



A case study exploring the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach within the emerging markets.

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Declaration of Originality

I declare that this Dissertation is the result of my own independent investigation and that all sources are duly acknowledged in the reference list.

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Abstract

This study adopted a single-company case study method and employed an interview guide developed based upon the Dimensions of Key Account Management model (Homburg et al., 2002) to explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management (KAM) approach within the emerging markets. 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with personnel from KAM and KAM support personnel at one Company operating across the emerging markets. This study contributes to the academic literature on KAM by addressing gaps within the existing literature, particularly a noticeable lack of research into KAM within emerging markets.

The enablers and inhibitors identified during the interviews were found to be broadly aligned to the themes currently captured within the academic literature, however several areas were found to be under-represented.

The Homburg et al. (2002) model under-represents the dynamic between seller and buyer with its 'Activities' and it is proposed that 'Interaction' is a more apt descriptor. Strong interpersonal relationships between Actors at the buyers and sellers location along with inter-personal; inter-firm trust; mutual understanding & strategic alignment were found to be enablers/inhibitors of KAM.

This study also highlights several themes relating to Actors, as potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM including the knowledge and capability of the workforce; the stability of the workforce and values. Enablers and inhibitors were found to relate to Actors at both at the buyer & sellers location. Training conducted by the buyer for the seller was highlighted as a potential enabler of KAM.

Themes relating to Resources such as IT systems and financial resources at the sellers location and Formalisation such as the 'identification of Key Accounts beyond the local organisation' are also highlighted as potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM.

Other factors are likely to have an impact upon the enablers and inhibitors of KAM. These include the structure of the selling organisation and the position of the customer within the value chain. As outlined, where a customer is a distribution intermediary, the potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM, outlined within the academic literature may apply to both dimensions of KAM (Actors, Resources; Activities and Formalisation) at both the seller's location and customer (distributors) location.

Finally the external environment and its impact upon the dimensions of KAM is discussed.

This study extends the current understanding of this subject, but points to the need for further research on the areas of KAM within the emerging markets and KAM within the context of distribution intermediaries.

Keywords: Key Account Management; National Account Management; Global Account Management; Relationship Marketing; Sales Management; Sales; Enablers; Inhibitors; Emerging Markets; Distributors; Value Chain; Activities; Actors; Resources; Formalization.

1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the context and research question and provides an overview of the structure of the dissertation.

1.1 Context Analysis

DENTSPLY International is a medical device manufacturer based in York, Pennsylvania, United States of America, which designs, develops, manufactures and markets a broad range of products for the dental market. The Company distributes its products in over 120 countries and is a global market-share leader in many of the segments in which it competes ("Investor Relations", 2013).

In 2006 DENTSPLY International announced that it had "entered into a new Strategic Partnership Program, designed to significantly improve its ability to collaborate with, and provide value to, its key distributor partners" within its home market of the United States of America ("DENTSPLY International Announces", n.d.). This programme led to the consolidation of DENTSPLY's roster of more than 200 U.S. distributors down to 28 that represented more than 90% of its distributor-based business (Endo Tribune US Edition, 2006, p. 3). At the time DENTSPLY's Chief Executive Officer of DENTSPLY International stated "We are excited to move forward with our preferred distributors on this initiative, and expect that this will take our mutual partnership to an elite level of collaboration and teamwork. We recognize that this consolidation represents a significant change to the industry and is a historic opportunity for us. We firmly believe that this initiative will allow both DENTSPLY and our retained U.S. distributors to mutually grow businesses and jointly provide the highest level of quality customer service" ("DENTSPLY International Announces", n.d.).

This move proved controversial at the time and led to some public backlash from some of the 170+ distributors with whom they terminated their relationship (“Net32.com Dental Supply Marketplace”, n.d.).

Following the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, DENTSPLY International has been aggressively targeting growth in the emerging markets through a programme of disproportionate investment and focused geographic expansion with the aim of increasing the contribution of emerging markets from 15% to 25% of sales within five years (Wise & Clark, 2010). The operationalization of the strategy; custodianship of the investment and day-to-day management of the growth initiatives has been led by the Corporation's three major emerging market management groups; Latin America; Asia and its UK based export management group responsible for the Middle East & Africa (MEA), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and as of 2012 Central and Eastern Europe and India.

