996). “This definition leaves us powerless to deal with those aspects of knowledge that seem to differ significantly from our intuitive ideas about assets and the way they behave, hence knowledge seems to be a non-rivalries or public good, one whose quantity and value is not diminished by sharing it with others”- Spender (1996).

This view is supported by the notion that knowledge is a resource within the company’s resource base which comes along with large experience for the competitiveness of the company, technological awareness, a proper understanding of the market, as well as good knowledge about the political, social, economic, and legal developments (Porter 1985). Similarly, “The value for knowledge assets will always increase as of when they are used, and the competitiveness of the company will definitely be realized from the interaction with rival companies within the industry”.- Davenport and Prusak (1998)

2.3 Knowledge and organizational learning

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) argue that the process of external knowledge transfer creates a platform for organizational learning, which is the conversion of explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge. In addition, organizational learning entails learning by individuals in a firm, which becomes implanted in the structure, culture, and memory of the firm hence allowing it to become more flexible and adaptive to its internal and external environments (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000). Organizational learning and knowledge management are very much interactive in nature, and are not mutually exclusive concepts due to the fact that their relationship could depend on how the two terms are defined (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000). Organizational learning enables knowledge management because it is through learning that the value and application of information is understood, thereby creating knowledge (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000) which would later be transferred. Knowledge management also enables organizational learning due to the fact that the knowledge that is managed provides additional opportunities for learning that in turn can also create new knowledge, (Lahti and
Beyerlein, 2000) hence knowledge management is a way of formalizing learning through strategies, structure, and processes.

### 2.4 The different forms of knowledge

It makes great sense in this research to discuss the forms of knowledge that would be transferred. Chini (2004) opines that the research that is taking place nowadays is very much based on the background of tacit and explicit knowledge. For that matter, Chini (2004) views are in agreement with Polanyi (1993) literature that characterizes all actions as present in both tacit and explicit knowledge, though tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1993) is difficult to articulate and transfer.

#### 2.4.1 Tacit and Explicit Knowledge

Polanyi’s (1993) views about the distinction between tacit (implicit) and explicit knowledge gave way to a lot of studies by various researchers such as Nonaka (1994) within the field of knowledge management. Tacit knowledge is more subjectively related to individuals, and has been very much linked to know-how, hence becoming more difficult to formalize and transmit (Nonaka, 1994). According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), tacit knowledge is more of an ongoing process of human understanding that is closely tied to action, commitment, and involvement in specific contexts, and involves viewpoints, intuition, and values that individuals develop through experiences. Tacit knowledge can be broken down into cognitive and technical elements (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000), and the cognitive element can be described in a way that allows individuals to create functional representations of their world by using analogies in their minds. Examples of these cognitive elements include paradigms, schemata, and beliefs that assist people in understanding their environment (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000).

On the contrary, explicit knowledge is relatively easy to articulate and codify to declarative knowledge (Nonaka, 1995). Although explicit knowledge is very much based on information, it is very much richer because its value is understood (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000) and it is therefore conveyed through formal, methodological languages. Nonaka (1995) further argues that explicit knowledge is discrete and can be represented in books, archives, data bases, and libraries.
Nonaka (1994) contends that although differences do exist between tacit and explicit knowledge, as well as the extent to which they should be differentiated, these knowledge forms are not exclusive but rather complementary. In that regard therefore, knowledge can be converted from one form to the other (Teece, 2000) and that knowledge is related to actions and practices, which hence makes doing and knowing inseparable. Polanyi (1966) is of the view that all knowledge is tacit, and rooted in tacit knowledge. This view is hence further supported by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) who argue that no matter how explicit rules are in firms, there will always be some uncertainty that creates a need for human beings to make inferences and strong judgments. Hence knowledge and meanings from this perspective are viewed from a social constructs, which cannot be reduced to the meaning-giving activity of individual subjects (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1996).

Another issue to note before knowledge is transferred is that knowledge actually exists on a continuum (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990) with explicit and tacit knowledge anchoring the respective ends, and this assumption is based on the fact that some forms of explicit knowledge may be closer to tacit knowledge than other forms.

![The Knowledge Continuum](Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000)

Given the knowledge continuum assumption, the knowledge transfer process for a certain situation is very much likely to involve a simultaneous transfer of degrees of tacit and explicit knowledge (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000). However, it is simpler to describe knowledge stemming more from the tacit end of the continuum as tacit knowledge, and describing the stemming more from the explicit end as explicit knowledge (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000).
2.4.2 Collective Knowledge

Since external knowledge transfer is more of a collective activity, there is need to discuss collective knowledge. According to Cohen and Levinthal (1990), collective knowledge is believed to stem from the individual. This cognitive perspective places knowledge as a term that is used in several publications, and is considered to be intimately attached to the individual who owns and knows it. Collective knowledge (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990) is therefore further explained as an aggression to individual knowledge. However, in contrast to such an idea, Spender (1996) contends that collective knowledge should not be reduced to individuals, and that collective knowledge and individual knowledge should be separated. Spender (1996) reiterated the notion that collective knowledge is deeply embedded in the culture, artifacts, routines, etc. Other insights about collective knowledge are given by (Nonaka 1994) with an emphasis on the socially constructed nature of knowledge, with the view that knowledge is created and held collectively by the people through learning and continuous social interactions.

Baring in mind that this research is about external knowledge transfer, it is imperative to discuss Nonaka’s (1994) argument that tacit and explicit knowledge exist at multiple levels, such as individuals, groups and organizations. In that regard, due to the simultaneous existence of the two interrelated knowledge dimensions at the individual and collective levels, the process of creation of knowledge can be described as one in which individual knowledge is amplified and internalized as a part of an organization’s knowledge base and vice versa (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000). Nevertheless, Nonaka (1994) opines that knowledge creation always starts with individuals as humans acquire and process tacit knowledge in environmental interactions.

Conclusively before any knowledge is transferred, there are quite many differences regarding the nature of knowledge, particularly with respect to the question of whether there exists collective or social knowledge (Nonaka, 1995), as well as the form in which it exists. While there is an emphasis on the subjectivity, tacitness, and dynamic dimensions of knowledge, knowledge is often treated as an objective and functional entity that is deeply rooted in regulation (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000). The other end of the continuum (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000) in figure 1 also has the view that knowledge cannot be captured by taxonomies because of its fluid nature. Spender (1996) also adds that the various conceptual
differences about knowledge make it difficult to define knowledge and the role that it plays in the societies

2.5 Knowledge Management

In this research that focuses on the external transfer of knowledge, knowledge management is an area of interest. Knowledge management has become a subject of great interest due to the notion that knowledge is a source of the firm’s sustainable competitive advantage (Grant, 1996). From a strategic point of view therefore, knowledge is very important to an organization and it requires an efficient knowledge management procedure (Porter, 1985) in order to convert it into competitive advantage. The above views have been further supported by leading organizational scholars such as Nonaka (1994), and Drucker et al (1997) who argue that knowledge management is the key to the competitiveness of an organization. The definition of knowledge management by various scholars point to a few crucial issues, and it has been defined as entailing the deliberate intent to increase, renew, share, or improve the use of knowledge represented in structural, human, and social elements of intellectual capital (Haggie and Kingston, 2003). In a quite similar characterization of knowledge, (Boisot, 1998) contends that knowledge assets are regarded as economic goods in their own right. Nevertheless, the core competence is the fruit of the organizational learning process, and it gets used repeatedly in a variety of circumstances, hence resulting in the benefits that are enhanced to the organization (Boisot, 1998).

While the transfer of knowledge was largely a one way process that maximized learning for subsidiary employees (Kogut and Zander, 1992), knowledge management emerged with the focus on a two-way process in which each culture has access to the skills and competencies that are required for their partners. Similar views are given by Wier and Hutchins (2005) who contend that knowledge sharing also refers to a two way learning process, advocating an assimilation of ideas. According to Wier and Hutchins, (2005) it is important to note though that knowledge sharing does not only result in competitive advantage for organizations, but can rather be detrimental to an organization in that once knowledge is codified and articulated, the organization risks losing information to its competitors

There are quite a number of sources where knowledge management is rooted (Lahti and Beyerlein, 2000) but one key link as it will be mentioned later is to information processing and theory which relate on how data are handled and administered. The rapid development
of information technology, as well as the growth of information processing have led to in-
formation revolution (Porter, 1985) hence creating a competitive advantage for companies
who out- perform the rest of the competitors. As for competitive advantage, Lahti and
Beyerlein (2000) discuss that gaining a competitive advantage is not enough, but sustaining
it would determine the long term success of the company or organization.
2.6 Strategies for managing knowledge

In this discussion that is meant to find the barriers to external knowledge transfer, it is imperative to discuss strategies for knowledge management. According to Krogh et al (2001) knowledge strategy is one that denotes the employment of knowledge processes to an existing or new knowledge domain, in order to achieve strategic goals. In the first incidence, this definition entails a process focus rather than a contents focus, and it hence assumes that knowledge is dynamic rather than static (Krogh et al, 2001). This view is further supported by Nonaka (1995), who assumes that the domains in which knowledge is characterized are a starting point rather than end states. Krogh et al (2001) further argues the assumption that the processes that are applicable to a knowledge domain, impacts on the way that domain would change in order to reach a strategic goal such as innovating, enhancing efficiency, and better ways of managing risk. The argument goes ahead with the notion that the core processes of creation and transfer dominate the evolution of the domain, and hence the strategist’s choice is to strike a balance between existing and new knowledge domains, understanding the core knowledge processes, as well as the firm’s goals (Krogh et al, 2001).

On the part of management, De Wit and Meyer (2004) assume that strategy means choice, and that the firm should allocate resources to knowledge domains and processes. In that respect therefore, striking a balance between the developing of the existing or new knowledge domains is a difficult process that must be pursued with care (Krogh et al, 2001). When industries that are already established are exposed to actual and potential substitutes, new knowledge about technologies and actions needs to be rapidly supported and transferred (Krogh et al, 2001, Nonaka, 1995), hence the need to build the firm’s capacity at absorbing these technologies and information which in turn is a difficult venture unless there is a commitment for substantial resources.

