Chapter 15
Knowledge Management Capability in Higher Education:
The Case of Lecturers at Mzuzu University, Malawi

George Theodore Chipeta  
Mzuzu University, Malawi

Winner Dominic Chawinga  
Mzuzu University, Malawi

ABSTRACT

For many years, universities have been accredited for being driving engines for the global economy by training experts in various fields of study such as Medicine, Education, Engineering, Mining, Technology, Military and Knowledge Management just to mention some of the most notable ones. Mzuzu University (MZUNI) which is one of the four public universities in Malawi is also involved in the production of knowledge through research and teaching activities by its lecturers. By self-administering a questionnaire to 130 lecturers at MZUNI, the authors investigated knowledge management practices by lecturers at MZUNI by addressing three objectives namely; types of knowledge created and acquired by lecturers, techniques of sharing and dissemination of knowledge and challenges faced. Results suggest that lecturers are involved in knowledge management practices although knowledge creation is mainly achieved through PhD and master’s theses as part of their training as opposed to research outputs published in peer reviewed journals.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-1741-2.ch015
INTRODUCTION

Universities have been accredited for being driving engines for the global economy. Universities have trained experts in various fields of study such as Medicine, Education, Engineering, Mining, Technology and Military just to mention some of the most notable ones. Aside training these experts, universities have remained and are expected to remain epicentres of research activities which have led to the production of valuable knowledge which is critical to the survival of public and private organisations and individuals in the torrid and rough global economy. Without the production of knowledge which is commonly created in universities, the corporate world is likely to collapse because researchers such as Zack (1999, p.45), Kulkarni and Freeze (2004, p.657) and Demchig (2015, p.3633) have argued that knowledge is an important strategic resource which creates and maintains a competitive advantage. Having been tasked with a huge responsibility of creating innovative knowledge and imparting tacit knowledge to students through teaching (see Juceviciene & Edintaite, 2012, p.555), one wonders how these universities have lived up to producing and sharing of the knowledge. Thus, in this study, we investigate how knowledge is created and managed at a public university environment in Malawi.

Higher Education and Knowledge Management: Some Connections

Universities and other institutions of higher learning play a pivotal role in the creation of wealth of any country. As such, Stefankova and Moravcik (2012, p.1118) observe that universities are increasingly becoming a centre of attention of politicians and governments who are convinced that these universities are the readily available assets for transforming countries from industrial to knowledge society. Precisely, the Universities UK (2010) as cited by Burnett (2013) and Stefankova and Moravcik (2012, p.1118) indicate that the higher education’s main responsibility is to equip individuals with knowledge and skills required for key positions in government, business, industry and professions. In addition, universities are responsible for producing knowledge through research which they distribute to help individuals and organisations. In summary, universities have a threefold mission according to Metaxiotis and Psarras (2003) and Kokts (2010, p.92) namely; to be involved in teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. Knowledge produced by universities need to be managed and the process is called Knowledge Management. In a university environment, Knowledge Management is defined as “...the collection of processes that govern the creation, dissemination and utilisation of knowledge” (Mary & Scholar, 2009) and Ngulube (2005, p. 43) similarly defines it as “processes that facilitate the creation, identification, validation, acquisition, shar-
Doctoral Theses in Environmental Science: An Obsolescence Study
[www.igi-global.com/article/doctoral-theses-in-environmental-science/206866?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/doctoral-theses-in-environmental-science/206866?camid=4v1a)

Webscale Discovery Tools: A Solution for Inestimable Online Resources
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/webscale-discovery-tools/133958?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/webscale-discovery-tools/133958?camid=4v1a)