ABSTRACT

This study explores the complex relationship between knowledge transfer, market orientation and network ties of technology commercialization facilitation in Ghanaian research institutions. Although Ghana has made major investments in research and development, most of its innovation remains in the laboratory because of the systemic factors of lack of sufficient funds, poor enforcement of intellectual property, inadequate industry cooperation and cultural factors that encourage them to publish their research rather than commercialise. This commercialization gap, sometimes known as the “valley of death”, does not help Ghana to make use of the results of research to enhance its economic development and benefit society.

The study utilized the qualitative research model, where the data were gathered through semi-structured interviews of 25 respondents representing research institutions, industry partners, government agencies, and innovation support organizations. Thematic analysis showed that the successful commercialization process requires not only formal tools, including patents and licensing, but also significant contributions of informal knowledge sharing, networking, and mentorship. This study identifies the importance of demand-based research in accordance with market demands and the importance of a good network relationship in gaining access to resources and market opportunities.

The results indicate that Ghanaian organizations have bureaucratic barriers, gaps in commercialization competence, and disintegrated policy frameworks, which all hinder the spread of innovations. The research highlights the need to embrace global best practices that are localized, reinforce an active government role with funding and policy changes, and improve academia-industry-government partnerships according to the Triple Helix model. It is recommended that deliberate knowledge management systems should be established, administrative procedures formalized, market-oriented research cultures should be encouraged, and capacity building on commercialisation should be invested in. Moreover, to overcome the research-to-market gap, specific funding systems, political intentions, and improved communication strategies are necessary. By focusing on these complex issues, Ghana can create a more dynamic innovation platform favorable to the translation of research into practical business supply, and thus lead to sustainable economic growth.