According to Krogh et al (2001) firms or organizations can help their resource allocation by distinguishing four generic knowledge strategies stated below:

- Leveraging
- Expanding
- Appropriating
- Probing
2.6.1 The leveraging strategy

This strategy sets out from the existing knowledge domains and focuses on the transferring of the knowledge throughout the whole organization (Krogh et al, 2001). In terms of strategic goal contribution, the leveraging strategy can first be oriented towards achieving efficiency in operations as well as reducing risks in operations (Krogh et al, 2001). Ideally, the strategy views seem to be drawn from Nonaka’s (1995) opinion that the company internally transfers existing knowledge from various knowledge domains, such as product development, manufacturing, marketing and sales, human resources, purchasing, finance, etc. When efficiency is realized, there would be an increase in the results of the local adaptation of cost-effective processes and services invented and developed elsewhere (Krogh, 2001), hence knowledge transfer is essential to the consolidation of activities, as well as the standardization of tasks.

![Figure 2: The Four Knowledge Strategies (Krogh et al, 2001)](image)

Krogh et al (2001) further contend that in innovation-oriented knowledge workshops, knowledge is shared across disciplines, including successes and failures which allows for faster innovation. By sharing knowledge in this way, building upon trust between the participants, the risk to repeat a mistake is significantly reduced, hence nurturing creativity and entrepreneurship (Krogh et al, 2001). Related to this view is Porter’s (1985) opinion that information and communication technologies (ICT) also play an important role in leveraging knowledge across domains in the company. Together with database software, or web technology with search engines, Krogh et al, (2001)b further argues that ICT also helps to create a repository that allows parties to become aware of the opportunity to exchange the knowledge.
Another important aspect about the leveraging strategy is the effects on the ability to manage risk (Krogh et al, 2001), for the fact that sharing of the existing knowledge within or between knowledge domains throughout the whole organization will reduce the risk of overtaxing resources. Within organizations, the sharing of knowledge is done when the employees gain access to new data and information, as well as acquiring new tools and procedures to solve new tasks (Nonaka, 1995). The shared knowledge about competitors and regulatory environments makes the organization increasingly aware of competitors’ moves and policy changes that could affect the performance of the company (Krogh et al, 2001).

2.6.2 The expansion strategy

The expansion strategy comes from the existing knowledge domain of the organization, and targets knowledge creation by drawing on the existing data, information and knowledge (Krogh et al, 2001). The strategy is aimed at increasing the knowledge scope and depth by clearly refining what is known (Krogh et al, 2001), and by employing more people who are bound to take part in the knowledge creation process. According to Krogh et al (2001), the process of knowledge creation may occur in various groups in the company that are in need of utilizing an existing knowledge domain. In order to achieve this, Nonaka (1995) adds that the combination of explicit and tacit knowledge would be desired in the creation of new product and service concepts that are based on tacit knowledge, or rather socializing members around certain tasks and work processes. Noteworthy, (Krogh et al, 2001) contend that the effects of using the strategy lay in the better understanding of key organizational processes, achieving of incremental innovations through combining the existing customer data and information about new technologies, and finally the creation of new knowledge base would enhance the organization’s ability to manage risks through leveraging, hence reducing the problem of overtaxing knowledge and resources (Krogh et al, 2001).

2.6.3 The appropriation strategy

Another suggested strategy is the appropriation. According to (Krogh et al 2001), the appropriation strategy is predominantly an externally oriented strategy, from which the key challenge is to build up a new knowledge domain through the transfer of knowledge from external sources. The strategy can help the company in achieving operational efficiencies, and it also helps in attaining innovation goals where by the partner company provides mar-
ket, manufacturing, and product knowledge that can provide a unique platform for building up new knowledge, products and services internally (Krogh et al, 2001). The strategy also helps to gain knowledge about the competitors of the company (Krogh et al, 2001). In support of this view therefore, Porter (1985) argues that alliances with the existing or potential competitors might provide new knowledge about their strategies, technologies and personal resources, thereby enhancing the internal capability to predict their future strategies.

2.6.4 The probing strategy

This strategy is meant to build up a completely new knowledge domain, whereby the teams’ participants show an interest in doing something new within the company, and these individuals in turn need to build their own community around a loose idea or vision of a future knowledge domain (Krogh et al, 2001). This strategy may help in achieving radical innovations, as well as helping the company to see business processes and tasks in a new light, hence having some impact on the efficiency goals. Creating knowledge in a new knowledge domain will always be risky due to the fact that it overtaxes the existing resources of the company, and dramatically exposes the company to risks of competitor retaliation (Krogh et al, 2001). However, the probing strategy reduces exposure to knowledge deterioration risks because it allows a more balanced portfolio of existing knowledge, alongside new knowledge.

2.7 Knowledge Transfer

Since this research is aimed at finding out the barriers and limitations that are faced by the involved parties in the process of external knowledge transfer between developed and developing nations, it is imperative to discuss the process of knowledge transfer.

According to Argote and Ingram (2000), the process of knowledge transfer in an organization is one through which one unit such as a group, individual, or department is affected by the experience of another. The interaction between the people in the organization results in the elevation of every member’s potential and productivity that would hence lead to competitiveness (De Wit and Meyer, 2004). In support of the above notion, achieving competitive advantage lies in the knowledge assets (Teece, 2000) which are well managed for the transfer of knowledge and sustaining of the competitiveness. Szulanski (2003) views the process
of knowledge transfer as a communication process in which the inter-personal relationship between the sender and the receiver would be the determinant of the effectiveness of knowledge transfer. In order to make sense out of that, Davenport and Prusak (1998) add that the process of knowledge transfer involves the transmission of codified knowledge through sending knowledge to the recipient, and the absorption of that knowledge by that recipient.

Walter et al (2007) stressed the importance of interaction between different people, networks, etc in order to gain access to the knowledge, as well as being able to transfer the knowledge between them and their partners. The process of knowledge transfer can be done in an internal environment that consists organizational units (Sveiby, 2001), as well as taking place in an external environment, hence transferring knowledge between a company and other foreign companies or organizations.

2.7.1 The processes of knowledge creation and knowledge transfer

In a bid to highlight the differences between organizational and managerial theories that are aimed at acquiring existing explicit knowledge, Nonaka and Tackeuchi (1995) developed some theory towards knowledge creation. Upon conducting research on Japanese companies, Nonaka and Tackeuchi (1995) differentiated tacit and explicit knowledge in light to the creation of knowledge by companies and organizations. Within this research therefore, the discussion about knowledge creation is aimed at showing the background to the transferred knowledge.

2.7.2 The SECI model by Nonaka and Tackeuchi

Although Nonaka and Tackeuchi (1995) studies were done on Japanese companies and society, the relevance of the SECI model is relevant in this research due to the fact the modes of the model are present in any of today’s society. The SECI model has four modes of knowledge conversion in which an organization creates knowledge. This knowledge is created through the interaction of explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge, which is described as knowledge conversion (Nonaka and Tackeuchi, 1995; Nonaka et al, 2000). Through the conversion process, tacit and explicit knowledge expands in both quality and quantity, since there is an interaction that is viewed as a social process between individuals (Nonaka and Tackeuchi, 1995).
The four modes of knowledge conversion as discussed by Nonaka and Tackeuchi are:

1. Socialization        Tacit to Tacit knowledge interaction
2. Externalization      Tacit to Explicit knowledge interaction
3. Combination          Explicit to Explicit knowledge interaction
4. Internalization      Explicit to Tacit knowledge interaction

Figure 3: SECI Model by Nonaka and Tackeuchi (Knowledge Spiral)

**Socialization**

According to Nonaka and Tackeuchi (1995), socialization is the process of converting new tacit knowledge through shared experiences. As shown in figure No. 3 above, the grey area denotes tacit knowledge whereas the white area denotes explicit knowledge. For the fact that tacit knowledge is difficult to formalize and often time and space specific, it can only be shared through shared experience, such as spending time together or living in the same environment. Shulze and Hogel (2008) add that socialization yields new tacit knowledge
that is built through information interaction i.e. through an exchange of tacit knowledge. It occurs by spending time together, making joint hands on experiences, working in the same environment, and informational social meetings between members of an organization. During socialization, firms often acquire and take advantage of the tacit knowledge embedded in customers or suppliers by interacting with them (Nonaka and Tackeuchi 1995; Nonaka et al, 2000).

**Externalization**

Externalization is the process of articulating tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. When tacit knowledge is made explicit, knowledge is crystallized, thus allowing it to be shared by others, hence becoming the basis of new knowledge (Nonaka and Tackeuchi, 1995). In addition, Shulze and Hoegl (2008) contend that externalization is an act of codifying or converting tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, characterized by more formal interactions such as expert interviews or the sharing of lessons learned in a previous project. Nonaka et al (2000) further argues that concept creation in new product development is an example of this conversion process, and the successful conversion of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge depends on the sequential use of metaphor, analogy and model.

**Combination**

Combination is the process of converting explicit knowledge into more complex and systematic sets of explicit knowledge (Nonaka et al, 2000). Explicit knowledge is collected from inside or outside the organization and then combined, edited or processed to form new knowledge. Combination as a process is one by which sense is made of the relations between previously unrelated knowledge domains (Shulze and Hoegl, 2008). The new explicit knowledge is then disseminated among the members of the organization, and the creative use of computerized communication networks and large-scale databases can facilitate this mode of knowledge conversion (Nonaka et al, 2000). According to Nonaka and Tackeuchi (1995), breaking down a concept such as a corporate vision into one that is operating in business of product concepts also creates systematic, explicit knowledge.

**Internalization**

Internalization is the process of embodying explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge (Nonaka and Tackeuchi, 1995), and hence through internalization, the created explicit knowledge is shared through an organization and converted into tacit knowledge by the individuals.
Explicit knowledge such as the product concepts or the manufacturing procedures has to be actualized through action and practice. Nonaka et al (2000) contends that explicit internalization is exemplified when trainees on training programs understand the organization through reading manuals and documents about their jobs in the organization, and by doing this, trainees can easily internalize the explicit knowledge that is written in such documents in order to enrich their tacit knowledge base (Nonaka et al, 2000).

In the context of external knowledge transfer such as the one that is being focused on in this research, the internalization of knowledge to become part of the individual’s tacit knowledge base in the form of shared mental models or technical know-how makes knowledge become a valuable asset (Nonaka et al, 2000). In that sense therefore, the tacit knowledge that is accumulated by the individual can then set off a new spiral of knowledge creation when it is shared by other members, employees, etc through interacting and socializing (Nonaka and Tackeuchi, 1995; Nonaka et al, 2000; Shulze and Hoegl, 2008).

