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## Transfer of skills technology and knowledge

**TURDIMURATOV SHAHZOD**

Technical School of Hydrometeorology

**Annotation:** This chapter is concerned with the rapid increase in technological advancement and its transfer across cultures. This is a vital area for the UK in its endeavours to seek competitive advantage in exporting in the face of fierce global competition. It is helped by the liberalization of cross-border movements, primarily in the EU, and the use of electronic communication, research and market intelligence.

**Key words:** Terminology, technology, knowledge, case study, skills, competence, Licensing and franchising, ability, developing countries.

Technology means different thing to people and organizations. According to Megantz (2002), to a scientist, technology is the end product of research, inventions and knowhow that may be developable into a commercial product, while to an engineer, technology is a tool or process that can be employed to build better products.

Knowledge. Several people have provided their unique interpretations on the definition of knowledge. The average person defines knowledge as just knowing something, and he also thinks that knowledge is power. Nonetheless, scholars and researchers have presented varied interpretations of what knowledge is by defining it in a variety of ways. Ganesh (2000) defined knowledge as an ordered collection of concepts, norms, processes, and information. Although there is a thin line separating knowledge and information, they differ depending on how they are organized. Information is unstructured, but knowledge is organized, according to Koniger and Janowitz (1995). Information is less rich and significant than knowledge. When information is put to use, knowledge could result. The process of technology transfer/acquisition by developing countries is one of learning and improving their technological capability (Barbosa and Vaidya, 1997). This is a complex, long-term process with various levels of technological competence such as the ability to use the technology, adopt it, stretch it, and eventually to become more independent by developing, designing and selling it. The Flow of Technology/Knowledge Transfer Below is the circular flow of knowledge and technology transfer from the Transferor to the Transferee and back to the Transferor.

Exporting information internationally is becoming more popular. Although there is a chance that the information could be exploited in a competitive manner, one obvious benefit is that the real investment in the foreign operation can be relatively little. Unless strict legal restrictions regarding copyright, patents, and trademarks are upheld. Consistent quality control is another area that could be problematic. In some circumstances, the

provider may continue to serve in a consulting position. Health and safety standards may well be of a lower standard in the recipient culture. Working conditions, safety equipment and medical care will need to be investigated and shortcomings remedied, and specialist training in safety procedures will need to be given. The technology and knowledge transfer has been a great challenge in developing countries because of lack of infrastructure and educational development of the people. For developing countries to achieve technology transfer certain factors as to be in place, such as good investment policy, basic infrastructures, attitude of people, good communication networks, etc. Over the years, developing nations have tried to encourage foreign investment participation in their countries, but these have been very difficult especially because of the political un-settlement in these countries. Developing countries that have succeeded in attracting few foreign investments still lack the successful transfer of technology from foreign companies to indigenous companies, mainly because of competitive advantage. The lack of government participation and partnership with universities and research & development project (R&D) has been a great draw-back to the progress in knowledge transfer. University and R&D project are not well funded by government of the developing countries. There are no close relationship between companies and universities in developing countries. This has caused lack of knowledge transfer in these countries. Also, when the issue of knowledge and technology transfer are being discussed, most developing countries believe in adoption of technology instead of the transfer. This is because, developing countries want a quicker way of gaining technology instead of going through the process of transfer which takes longer time to achieve. Knowledge transfer is an important issue when taking about technology transfer. Technology transfer will only be achievable in developing countries if academic, policy makers and companies are involved in the process of knowledge transfer. Although, it has been proven difficult to measure the level of knowledge/technology transfer from foreign company's to local company's, but the measurement of transfer between foreign companies and local companies involves the observation of human communication/interactions, attitude, interest and motivation of all participant of transfer.

#### Method of Technology Transfer:

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) FDI have been a channel for technology transfer approved by many authors because of its direct impact on economy development and low cost of transfer. But the choice of choosing what method to channel technology depends on the countries market size, market growth, the threat of imitation, and the IPR. For developing countries to acquire technology through foreign direct investment there should be abundance of

skilled and semi-skilled workers and also a strong IPR protection to attract investors, these will increase the level of tacit knowledge (know-how) absorption. The multinational cooperation (MNC) is media for the transfer of knowledge and technology. Expatriates" are used for the transfer of knowledge and technology by the MNC. According to Dana & Snejina (2004), the more MNC uses expatriate for temporary assignments (Assignment less than a year), the greater the expatriates" ability to transfer knowledge while the more the MNC uses expatriate for long-term assignments, the greater the willingness to transfer knowledge. Haris (2002) argued that, expatriates" with long-term assignment remain critical for skill transfer, management control and management developments while expatriate with temporary assignment are used mainly for skill transfer.

Conclusion. The issue of knowledge and technology transfer have been a great interest area for academics, policy maker, and industries in both developed and developing countries of the world. Technology Transfer has been an area of controversy over the years with the introduction of TRIP Agreement. This has benefited the developed countries more than the developing countries. To reduce poverty and increase the world economic strength, knowledge and technology transfer to developing countries should be focused upon. This will enable indigenous R&D to innovate more. This will enable indigenous R&D to innovate more. Nigeria should cooperate with other developing nations like China and India for the transfer of technology because these nations have experienced similar circumstances and are willing to bargain for the right knowledge and technology. And lastly, despite all of these problems, tacit information can only be properly transferred before it can be shared.

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