

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary and Conclusions

The research results shown that the knowledge-based view model has gained increasing popularity in construction firms in Malaysia. Due to the increasing competition in the construction industry, construction firms need to be vigilant and forward looking. Long-term view of construction firms is therefore essential to remain their competitiveness in the industry, both locally and internationally. From the research result, there is clear evidence that all of the construction firms interviewed have identified knowledge as an important resource in competitive environment. Focuses of construction firms have shifted from production orientated to knowledge orientated. Knowledge diffusions from external sources via continuous learning and training programmes are significantly high.

It is also found from the research results that, there is clear evidence of innovation in construction firms, not only in construction operations, but also in business management such as business development and marketing strategies. Evidence of innovation construction operations are seen in challenging mega projects both locally and globally undertaken by these large size construction firms.

The study has shown that knowledge-based view model is a suitable model to be adopted and it is clear that knowledge-based innovation has encourage a healthy competition amongst construction firms in Malaysia, leading some of these firms to become one of the top construction firms in Asia.

The knowledge-based view model encourage openness and interaction to create a win-win situation. The importance of this model will be increasing in the near future due to globalisation. The adoption of this model in construction industry of developed countries such as US, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Dutch, Japan and so on has been wide-spread.

As a conclusion, Malaysian construction firms need to be more proactive in application of this model to gain competitive advantage in the long term.

5.2 Suggestions for Additional Research

This study is focusing on the application of knowledge-based view and innovation as a competitive advantage of construction firms in Malaysia. This study is a qualitative research carried out by interviewing the management and operation staffs on selected companies. All of the companies selected via convenience sampling are public listed companies with a minimum turnover of RM60 millions.

Little research has been carried out on investigating knowledge transfer in construction firms. Even though getting participants for quantitative research is difficult for construction companies, it is advisable that future research should cover a wider range of construction firms in terms of organisation sizes, specialisations, etc. This is because knowledge transfer and innovation are affected by these factors.

5.3 Implications

The study has conveyed a message to the construction enterprises that knowledge-based approach to innovation is inevitable to gain competitive advantage in increasing competitive environment. Knowledge is power, and effective transfer and exchange of knowledge will enhance the innovation performance that will help gain competitive advantage. Thus, not only large size construction firms are affected; small and medium size construction companies shall also shift their focus from production orientated to knowledge orientated.

The research findings shall serve as a reminder to the players in construction industry especially project-based firms that knowledge diffusions is essential for continuous improvement and upgrading of the technical capabilities. Besides, the research findings also stresses on the importance of long term

planning and coordination of permanent network in the form of trust, in gaining competitiveness in the industry.

On the other hand, the research results shown that most of the knowledge transfers occurred naturally in the construction process and were not codified or recorded. Construction firms need to emphasis on the usage of Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) in order to strategize a systematic procedure to codify and record the knowledge transfer to the organization for better diffusions of knowledge within the organization from time to time. The better the diffusions of knowledge within the organization, the higher the innovation performance of the organization, thus gaining competitive advantage in the industry.