2.7.3 Factors affecting knowledge transfer by Ang and Massingham

This thesis is aimed at finding out the barriers that are faced by the involved parties during the external knowledge transfer process. The guiding literature from Ang and Massingham (2007) introduce the factors that affect knowledge transfer in five categories which are; cultural factors, organizational factors, individual factors, knowledge process and knowledge management factors, and knowledge resource or knowledge characteristics factors. Initially, the purpose of Ang and Massingham (2007) literature was to examine the effects of national culture on knowledge management for multinational companies, for the fact that multinational companies often decide whether to standardize, or adapt their operations (Ang and Massingham, 2007).

Although there is growing overlap between cultures, differences among knowledge management styles are likely to continue due to the differences in histories, cultures, and institutional forces (Zhu, 2004) hence a universal concept of knowledge management is unrealistic, counterproductive and undesirable. In that regard, Ang and Massingham (2007) agree with Pauleen and Murphy’s (2005) opinion that knowledge management models that exclude the influence of national and regional culture seriously undercut their potential effectiveness particularly in global applications.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Summary of factors affecting knowledge transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural factors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sender and recipient</em></td>
<td>Characterized in terms of the strength of their social ties, their level of trust and the extent to which there is common processes and values.</td>
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<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational factors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Headquarter control</em></td>
<td>The evaluation of the effectiveness of knowledge transfer, as well as corporate social mechanisms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mechanisms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Leadership</em></td>
<td>Should take a more active and supportive role towards knowledge transfer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Forms of ownership</em></td>
<td>Wholly owned subsidiaries provide good control over the knowledge transfer process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Strategic similarity</em></td>
<td>Firms with strategic similarity would develop social ties with similar knowledge structures for easy knowledge transfer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Incentive based learning capacity</em></td>
<td>An increase in the firm’s incentive based learning capacity would increase the effectiveness and efficiency of knowledge transfer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Partner protectiveness</em></td>
<td>Partners in a strategic alliance would prefer to protect their knowledge from their partners, which would be a barrier for the knowledge transfer process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>HR management practices</em></td>
<td>The interaction effects between both employee’s ability and employee’s motivation have an influence on the knowledge transfer process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Organizational culture</em></td>
<td>Knowledge friendly culture would lead to successful knowledge transfer, and the organizational culture must fit with the firm’s objectives for knowledge management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual factors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Absorptive capacity</em></td>
<td>The ability of staff to understand and apply knowledge resources that may be used by the firm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Knowledge transfer capacity</em></td>
<td>The focus is on the concepts of knowledge transfer costs and the firm’s ability to transfer knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Learning intent</em></td>
<td>Firms and individuals with higher learning intent would be more effective than those with lower learning intent in the knowledge transfer process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Psychosocial Filter</em></td>
<td>People often filter information that they obtain from other employees because they fear that the new information or knowledge might be mis-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge characteristics factors</td>
<td>Knowledge embeddedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If knowledge is embedded in people it would mean that it is necessary to transfer the person in order for the firm to transfer the knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Desirability of knowledge        | If the knowledge is expected to enhance a firm’s skill level and competitiveness the recipient would be more willing to acquire the knowledge from the sender. |

| Codified versus tacitness        | Tacit knowledge is harder to transfer compared to explicit knowledge. |

| Causal ambiguity                 | Causal ambiguity is present if the reasons for success and failure in replication of a capability in a new setting cannot be determined. |

| Knowledge management factors     | An organizational infrastructure for knowledge transfer should identify organizational members who have the right skills and assign roles to them. |

| Infrastructures                  | IT is more suitable for the transfer of explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge should be transferred through the social interaction between people. |

| Information technology           | Without measurable success, most employees and management would lose interest in the knowledge transfer process. |

Figure 4: Factors affecting knowledge transfer by Ang and Massingham (2007)

As opined by Ang and Massingham (2007), the above mentioned factors are the ones that affect the transfer of knowledge within the organization. It should be noted that within the context of external knowledge transfer, some of these influencing factors do not apply. Although Ang and Massingham (2007) theory is really good in guiding this research towards the empirical findings, there are some influencing factors that will be excluded when creating a conceptual model for the research. The researcher has therefore edited these factors for the purposes of suiting the context of the research. The researcher will therefore use the literature to find out the existence of any of the chosen affecting factors.
The would-be influencing factors and limitations of external transfer of knowledge

The above model shows the factors that affect the external transfer of knowledge, as depicted from the studied literature. It is believed by the researcher that cultural factors, individual factors, organizational factors, and knowledge management factors are the ones that affect the external transfer of knowledge and from them, barriers and limitations to the process of external knowledge transfer arise. These factors have been explained in detail as seen in Figure 4 (Ang and Massingham, 2007) literature. The research is based on the view that if all these affecting factors or barriers are solved or controlled by the involved parties from both Sweden and Uganda, the process of external knowledge transfer would be a success for the companies and organizations.

Within the methodological framework therefore, these factors that were drawn in a model form will be presented to the interviewees, with some hope of having a guide to the empirical findings, which is meant to realize the truthfulness of the effects of these factors towards
the external transfer of knowledge. The interviewees will be questioned on the criterion of finding out whether these factors played a role in the limitations/barriers of external knowledge transfer process.
3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology chapter is meant to show the methods that the researcher uses during the process of doing research. Positivism and interpretative scientific paradigms will be discussed. The researcher will also throw some light on the intended research approach, as well as discussing various ways of collecting data. The researcher will also explicitly discuss about the interview process, as well as giving views about the validity of qualitative research.

“I don’t go by the rule book... I lead from the heart, not the head.”

(Princess Diana)

Methodology and methods are sometimes used as though they were synonyms. Rubenowitz (1980) disagrees with such an idea, and hence goes ahead to give a clear distinction between methodology and methods. Methodology is the study of methods, and deals with the philosophical assumptions that underlie the research process, whereas a method is a specific technique for data collection under those philosophical assumptions (Rubenowitz, 1980). In this section, both methodology and the methods of data collection will be discussed in detail by the researcher, in a bid to explain their usefulness to the research.

3.1 Scientific paradigms

Scientific paradigms are part of methodology, and hence reflect different ways of thinking, as well as ways of treating data in modern research (Remenyi et al, 2002). There are two types of scientific paradigms that this research will throw some light on, and these are the positivism and interpretative paradigms.
3.1.1 Positivism and Interpretative paradigms

In accordance to Rubenowitz (1980), positivism as a methodology contains the underlying philosophical assumptions of research in most of the pure and applied sciences, physics, chemistry, engineering, etc. Positivism is based on ideas of objectivity or by means of measurement, scientific method, and empiricism. Positivism was a reaction to the idea that metaphysical speculation could provide a basis for obtaining true knowledge of phenomena (Rubenowitz, 1980). According to Remenyi et al, (2002) positivism or scientific empiricism has been proven as one that cannot therefore be applied to the social world. Since this research is based on finding the barriers to external knowledge transfer, which are surely in the social science field, hermeneutics and phenomenology are viewed as providing the basis of interpretative research (Remenyi et al, 2002). On its part therefore, interpretative research assumes that social reality can only be understood through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meaning (Gummesson, 2000). A further description of interpretative research paradigm states that interpretive research does not predefine variables, but explores human sense-making in natural settings, hence enabling the researcher to gain an insight by discovering meanings from understanding of the whole subject (Gummesson, 2000).

Within this research, the model that is used for gathering information and interviews is based on facts that are drawn from theory, which facts will be interpreted after the interviews are done. Together with the qualitative data collection (interviews), the interpretive approach will therefore be useful due to the fact that when using this approach, language takes centre stage, and hence qualitative data assessments are much favored and appropriate (Gummesson, 2000).

3.2 The intended research approach

The relationship between theory and the empirical facts is distinguished between the deductive and the inductive approaches (Gummesson, 2000). Within this research, the deductive approach will be used, for the fact that it initially starts with discussing the chosen theory, from which the empirical perspectives are given after verification or rejection of the hypothesis and assumptions that are derived from the chosen theoretical framework. As a com-
pletely opposite approach from the deductive one, the inductive approach is when the researcher starts with the empirical framework towards theory. In this incidence, the research would be aimed at architecting new models of theory from the available gathered data and information.

The researcher will use the deductive approach, which is tantamount to saying that at an initial stage of the research, various theories are used as a guide to the next level of the empirical perspectives that will later help in realizing the findings and interpretations. Noteworthy, the deductive and inductive approaches can be combined by the researcher to form an abductive approach (Gummesson, 2000) where new theories are derived from the empirical findings which would be further elaborated in further empirical studies. It should be noted however that this research does not aim to examine the validity of the hypothesis, but rather to give an interpretation of the theoretical concepts with the help of the empirical results. These factors that are drawn from theory may not be the only factors that do affect the external transfer of knowledge. For that matter therefore, the interviews that are done with the interviewees will not only be meant to find the truthfulness and the occurrence of these factors, but also other factors that may be realized from the research.

### 3.3 Data collection

During the course of doing research, researchers are faced with different kinds of data, from which theory is created for the purpose of getting the results and findings of the research. Data can be classified as either primary data or secondary data, and can also be collected using qualitative and quantitative methods.

#### 3.3.1 Primary and secondary data

During the period of doing research, primary data can be collected with a specific intention of backing up the available data, in order to reach the analysis of the research. According to (Merriam 1998), interviews and observations are said to be the most common types of data collection. On the other hand, secondary data is the type of data that has been collected and published before by other people. There are several types of secondary data in form of books, articles, magazines, newspapers, case studies, etc.
Primary data has been central in the empirical part while interviewing the respondents, in view of getting the empirical findings. There are various views that are given by different researchers about the advantages and disadvantages of both primary and secondary data. Merriam (1998) opines that the usefulness of secondary data may be limited in some ways since it is mainly collected in disregard of the problem at hand, hence viewing it as second-hand data that has been already generated for old projects. Primary data on the other hand addresses the problem at hand, for the fact that it is new and may be regarded as first-hand data or information (Merriam, 1998).

### 3.3.2 Qualitative and quantitative research

According to Walliman (2001), the type of approach that will be used and the kind of realized data will hugely depend upon the methods that are used for the study. Researchers can either use the qualitative and quantitative approaches of getting data. In that sense, the quantitative research approach uses statistical tools for collecting and quantifying numerical data. It usually involves large scale participants (Sayer, 2000) to quantify the frequency of occurrence and complex text scores. Strauss and Corbin (1998) describe the qualitative research approach as one that provides the collection of information that cannot be quantified. It is not possible to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods, due to the relationship between the two; for quantity is a measurement of quality (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Qualitative research is a research about persons, their lives, experiences, emotions and feelings about organizational functions, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Patton (1990) also adds that the quantitative approach is an easy approach to present in a short period of time, hence measuring data in a standardized and systematic way.

In the context of this research, the choice of qualitative research is very appropriate due to the fact that as according to Strauss and Corbin (1990), it involves the need to discover what is really going on, with the belief that since the research is aimed at finding out the barriers and limitations to the external transfer of knowledge, people that take part in such a process are actors who take an active role in responding to situations that are problematic. Qualitative research can be different from quantitative research to the extent of not having been statistically generated, or through other quantification approaches (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Qualitative research will also be appropriate in this research since finding the barriers to the
process of knowledge transfer requires the understanding of human behaviors, as well as knowing why people behave in a certain way, what they think about such situations, and how they are ready to react to such behaviors (Patton, 1990). In this context therefore, the quantitative approach will not be appropriate due to its numerical analysis that is not suited for finding out answers to the research problem.

3.4 Interviewing of respondents

While doing qualitative research, interviewing of the respondents is an appropriate tool when gathering primary data. Interviewees usually behave in different ways that would make the researcher become aware of the circumstances that are being interviewed about. According to (Bell, 1996), the researcher can judge from the hesitation, voice, or actions of the interviewee and hence would have enough information at disposal than information that can be got from documented questionnaires. It should be noted that during the interview, the researcher usually wants to get as much information as possible from the respondents or interviewees, and so it is clearly up to them to create an atmosphere that is favorable for primary data collection (Bell, 1996).

There are two interview types that the qualitative researcher can opt for while carrying out qualitative research. One of them is the formalized interview, and the normal interview that can be carried out through a conversation (Bell, 1996). Structured interviews are ones where by the same questions are sent to the interviewees with limited answer possibilities, hence making the interviewee able to give answers that are intentionally directed to the exact question (Bell, 1996). As for unstructured interviews, the qualitative researcher will have a great pool of available data from which conclusions would be made.

During this research, the researcher will use the general interview guide approach in which questions that concern the barriers and limitations of knowledge transfer will be raised, and as Patton (1990) contends, the wordings of the interview questions are loosely formulated. The interviewees will therefore be asked about the factors that have been raised from the literature, and which factors have been put in a model form.

Further still, it is logical (Patton, 1990) to find out about the kind of questions that will be presented to the interviewee during the course of the interview. The kinds of questions that are to be used in this research depend on the nature of the problem that is being researched
about (Patton, 1990). Barriers and limitations of external knowledge transfer between developed and developing countries fall in the category of focusing upon the personal experience and behavior of the people who are part of the knowledge transfer process, as well as finding out how the giver and receiver responded to such circumstances (Patton, 1990). Questions that highlight the values and norms of the interviewee will also be asked for the purposes of understanding the interpretive process (Patton, 1990) of knowing what ideas and thoughts the interviewee has about the barriers or limitations of the external knowledge transfer process.

Patton (1990) also stresses the considerations about the wording of the interview questions that are presented to the interviewee. In this research, open-ended questions will be used since the researcher aims at getting unrestricted and elaborate answers (Patton, 1990). The researcher should also avoid “why” questions due to the fact that such questions not only presume a cause-effect relation between two incidences, but also view all the occurrences in the world as being in perfect order, and that the respondent may be assumed as having perfect knowledge about the topic (Patton, 1990). Another point that should be put into consideration is that the researcher should avoid dichotomy in the questions. This is tantamount to saying that the researcher should avoid questions that would enable the interviewee to answer with a plain “yes” or “no” (Patton, 1990) for the fact that such answers will definitely make the interviewee not to talk about their feelings, experiences, knowledge, and opinions.

According to Gillham (2005), interviews may be conducted in form of face to face interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer. This kind of approach is very good in such a way that the interviewer may clearly observe the interviewee’s reactions and behaviors that would help in having a huge choice of issues to write about (Gillham, 2005). Due to time constraints and the high amount of money that would be needed to travel and interview the respondents, the choice of using face to face interviews was dropped by the researcher. Some of the respondents are located in Uganda, which makes the face to face interview even harder. Face to face interviews are usually appropriate (Gillham, 2005) for; they explore the advantages of verbal communication elements which of course are not present, and are very much missed for the purposes of extensive interpretation during the process of doing telephone interviews.
The chosen way of conducting the interview will be through sending questionnaires to the respondents who in turn will be given interviews through the telephone. Questionnaires alone will not be appropriate for this research due to the fact that some reactions and attitudes of the interviewee will not be noted by the interviewer. So there is need for making telephone interviews after the respondent receives the questions that will be asked, a move that helps the interviewee to get prepared for the interview. As Gillham (2005) opines, the answer in a spoken form will help the researcher to gain a deeper insight about the problem or issue that is being researched about. Gillham (2005) also reiterates that talking to people through the telephone is one of the best ways these days since most people have telephones and mobile phones, and may be reached from wherever they are in the world.

3.4.1 The Interview questions

Bearing in mind of what has been discussed about interview questions, the questions below were well designed for the purposes of putting all the discussed concerns into consideration

1. Would you please introduce yourself and tell me about your position and responsibility in your company?

2. Could you please shortly describe the project specifications in terms of the issues mentioned below?
   - Name and type of the project
   - The involved stakeholders and their relationship
   - Aims and objectives

3. What is the reason for going ahead with this project (i.e. background?)

4. Describe the kind of knowledge that you were/ are transferring

5. What approach or methodology did you use in transferring this knowledge?

6. What were the major problems or barriers that you faced during this process of knowledge transfer?

7. What solutions did you apply to solve these barriers?

8. Could you please explain the occurrence of any of the above factors that are presented in the model (Figure No, 4)?

9. Could you please shortly describe ways through which you would achieve sustainability of the project, bearing in mind the existence of barriers/ problems to external knowledge transfer?
3.4.2 Qualitative validity

Depending on their philosophical perspectives, some qualitative researchers reject the framework of validity that is commonly accepted in more qualitative research in the social sciences (Gillham, 2005). Such researchers reject the basic realist assumption that there is reality that is external to our perception, and that it does not make sense to be concerned with the truth or false implications of an observation with respect to an external reality, since this is a primary concern of validity (Gillham, 2005). According to Remenyi et al (2002), qualitative researchers such as the one for this research argue for different standards for judging the quality of the research. These are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

- **Credibility**

Credibility involves the establishment of a criterion that shows how credible or believable the results of qualitative research are, from the perspective of the participants in the research (Remenyi et al, 2002). From the chosen theory, the factors that affect the external transfer of knowledge are drawn from Ang and Massingham (2007) who are given credit and referenced by other authors in the field of knowledge management. Further still, the model that is drawn out of the literature contains factors that are widely faced in the field of social sciences. All the respondents also agree to the fact that these factors or barriers do affect the transfer of external knowledge, and therefore the credibility of this research is quite high.

- **Transferability**

According to Remenyi et al (2002), transferability is the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. In the context of this research, the findings regarding the barriers and limitations of external knowledge transfer between developing and developed countries can be easily transferred to create meaning in other research areas (Remenyi et al, 2002). This research has been thoroughly described by the researcher, as well as the assumptions that took centre stage in the research. Central to this research, is the fact that the researcher does not only target respondents from one side, meaning that ideas from interviews are well drawn from both the de-
veloping and developed country’s perspectives on these affecting factors. In this incidence, the assumptions to which this research was based are valid, and they are from the view that there are quite many disparities between developed and developing countries, hence making various situations such as culture, knowledge management, organizations, and the individual focal to various judgments.

- **Dependability**
  On one hand, it is a matter of concern whether the same results would be obtained if the research is done twice, but on the other hand if something is measured twice then it is a measure of something different (Remenyi et al, 2002). The findings from this research are based on the notion that the political, social, economic, technological, and legal situations are believed to be constant. Due to the fact that these factors are constant, the results of the research were dependent on such a notion. For instance the technological backwardness of developing countries creates a lot of problems in communication and knowledge transfer. But assuming all countries had equal technological advantages may be some of the factors in the findings would not be affecting external knowledge transfer.

- **Confirmability**
  Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others (Remenyi et al, 2002). Through the whole research, data was checked on a daily basis to make sure that the data is confirmed. Other factors that affect the external knowledge transfer processes that are different from the five chosen ones may be present. It is not in the interest of the researcher to neglect and omit other factors, but the reason as to why they may not have been found out is the same reason why the researcher is studying or engaged in education—learning and finding new information.
4 EMPIRICAL FRAME WORK & FINDINGS

In this chapter various project cases that were researched about will be described. The findings will show that the factors affected the knowledge transfer process to some extent. The research also shows that there are new factors: political will, ownership, and focus on the local needs, that also need to be considered.

The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination

(Albert Einstein)

4.1 ERICSSON (SWEDEN)

Ericsson is the world's largest telecom services provider and the strength in telecom services has a strong correlation with the company's technology leadership, R&D achievements and long tradition of innovation (Ericsson, 2009). The Swedish company's services portfolio includes expertise in the areas of consulting, systems integration, managed services, network deployment and integration, education and support services (Ericsson, 2009). That includes planning, building, deploying, optimizing, running networks and solutions for customers as well as providing strategy-, technology-, network-, operations- and competence consultancy services. The Company offers managed services capabilities within the telecom industry, and its offerings cover management of day-to-day operations of a customer's network including a managed capacity service for a network build out and on-demand capacity, as well as hosting of applications and content management (Ericsson, 2009). By outsourcing certain activities to Ericsson, operators focus on their core business of attracting, serving and retaining customers. Ericsson's services organization has over 30,000 service professionals working in 175 countries (Ericsson, 2009).

4.1.1 The knowledge transfer project in Uganda

Ericsson is involved in the Mobile Health Care project that is part of the Millennium Villages Project. The Millennium Project was commissioned by the United Nations Secretary-
General in 2002 to develop a concrete action plan for the world to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people (UNDP, 2009). The bulk of the Project’s work was carried out by people, each of which also presented its own detailed recommendations in January 2005. The Task Forces comprised a total of more than 250 experts from around the world including: researchers and scientists; policymakers; representatives of NGOs, UN agencies, the World Bank, IMF and the private sector (UNDP, 2009).

The Millennium Villages are designed to demonstrate what it takes to meet the eight Millennium Development Goals in rural Africa within five years. By initially working in 12 research villages located in 10 African countries, the Millennium Village initiative works directly with the respective communities, key non-governmental organizations and national governments to show how rural African communities can lift themselves out of poverty and achieve the goals if they have access to proven and powerful technologies to improve their farm productivity, health, education, and access to markets (UNDP, 2009).

As the leading telecoms services provider, Ericsson is working together with key stakeholders like Uganda Ministry of health, The Earth Institute of Colombia University, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Millennium Promise, UN Millennium Project, etc. The project is aimed at:

1. Providing telecommunication knowledge in health care systems with proper terminals.
2. Deploying a mobile health system that is meant to link health care workers through mobile communication.

The project’s goal of external knowledge transfer is given to the local health workers in Uganda by experts in from countries such as Sweden through;

- The provision of telecommunication knowledge in health care systems with proper terminals.
- Ensuring that the local health workers are aware of urgent functionalities like free calls between themselves.
- Arranging of hands-on training workshops together with experts from developed countries.
• Implementing of pilot projects, and full scale tests that are meant to enhance the competencies of the local health care workers.
• Demonstrations with small samples in order to contain the absorptive capacity problem that may be present in the local health workers.
• Etc.

In order to get information about the external transfer process, a qualitative interview was carried out by the researcher. The interviewed expert is a senior research engineer at Ericsson. The expert is an internal consultant for mobile health care, with the role of coordinating mobile health activities in the external knowledge transfer process.

4.2 IT+46, SWEDEN

IT46 is a Swedish-based IT consultancy company, with a vision of transferring knowledge to recipients for the purpose of promoting social change. One of the company's objectives is to use information technology to achieve sustainable development. But since information by itself is not knowledge, IT+46’s aim is to share knowledge rather than simply transfer information (IT+46, 2009)

Since 2004, IT+46 has taken this approach in more than twenty projects, from the design to the implementation and training. In its operations, the company works together with grassroots organizations, academia, as well as regulators in both developing and developed countries (IT+46, 2009).

The company brings more than fifteen years of hands-on international working experience in Information Technology in the areas of:

• Education and Training in ICTs
• Free and Open Source Software Development
• Localization of Software
• Design and Implementation of fixed and wireless Infrastructure
• Voice over IP
• Network and Computer Security
• ICT Policies and Development Plans
Since 2004, the company has trained over 350 people in fourteen countries (mainly developing countries) and worked with 16 donor partners (IT+46, 2009).

4.3 Makerere University, UGANDA

Makerere University, Uganda's largest university, was first established as a technical school in 1922, and in 1963 it became the University of East Africa, offering courses leading to general degrees of the University of London (MUK, 2009). It became an independent national university in 1970 when the University of East Africa was split into three independent universities: University of Nairobi (Kenya), University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and Makerere University. Today, Makerere University has 22 faculties, institutes and schools offering programs for about 30,000 undergraduates and 3,000 postgraduates (MUK, 2009).

4.3.1 The Community Wireless Resource Center project in Uganda

As a collaboration project between IT+46 and Makerere University (Uganda), the community wireless resource center project arose out of the need to reduce the high cost of connectivity in the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) supported telecom centers in Uganda, and to explore optimal connectivity models such as sharing the existing bandwidth with neighboring institutions via outdoor wireless networks (IT+46, 2009). It was anticipated by the experts that by collectively managing the cost of connectivity at each telecom center, more institutions could get access to the internet without heavy initial investments in satellite hardware and subscriptions (IT+46, 2009).

External knowledge transfer was done between the Swedish experts and the locals through making connectivity more affordable for the telecom centers by implementing a communication infrastructure that is shared and managed by the community. Such a concept is known as community wireless network, and it is based on the possibility for groups or communities to build self owned and operated networks (IT+46, 2009).

As a result of the project, it was expected that the Community Wireless Resource Centre would lead to the development of community wireless networks in rural areas. Consequently, connectivity in communities would be enhanced, and would be made available at a more
affordable cost. The project was also aimed at enhancing capacity of the engineering students and telecom centre staff in the installation and maintenance of community of wireless networks, hence increasing awareness and training on community wireless networks (IT+46, 2009).

In order to get views from both sides, the interviews were given to an expert at IT+46, Sweden, as well as to an expert at Makerere University, Uganda.

4.4 The SIDA and Makerere University ICT project

SIDA is the Swedish international development cooperation agency that strongly embarks on development in developing countries (SIDA, 2009). Together with Makerere University, SIDA through the department for research cooperation (SAREC) is aimed at providing assistance for strengthening national research capacity in developing countries. Through Makerere University in Uganda, SIDA has got current research cooperation with faculties like the medicine faculty, social science faculty, technology and agriculture (SIDA, 2009). SIDA has over the years funded ICT projects at Makerere in a substantial way.

The objectives of the first ICT project were:

- Enhancement of learning and research through access to online resources;
- User training to ensure optimal utilization of the computerized environment;
- Increasing ease and efficiency of communication for internal and external academic and administrative interaction;
- Establishing the basic minimum infrastructure necessary for computerization, and
- Using this as a platform to shift the university’s academic and administrative operations to a computerized environment through the implementation of the major corporate information systems (Library, Academic Management, Financial Management, and Human Resource Management);
- Establishment of a unit of experts who would assure the sustainable availability of all ICT resources through proper information resource management.

In order to get qualitative information, the researcher interviewed an expert who is the end user support manager from Makerere University.
4.5 Discussion of the influencing factors

Within this part, the researcher will discuss the factors that are believed to lead towards the barriers and limitations of external knowledge transfer between developed and developing countries. Each of the cases will be discussed together with the occurrences or absence of these particular factors. Information from the interviewees will be very useful in proving how valid the literature and the factors from the model are.

4.5.1 Cultural factors

The developed thesis model highlights culture as one of the most important factors to consider during the process of external knowledge transfer. According to Roger and Steinfatt (1999), Culture is a term that has different meanings, as highlighted below;

- Excellence of taste in the fine arts of humanities, also known as high culture
- An integrated pattern of human knowledge, beliefs and behavior that depends upon the capacity for symbolic thought and social learning
- The set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution, organization, or group.

As it has been depicted from the empirical model, some cultural issues were raised from the research literature, and are therefore going to be discussed in detail within each of the described cases of external knowledge transfer. These cultural issues are;

1. Trust
2. Communication
3. Cultural distance

In order for any success in external knowledge transfer, there has to be a very strong relationship between the giver and the receiver of the knowledge. According to the expert at Ericsson, one thing that was so important during the process of knowledge transfer was the building up of strong connections with the local people on the ground. The expert at Ericsson opined that people are different, as one moves further away from one’s country of origin. Much as the expert may trust someone at Ericsson in Sweden, it takes time to trust someone in Uganda, since there is a very huge difference in the culture. Compared to Ang and Massingham (2007) literature, the relationship between actors can be characterized in
terms of the strength of their social ties, their level of trust and the extent to which they share common processes and values. According to the expert, the initial aim of the project was to hire competent locals in Uganda, through whom they could communicate and wipe out any obstacles in culture. The above strategy worked very well in favor of the project due to the fact that most of the local managers in Uganda have had good education abroad, and that these local managers also work as interpreters, with a keen eye towards any limitations and problems in the project. As Weick (1995) states, knowledge generation is linked to sense making due to the fact that sense making is a result of generating of knowledge in the sense that individuals within an organization make sense out of the available information. Since these local managers have had PhD’s from countries like USA, there is a sense of calm in the expert at Ericsson, for communication becomes much easier. A lot of trust between the foreign experts and the local managers has been built over time, and that the local managers are the ones that see where the need is, and then make decisions upon what may work or fail within the project. The above is in agreement with Roger and Steinfatt (1999) argument about cultural relativism, which the degree to which one culture is accepted by another. Views of having a strong relationship and ties were also echoed by the expert on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere University. The expert said that there were virtually no cultural problems during when the project was taking place. He further commented that the Swedish counterparts in Uppsala University are so helpful and friendly, to the extent that if there are some complex problems regarding technology, they would be contacted for some help. Otherwise, most of the problems are solved by the counterparts at Makerere University.

The interaction between the people in the organization results in the elevation of every member’s potential and productivity that would hence lead to competitiveness and success (De Wit and Meyer, 2004). Having a friendly relationship with the local counterparts therefore, is one of the issues that may make the project very enjoyable, to the extent of achieving the project goals and objectives. The expert at IT+46 opined that local counterparts will always wonder about their involvement in the project. According to the consultant, there will always be periods when there is a disagreement on how to go ahead with the project. But the involvement of all the parties in the project will always mean that people’s views are also considered. The IT+46 consultant further said that after building this strong relationship with the locals, there will be good coordination and communication that will make people trustable with time. While installing the Community Wireless Resource Centre
project in Uganda, various places in rural areas were visited by IT+46 consultants. The visiting of various places while transferring knowledge makes someone to realize how people behave, and live in their daily lives, which is in line with Roger and Steinfatt (1999) argument about cultural relativism thus making it easy for the transfer of knowledge. One of the interviewed local experts from Makerere University also voiced similar concerns that in order for any project to succeed, foreign experts need to collaborate with the local experts in good will. The above view is in contention with Szulanski (2003) argument that the process of knowledge transfer is tantamount to a communication process in which the inter-personal relationship between the sender and the receiver would be the determinant of the effectiveness of knowledge transfer. If there is no trust between the two parties, then the chances of the project to fail are high. During the project, good collaborations between IT+46 and Makerere University counterparts made the project successful.

The Ericsson expert within the external knowledge transfer project (Millennium villages) agreed that the initial process of running the project was not easy at all due to the communication problems. However, the presence of local Ericsson offices in Uganda has helped a lot, because they are the ones that handle any problems that might arise within the project. Similar calls for proper communication between IT+46 and the people at Makerere University showed the need to work together. According to the IT+46 consultant, more people should be involved from the beginning and that the project should be aimed at making people to like what they do. The consultant therefore calls for ownership to be partially given to the local counterparts. At Makerere, the involved local experts on both projects argued that the transfer of knowledge became much easier when the involved parties made sure that all the problems are reported and solved. So, it was every one’s responsibility to see to it that the project succeeds. This notion is similar to Kogut and Zander (1992) view that knowledge transfer is a two-way process in which each culture has access to the skills and competencies that are required for their partners.

The expert on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere further said that even if the counterparts from Uppsala in Sweden are not in the country, they have constant communication between them that is done by e-mail, and phone conferences. This showed that communication was therefore not a problem at all, hence having the agreement with Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) notion of socialization.
During the interview, the expert at Ericsson further opined that there is a huge cultural gap or cultural distance between people in Sweden and people in Uganda. According to the expert, people’s beliefs, values and norms vary from culture to culture. For instance the expert expressed concerns to have a good working relationship with the people in Uganda due to the fact that there are huge differences in time management. Citing from Davenport and Prusak (1998) a knowledge friendly culture would be one of the most important factors for successful knowledge transfer. People would be interested in learning and sharing ideas between each other. Some people in Uganda absolutely lack time keeping ethics, for which the expert at Ericsson further expressed concern that while it is difficult for the locals to keep time in Uganda, the situation becomes annoying when there is no excuses given for such a gesture. The expert from Ericsson further pointed out a disparity in time keeping by saying that unless someone is a minister or a very important person; the expert cannot make a delaying wait for over 15 minutes. The cultural issue was also mentioned by IT+46 consultants in the sense that the culture of the locals in Uganda would entail an organization of big events, open events, hacking-nights, and linkages with local companies. In so doing, the local consultant at Makerere adds that the local people will therefore know that the event is very popular; hence making the locals interested in attending it. However, the expert on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere, completely contradicted Ang and Massingham (2007) cultural distance notion by saying that there were no cultural problems.

Consultants from IT+46 (Sweden) and Makerere (Uganda) said that while it may not matter much who attends official occasions in Sweden, occasions in Uganda must attract a special person in the village. There is also a need to be careful with whatever is said in public as well as closely to one another. While there may be direct talking in Sweden, the process of communicating to the people in Uganda is not so easy due to the indirect ways of communication. In order to have a successful knowledge transfer process therefore, the experts argued that a local guide would help a lot in the suppressing of any would-be problems. The differences and the distance in culture would also determine how successful the process of external knowledge transfer would be. Similarly, while carrying out the millennium village project, the expert at Ericsson realized that if experts push things hard in order to get a good response, local people would just agree by just saying yes, yet nothing is done in actual sense. In this incidence, the Ericsson expert said that there is need to have all the local stakeholders on board, during the decision making processes. The expert from Ericsson in
Sweden also gave an example that as a cultural belief, people in Sweden would be open to criticism, while people in Uganda would walk away without saying the truth.

### 4.5.2 Individual factors

Individual factors were also found to have a great impact towards the success or failure of the external knowledge transfer process. Since knowledge is owned by the individuals, it is of great importance to throw some light upon some of the individual factors that affect the knowledge transfer process. The process of knowledge transfer starts from the individual, and then spreads out into the group (Nonaka and Takuechi, 1995). The individual in this external transfer process is therefore of great importance.

The three individual factors that were researched about are:

1. *The absorptive capacity*
2. *Commitment of recipients*
3. *Credibility and comfort ability*

In the context of this research, the absorptive capacity of an individual may be described as a set of individual routines and processes, by which individuals acquire, assimilate, transform and exploit knowledge to produce dynamic personal and organizational capability (Cohen and Levinthal, 1990). If the knowledge resources are well understood and applied by the individual, then such individuals are said to have a high level of absorptive capacity.

While carrying out the Millennium villages’ project therefore, the expert at Ericsson was meant to oversee the installation of a mobile health care system that was meant to improve operations within the department of health in Uganda. The expert said that the project did not experience many problems regarding the absorptive capacity of the recipients for the fact that the stakeholders had embarked on employing very competent locals in Uganda. The expert said that people will always grab the knowledge if it is the appropriate one. It was also stressed by the expert that locals must be given what they can handle; otherwise there is a risk of not transferring any knowledge at all. This is similar to Cohen and Levinthal (1990) opinion that absorptive capacity is the ability of the individuals to understand and apply knowledge resources that may be used by the organization. In that respect, the
Ericsson expert also opined that the transfer of knowledge may be doomed for failure if there are too many high-tech applications that are taken to developing countries as a process of knowledge transfer. On its part, Ericsson did embark on employing “easy to use” technology, instead of installing high-tech gadgets. In support of such views, the expert at IT+46 opined that giving many high-tech applications may lead to problematic situations due to the fact that the locals may not want to show their ignorance by agreeing to everything, which would hence mislead the experts and thus becoming a huge limitation in the transfer of knowledge. While discussing with the local experts from Makerere University in Uganda, there is so much support in the need to encourage the local experts to get involved in demonstrations, advertisements, as well as replications. In doing so the locals will be very much interested in the project, which will hence increase their interest to learn and participate. When this is done, the process of knowledge transfer will therefore stand a chance of being successful. However, the expert on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere argued that there were some delays on the project due to the fact that people did not wholly know how to implement systems initially. But as time went on, there were constant training and workshops that enhanced their capacity.

According to the Ericsson expert, Commitment from the involved locals was one of the factors that proved to be important during the process of carrying out the mobile health care project. Initially, the expert says that even if people know that they would not get the technology without help from developed countries, they realize that this technology is brought for the sake of helping them. The initial relationships with the people on the ground can easily make the project successful, for the fact that people will feel that they have been involved in the project. The Ericsson expert further opined that during the project, the team was careful not to introduce a strong monitoring system, for the fact that within the culture, there are limited operations with strong rules. Another issue that was raised by IT+46 experts is that there was need for the project to involve the locals in the planning and operations. There is need to build the firm’s capacity at absorbing these technologies and information which would require the commitment of the involved people (Krogh et al, 2001, Nonaka, 1995). Ownership is a very important issue in projects that take place between developed and developing nations. People according to the experts at Makerere, will not view them-selves as very important in the project if their views and ideas are not put into consideration. Ownership will make people to feel that they are making a personal contribution, instead of thinking about benefiting the organization. While carrying out the community
wireless resource center project with Makerere University, the IT+46 expert argues that all the intellectual property that is related to the training modules towards the local people should bear mechanisms that allow trainees to become future trainers. In so doing therefore, ownership by the locals will enhance the commitment which would lead to smoothening of the knowledge transfer process.

Another issue that was raised by the researcher is credibility and comfort ability. The Ericsson expert opined that people are usually skeptical of any new things that come, in form of external knowledge transfer. During the mobile health care project, the expert could read from the eyes of the people, in a way that they may have wondered whether the technology would work in a properly managed way. At Makerere University, the local expert argued that people had a belief that some technology that worked in Europe would not work in Uganda. However, although the products are high-tech, the experts were always trusted due to the earlier strong relationships and strong ties (Nonaka and Tackeuchi, 1995), that they had created with the locals. During the open source project with Makerere University, IT+46 experts ensured that there was a virtual place where trainees could get access to expertise in form of laboratories, open forums, mailing lists, and online communities. In so doing, the transfer of knowledge became apparent and easy due to the fact that the locals were comfortable with the learning criterion that were used by the experts, through an exchange of tacit and explicit knowledge (Nonaka and Tackeuchi, 1995). Further still, during the training modules, the local counterpart on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere said that people were very comfortable with the documentation sessions that provided the necessary tools, time for technical writing, as well as the description of best practices. All these led to the enhancement of the commitment of the locals, thus increasing the chances of successful knowledge transfer.

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) contend that tacit knowledge is more of an ongoing process of human understanding that is closely tied to action, commitment, and involvement in specific contexts, hence involving view points, intuition, and values that individuals develop through experiences. The commitment of the local people (health experts) is also seen as a very important factor, according to the expert at Ericsson. People will always think of gains and motivational factors in the project. People will also think of their own reward within the project, and therefore it is very important to put this factor into consideration. Most projects to developing countries are viewed as ones that will only benefit the organization without
any regard to the local people. The expert reiterates the fact that the initial relationship building during the early phases of the mobile health care project was very useful in such a way that the locals felt as if they are part of the project instead of feeling like something is being imposed and dictated onto them by the experts.

4.5.3 Organizational factors

Organizations or companies with strategic similarity will be more effective in the transfer of knowledge between each other, and managers in organizations with strategic similarity will always find it easier to develop social ties between themselves, (Ang and Massingham, 2007) since they have similar knowledge structures, which will in the end help in the successful transfer of knowledge.

From the model, organizational factors that were drawn from the literature are;

- **Organizational culture and distance**
- **Strategic similarity**
- **Learn by incentives**

The expert at Ericsson acknowledged that there are huge strategic differences between Ericsson and the health centers to which the knowledge is transferred. Although there is a difference in strategic intent, they both share common views in how the project should run, as well as ways that can help to achieve the project objectives. According to the expert at Ericsson, there was a common goal of deploying a mobile health system for health care workers to communicate between each other through mobile phones. As Ang and Massingham (2007) argue, this common intent from both parties led to the increment of the desire, motivation and commitment to the external knowledge transfer process. The expert at IT+46 echoed similar views about the need to have the same shared vision for the project. While doing the project, the expert says that the team had to agree upon issues such as ownership, local needs, knowledge transfer methodologies, for the success of the project. All these issues were agreed upon by all the involved parties which strategically gave them a similar vision. Just as the local Makerere University expert on the community wireless resource center project, the IT+46 expert said that individuals need to feel like they are not only working for the organization, but also for themselves, for the fact that if they only feel that they work for the organization, then there is no much point for doing so, hence the lack
of morale. Similar views were also brought up by the expert on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere.

The expert at Ericsson threw some views towards the culture of the organizations that are working together for the purposes of knowledge transfer. Culture is something that does not take little time to adapt to (Hofstede, 1980), so it is one of the issues that should be greatly considered. For instance, the expert said that at Ericsson, people know what to do on different days of their working calendar. People know the days during which they should gather and do collective things such as occasions, parties, etc. On the contrary, although people in Uganda also have their own working culture, the expert from IT+46 contends that bringing these organizational cultures together may not be easy. For instance, the expert said that upon inauguration of the project in Uganda, there are beliefs that the ceremony should be pompous, in attendance of a prominent person in society. However, the expert said that since the project has a time frame, focus shifted from the organizational culture to focusing on milestones, as well as achieving the set objectives. In addition, the expert in charge of the community wireless resource center project at Makerere University noted that the culture of the organization is not so much different from the national culture (Hofstede, 1980). The expert went on to say that in Uganda, people will always skip work if they have a burial or a wedding ceremony to attend. In the opinion of the expert at Makerere therefore, knowledge transfer would not be wholly affected by the culture of the organization, hence further reiterating the need for relationship building and local ownership in the initial stages of the project, as well as gaining the much needed support from the government for the purposes of sustaining and scaling the project.

During the community wireless resource center project, the interviewed counterparts from both projects at Makerere University suggest that it is of great importance to motivate the local people that are working on the project. Mechanisms such as allowances, bonuses, paid dinners, etc would be appropriate for the locals. People will lose interest in the project if they do not have anything to motivate them. The expert further noted that project operatives were given transport allowances in order to boost their commitment to the project. On the other hand, the consultant at IT+46 argued that there were plans to pay for air tickets to Sweden for some of the local counterparts, in a bid to increase their capacity and knowledge, thus boosting their confidence while working on the project. In this incidence, people became even more interested and active in favor of the project. Although it was not possible
to see any limitations to the transfer of knowledge if there were no incentives, the increase in the motivation of the local people explains that there is need for motivating them. According to the expert at Ericsson, salary is the most important aspect to the people that receive the knowledge. People in the health care profession in Uganda get more motivated when they learn that they are will be well placed on the project. It is more of an issue of status in the society, due to the fact that the more influence one has in society, the more status and respect one gets. There are also “small things” that do motivate the people that are working on the project in Uganda. According to the Ericsson expert, a simple badge that could be placed on the coats of the project participants is something that would make people to feel proud and respectable by the rest in the society. Further still, during the process of external knowledge transfer, it is of importance to give responsibilities and mandates to the local people that are taking part in the project. For instance while working under the Millennium villages project on the mobile health care project, the expert from Ericsson said that competent local health workers were given enormous responsibility to make sure that they can perform in line to achieving the project objectives. All these issues according to the expert at Ericsson made these health workers proud, opened up good lines of communication (Szulanski, 2003), since they created a sense of ownership within the local experts towards the project. The above thus makes the project fun and enjoyable, with great commitment and a chance for knowledge transfer to become successful.

4.5.4 Knowledge management factors

The process of external knowledge transfer is one that should be properly managed, in order to make sure that there is success in the transferring of knowledge (Nonaka and Teece, 2001). There should be competent managers from both sides, in order for the process to succeed. It is believed that management experts are not the only ones that would be needed during this process (Nonaka and Teece, 2001). Since there is a very big concern on the part of culture, there is need to have some culture experts who can easily foresee any problems that may occur.

Knowledge management factors were considered in this research, due to the fact that knowledge management would be needed during external knowledge transfer.

These are some of the knowledge management factors that affect the knowledge transfer process;
1. **Infrastructure**

2. **Information technology**

3. **Causal ambiguity**

The expert on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere described the problems which they faced in the initial phase of the project. According to the expert, SIDA came to Makerere to do research but without the proper infrastructure. This was one of the limitations in the beginning of the project. New information systems were difficult to be controlled by different departments, which was blamed to lack of infrastructures. During the community wireless resource center project in Uganda, the experts from Makerere University and IT+46 said that they did encounter some problems with the infrastructure. The constant load shedding (power cuts/ electricity cuts) made it difficult for the in-house workshops and seminars. Nevertheless, the expert at IT+46 said that although there are infrastructure problems during the external transfer of knowledge, the need for conceiving an integrated solution has forced many ICT practitioners to explore other areas of knowledge such as localization, free and open source software, open documentation, etc in order to curb down any limitations.

According to the expert at Ericsson, proper infrastructures during the process of knowledge transfer are needed for the sake of having good operations (Ang and Massingham, 2007). The mobile health project did not have many problems with the infrastructure in Uganda, for the offices of operation were already in place, and communication lines were also set up for the purposes of the project. According to the expert, the only annoying problem is that when someone is travelling let’s say from the capital city (Kampala) to the airport (Entebbe), there is a lot of traffic, where by the cars move very slowly. The expert says that a lot of hours were spent along the way to the airport- a road that is full of other road users like cyclists and motor bikes. This would not have been a problem, but there are no alternative routes. Hence such a scenario according to the expert would lead to delays for meetings and other occasions thus limiting the process of knowledge transfer.

Information technology was sighted by the expert at Ericsson as one of the factors that affects the knowledge transfer process. According to the expert, knowledge transfer between the experts and the local health workers was mainly done using technical means. People were always given demonstrations about how the machines work. The expert also singled out the use of workshops, tests, and training sessions for the transfer of knowledge to the local Ugandan health workers. The above is similar to Nonaka and Tackeuchi (1995) argu-
ment that tacit knowledge can be shared during the interaction between the knowledge recipient and giver. The developments from the project were similar to Porter (1985) reasoning that the rapid development of information technology, as well as the growth of information processing have led to information revolution which in the end creates a competitive advantage for better performing companies. Similar views were aired out by the IT+46 expert, who opined that people learn more when they practically do things, than spending much time with teaching of theory. This means that information technology is more suitable for the transfer of explicit knowledge (Ang and Massingham, 2007). In support of the above views therefore, the local expert for the community wireless resource centre project at Makerere University said that technology for the sake of technology has not yielded much, due to the fact that the lack of sustainability has made the projects struggle. Further still, the Ericsson expert said that while in Sweden, communication to the Ugandan counterparts has been done through e-mails and phone conferences, meaning that information technology has played a major role in the transfer of knowledge between people. In another clarification, the Ericsson expert has not spent a lot of time in Uganda, which means that there have been fewer interactions with the local health workers. This hence means that there has not been much exchange of tacit knowledge compared to the transfer of explicit knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

Another factor that was raised from the theory was causal ambiguity, which tends to be the characteristic of tacit knowledge. Causal ambiguity occurs when the link between the resources of the organization and success cannot be determined (Ang and Massingham, 2007). In the context of the mobile health care project in Uganda, causal ambiguity may not be determined during the initial stages of the project. All the experts that were interviewed contend that the evaluation and monitoring procedures are some of the applied techniques for envisaging whether the project is on the right track or not. According to the IT+46 expert, an open training curricula and methodology that is based on problem solving, team work and peer learning that is supported by the local and external mentors would be an appropriate one in the external transfer of knowledge. Experts agree that targets and milestones are very important in evaluating the success or failure of the projects.

However, there was consensus that determining what the results of the project would be is a big gamble for the fact that a lot of resources would be spent on ideas that may fail. The expert on the community wireless resource center project as well as the expert on the SIDA
funded ICT project at Makerere University contend that the local ownership and knowledge transfer replication would be one of the solutions to the problem of causal ambiguity due to the fact that the local people would be committed to the project cause, thus increasing the chances for success. By using practical tools therefore, the mobile health care project is seen as one that is on track to achieve the set objectives and goals. The expert at Ericsson reiterates that although it may be difficult to determine the things that may happen in the future, the external transfer of knowledge is not affected due to the fact that there is a lot of money from donors that is meant for sustaining and scaling the project to other Millennium village target sectors such as education, government, poverty eradication, etc.

4.5.5 Factors found by the research

During the course of carrying out the interviews, the researcher found out that there are some other factors which affect the external knowledge transfer process. These factors were found out during the interview sessions, and were not mentioned in the literature.

1. Political will
2. Ownership
3. Emphasis on local needs

All the interviewed experts from both Uganda and Sweden agreed to the fact that the political situation in Uganda played a big role in the external transfer of knowledge. It is common sense to believe that if the situation in the country is calm, development projects would be very well conducted with a good chance to succeed. Various projects that have taken place in Uganda have had some extent of involvement with political circles. There is some legislation to follow in Uganda if one would like to implement development projects. For instance development projects should have a demonstration that the local people will benefit from it.

As one of the powerful stake holder in the project, the government of Uganda would like to see that not only is the project achieving short term objectives, but also being scalable to other areas of the country. When such development projects come to Uganda, the government usually puts money aside in order to contribute something on top of the available donor funds. One example is the Millennium villages project where by the government
through various ministries contribute some money that is aimed at enhancing the performance of the various sectors such as the health sector, education sector, agricultural sector, etc. This positive attitude by the government shows that the projects are aimed at fulfilling the needs of the local people and the country as a whole. The donor experts who work on the projects in Uganda always get a positive feeling when the government makes a positive contribution to the project—a gesture that leads to increased commitment from the donor countries and organizations. In that sense, when such positive attitudes are shown by the government, there are high chances that the projects would be successful thus leading to a smooth process of knowledge transfer.

The power of politics was also cited as one that led to a lot of problems, according to the expert on the SIDA funded ICT project at Makerere. There were laws that related to procurement led to the delay of the project. For instance there was an incidence when the University bought the information system from South Africa which created concern from the counterparts from SIDA. People at SIDA wanted the manufacturer to be well known to them, an incident that made Makerere University to embark on creating awareness for the local people to be ready with such particular requirement.

On the other hand though, the political situation also contributes to the failure or the slowing down of the process of external knowledge transfer. According to the IT+46 and Makerere University experts, the community wireless resource center project faced limitations and barriers when a strike broke out among the teachers at Makerere University. The teachers had complained for so long about low salaries and that they were demanding a pay rise from the government. Since the government did not take immediate steps to react, the strike drag on for over 3 months. These incidences affected the projects due to the fact that workshops had to be relocated to other premises on very short notice. Knowledge transfer in this case had to be affected so much that even participants had to be greatly reduced for the fact that the new premises had limited space. There were also complaints about corrupt police officers on the roads in Uganda. Experts from Makerere argued that police officers would ask for money and other valuables in case someone is involved in an accident or other traffic offences. This alone would reduce the morale of the foreign experts since such behavior is usually not common with the law enforcers in Sweden.

Another factor that the research found as affecting the process of external knowledge transfer is ownership. All the experts opined that lack of ownership would easily lead to the
project failure. As it has been argued, the experts agree that the involvement of the local people in the initial planning phase of the project would bear advantages towards the success of the knowledge transfer process due to the fact that this would lead to the building of strong relationships between experts from developed countries and the local counterparts.

The research also found out that another important factor that should be put into mind is the emphasis upon the local people’s needs. In the process of transferring knowledge, the experts said that the local societies must benefit from the projects that are carried out. For instance while carrying out the community wireless resource center project, the experts from IT+46 and Makerere University built water taps for the locals to get clean tap water for their domestic purposes. This idea was very good to the extent that the locals were even volunteering to help with the activities that benefited the society. The experts said that initially, the local people had showed no interest at all in the project due to the fact that they thought that the project had nothing to do with their interests. The locals usually think that this kind of technology only benefits the rich people that own businesses. In this regard, the local people always have a feeling that since they don’t have any gains from the projects, they simply ignore any thing to do with them. Making the local people get involved in one way or another is very important according to the expert working on the mobile health care project at Ericsson. The expert contends that the locals could highlight problems with the installations, which they reported to the experts for fixing. This according to the expert is a very good sign due to the fact that such kind of collaboration increases the relationship between the locals in Uganda and the Swedish experts.

4.5.6 FINDINGS

The initial aim of the research is to find out the barriers and limitations that affected the knowledge transfer process between developed and developing countries. A study has been done by the researcher with a focus on Swedish organizations from the developed world, and Ugandan organizations or counterparts from the developing pool of countries. Further still, the research is also meant to highlight in which these barriers if any, are handled in order for the organizations to stay on course of achieving the set objectives and goals.

In order to get a balanced set of results, the researcher interviewed two experts in organizations from Sweden, and two local counterparts from Uganda. It should be noteworthy to mention that although some of the organizations that are represented in this research are ac-
tively involved in profit making businesses, the projects that are targeted by the researcher, and in which these organizations were involved in are simply nonprofit, and they are just for development purposes.

The research found out that the factors that were drawn from the literature had a part to play in the limitation of the process of external knowledge transfer. According to the findings of the research, the extent to which these barriers or limitations are handled by the organizations is explained by the criterions that were used by the experts in the organizations to curb down the barriers and problems during the phases of the projects. It should be noted that during the presentation of the empirical data from the interviews, the researcher explains the affecting factors or barriers, as well as discussing various ways in which the experts handled the situations. The research found out that to a great extent, organizations had been aware of the occurrences of these limitations, and had arrangements for any eventual effect of these barriers towards the process of external knowledge transfer.

From the research, it was found out that cultural factors were strongly linked to the cause of barriers and limitations to external knowledge transfer (Ang and Massingham, 2007). Although the Swedish experts had prior knowledge on how to communicate and create good exchanges of knowledge, there were barriers in the cultural adaptations and understandings. It is also found out that as a big barrier and limitation, cultural differences lead to other problems such as communication, commitment and trust. In other words, adapting to the local culture is a prerequisite for proper communication, commitment and trust (Hofstede, 1980).

The research also found out that individual factors were not strongly linked to the barriers of external knowledge transfer. The experts argued that since the projects in which they were involved did not have a lot of technology or complex systems, the would-be problem of absorptive capacity was somehow contained by the project experts. The experts’ opinions embarked on building strong relationships and ties with the local counterparts in order to increase the commitment, credibility, and comfort ability (Szulanski 2003, Nonaka, 1994). Further still, the research found out that the involvement of local experts in the projects meant that knowledge transfer mechanisms were meant to be reproduced by the trainees and other third parties. At this point, the above brings the research to the issue of project ownership by the locals which truly reduces barriers and limitations in the process of external knowledge transfer.
Another finding of the research is that to some extent, knowledge management factors contributed to the barriers and limitations of the research. The research mainly found barriers with the infrastructure in Uganda. The research found out that due to the poor roads and transport system, some of the projects faced a lot of problems. Apart from that, the research findings didn’t find causal ambiguity as an apparent problem for the fact that the projects are on-going, well planned, and have a lot of available funds to use in care of any problems. At the same time information technology was found to have caused a few problems due to the fact that alternative communication means are in place in Uganda.

As the biggest highlight of this research, organizational factors were viewed as ones that have led the research to find other factors. From the literature, organizational factors have been regarded as ones that would play a role in the barriers and limitations of the research, but the findings of the research demonstrate otherwise. In the context of the research, it should be noted that the projects that have been targeted are for nonprofit making purposes. Basing on this fact therefore, the research has found out that factors such as organizational culture and distance, strategic similarity, and learning by incentives are factors that would be appropriate in a profit making organization that is working on profit making projects. These factors are therefore not appropriate, and according to the research, they do not apply to the barriers and limitations of external knowledge transfer that deals with development projects.

In the context of nonprofit making projects, the research found that the affecting factors are therefore political will, ownership of the project by the locals, and local needs. The findings of the research clearly showed that there is need to identify the needs of the local people. There are various problems that come up when the local needs are not fully considered, and this leads to the creation of barriers and limitations of external knowledge transfer. After the local needs have been identified, the research found out that ownership of the project by the locals is another factor that led to the barriers and limitations of the external knowledge transfer process between developed and developing countries. The research found out that the lack of involvement by the locals had proved to be a factor that decreased commitment, interest, and morale. Nevertheless, the experts contend that the planning and implementation of the projects should be well defined to solve problems that are identified by the local counterparts. Further still, the research found appropriateness in the use of problem solving
methods that would engage the locals, hence increasing their commitment, willingness, and interest in the projects.

In that sense, the local ownership opens the door to the political will. In Uganda, the research shows that the popularity of any event would create political interest. In this case, political calmness plays a role in the success of the project which hence leads to the successful transfer of knowledge where as political unrest would cause un-bearable problems. The relationship between these three factors is explained with a view that once the local needs are identified, then the successfulness of external knowledge transfer would be dependent on the extent of the project ownership, and the political calmness of the country.

During the collection of the findings, the research also found out that there is a variance in the responses of the interviewees from Uganda. Since they are the recipients of the transferred knowledge, there is a sense and willingness to comply with the ideas and methodologies that are suggested by the knowledge givers in Sweden. The research for example found out that the respondents in Uganda are much more free to discuss and exemplify issues that regard their involvement or needs, ownership, and the need for good communication whereas there was some reluctance in answering issues that regarded absorptive capacity, commitment, and trust. On the other hand since they are the knowledge givers, interviewees from Sweden were free to discuss nearly all the issues that regard the transfer of knowledge in Uganda.
5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, conclusions about the research will be discussed. Recommendations for the success of development projects will also be discussed. Furthermore, suggestions for future research will also be given.

“No man should escape our universities without knowing how little he knows.”

(J. Robert Oppenheimer)

The research was aimed at finding the barriers and limitations that affected the process of external knowledge transfer between developed and developing countries. It was believed that external knowledge transfer is becoming very rampant, due to the increased interest for organizations and companies to get involved in projects in other countries.

The choice of the projects from which this research got findings was motivated by the fact that most of the literature is based on previous research that has been done between two different companies or organizations from two different countries, as well as companies and organizations that are doing profit making businesses. That is tantamount to saying that most research on external knowledge transfer has targeted cross cultural mergers and acquisitions, strategic alliances, outsourcing (Bruner et al, 2003), and many other ways that may be termed as globalization. On the other hand, the researcher has tried to consider the fact that there has been limited research on development projects that are meant for nonprofit making purposes. For that matter, all the projects from which the research has got qualitative data are development projects that were/are being carried out by Swedish organizations and Ugandan counterparts.

The research found that to some extent, the mentioned factors that are drawn from the literature play a role in affecting the process of external knowledge transfer. Cultural factors according to the research do contribute towards the knowledge transfer process due to the fact that since the projects are done between two countries from two different cultures, there are some cultural concerns that the experts need to put in mind (Ang and Massingham, 2007). The research also found out that the individual factors cannot be ignored, and it’s from them that the relationships are built in favor of a smooth knowledge transfer process (Szulanski, 2003). Further still, the research found that organizational factors may be strongly applica-
ble in profit making organizations, thus the introduction of factors like political will, ownership, and focus on the local needs as factors that strongly favor nonprofit making projects which have been the centre of this research. Finally, knowledge management factors have also been found to affect the external knowledge transfer process to some extent. Under knowledge management, factors like infrastructure and information technology ranked high on the grid amongst those that posed a greater barrier or limitation.

5.1 Recommendations

According to the study, the following criteria were found by the research to be very much in favor of the success of development projects between developed and developing countries. In regard to all the mentioned factors; cultural, individual, organizational, knowledge management, and other crucial factors such as the political will, ownership, and local needs, development projects should be architected in a way that follows the aspects below;

1. Local needs should be identified by the local knowledge receiver and agreed upon by the knowledge giving experts.
2. Relationships should be built, from which friendships, collaborations, finding local competent skills are emphasized. This is meant to strengthen the ties between the knowledge receiver and knowledge giver that would try to contain any cultural problems.
3. Ownership of the projects should also be passed on to the local counterparts. In so doing, more relationships are built on an individual level through trust, commitment, credibility and comfort ability.
4. The role of politics should also be given consideration for the fact that various rules and regulations from the government would affect the process of external knowledge transfer. The willingness for sustainable development and scalability would always have a seal of approval from the government due to the extent to which other sectors may be affected.
5. The factors that would affect knowledge management should also be put into consideration. Information technology, infrastructure, etc should be considered for the success of external knowledge transfer. In addition, experts should also have evaluation and control mechanisms that would help to envisage any would-be problems or barriers which would affect the achievement of the project goals and objectives.
5.2 Future Research

The research found out that one of the concerns of the knowledge recipients in developing countries is to find means of how and where to find other donors for the project, after the planned period of the project has elapsed. Since knowledge transfer is very helpful for both developing and developed countries, it is an issue of concern to make sure that the process succeeds.

Baring in mind that there are various limiting factors to the external transfer process vis-à-vis the need to succeed and achieve the goals and objectives, it could be of much interest to find out if it is possible to develop a business model out of the development projects. Research on the enhancement of entrepreneurship would be interesting during the process of external knowledge transfer. Shifting the development project into an entrepreneurial business would be an interesting phenomenon since there would be exploiting of advantages, emanating from the initial relationships and strong ties with the recipient country. Thus there is interest to find out whether a nonprofit making development project would partially become a profit making project.

This is an idea that is so interesting, and it would therefore be given considerations for future research in this interesting social science of knowledge transfer.


APPENDIX

List of interviewees

- **ERICSSON**, Peter Håkansson, Senior Research Engineer, Telephone Interview on 18th May, 2009, Study room, Jonkoping International Business School.


- **Makerere University** (CWRC, Partnering IT+46), Dorothy Okello, Administrator, Telephone Interview on 19th May, 2009, Study room, Jonkoping International Business School.

- **Makerere University** (ICT for development, Partnering SIDA), Ali Ndiwalana, End-User Support Manager, Interview on 22nd May, 2009, Study room, Jonkoping International Business School.
Interview questions

1. Would you please introduce yourself and tell me about your position and responsibility in your company?

2. Could you please shortly describe the project specifications in terms of the issues mentioned below?
   - Name and type of the project
   - The involved stakeholders and their relationship
   - Aims and objectives

3. What is the reason for going ahead with this project (i.e. background?)

4. Describe the kind of knowledge that you were/are transferring

5. What approach or methodology did you use in transferring this knowledge?

6. What were the major problems or barriers that you faced during this process of knowledge transfer?

7. What solutions did you apply to solve these barriers?

8. Could you please shortly discuss any problems that you faced while working on the project in Sweden?

9. Could you please shortly describe ways through which you would achieve sustainability of the project, bearing in mind the existence of barriers/problems to external knowledge transfer?

10. What outcomes did the project realize in terms of milestones and goals?

11. In your personal experience, what did you learn from this project?