During 2009 the former General Manager of the then MEA/CIS Division introduced a number of measures encapsulating his desire to move towards a Key Accounts Management (KAM) Approach. The term ‘dealer’ or ‘distributor’ was dropped in favour of ‘business partner’ and a set of ‘business partner selection criteria’ was introduced to ensure that the ‘right partners’ were selected. Over the coming years, due to significant geographic expansion and the addition of new territories under the responsibility of the UK based Export Division, the number of ‘distributor accounts’ managed by the UK based export Division has increased significantly.

Given such rapid expansion of the number of accounts being managed, in stark contrast to other parts of the business, which have been rationalising the number of accounts to enable them to focus on ‘key distribution partners’ (“DENTSPLY International Announces”, n.d.) it is important to understand the

enablers and inhibitors of adopting a KAM approach within the emerging markets.

The aim of this dissertation is to explore and examine the enablers and inhibitors of adopting a key accounts approach within the emerging markets. This study aims to contribute towards the academic literature by further developing our understanding of the enablers and inhibitors of adopting a KAM approach within the emerging markets, including any unique enablers and inhibitors not covered within current the academic literature. The research will also provide an insight into any enablers and inhibitors specifically relating to distribution intermediaries. From an academic perspective, the case of DENTSPLY International is of interest due to the number of emerging markets it is currently operating in and along with the focus on and historical investment in the emerging markets. Accordingly this particular case study provides an ideal opportunity to assess the themes outlined within the academic literature for completeness. Upon completion a framework will be developed to conceptualize the enablers and inhibitors of adopting a KAM approach within the emerging markets. This will assist Corporations operating within the emerging markets and wishing to adopt a KAM approach adapt their Corporate Strategy and approach in light of the enablers and inhibitors identified.

1.2 Research Question and Objectives

The purpose of this research project is to gain an understanding of the following question:

What are the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a KAM approach within the emerging markets?

Developing an understanding of the perceived enablers and inhibitors will assist organisations gain an insight into how best to implement a KAM approach able

to leverage the benefits; overcome the barriers and potentially mitigate the risks of failure given the specific challenges presented by the emerging markets. The research shall also provide some insight into aspects and challenges of adopting a KAM approach when selling to distribution intermediaries. With an awareness of the factors, Corporations can then adapt their strategy or approach. As acknowledged by Al Husan and Brennan (2009) further research is required into the impact of culture-specific factors on the implementation of KAM within the emerging markets.

2 Literature Review

This section presents the outcome of a period of literature review, covering various sources such as ESBCO; ScienceDirect, Business Source Complete and academic textbooks available through the University of Portsmouth library (both online and hardcopies) and University of Surrey (hardcopies). Numerous search terms were included in the scope of the search, including ‘Sales Management’; ‘Key Account Management’; ‘Relationship Marketing’; ‘Emerging Markets’ and ‘Distributors’. To ensure that the appropriate literature was identified, Boolean searches (“Boolean Searches”, n. d.) were conducted in order to identify literature incorporating one or more than one of the themes.

2.1 Historical foundations of Key Accounts Management (KAM)

KAM has emerged over the last 30-years as one of the most significant trends in business-to-business marketing practice (Abratt and Kelly 2002; Homburg et al. 2002; Davies and Ryals 2009). In contrast to most models of marketing which have their origins in consumer markets, the roots of KAM lie in ‘business-to-business marketing’ or ‘industrial marketing’ as it used to be known (McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003; Smith, 2009). KAM is distinguishable from Key Accounts Selling through its emphasis on “long-term, mutually beneficial relationships between buying and selling companies, rooted in the realization of opportunities for profit enhancement for both parties” (McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003).

The first theoretical breakthrough relating to the relationship between the buying and selling company was the concept of the decision-making unit (DMU) developed by Robinson, Farris and Wind (1967). A buying centre (also known as a decision making unit or ‘DMU’) in marketing, procurement and organisational studies, is a group of employees or members of any type of organisation responsible for finalizing major decisions, usually involving a

purchase. In a business setting, major purchases typically require input from various parts of the organisation including finance; accounting; purchasing; information technology; management and senior management. Highly technical purchases, such as information systems or production equipment also require the expertise of technical specialists. In some cases the buying centre is an informal ad-hoc group, but in other cases, it is a formally sanctioned group with a specific mandate, criteria, and procedures. The employees that constitute the buying centre will thus vary depending on the item being procured. The research conducted by Robinson, Farris and Wind (1967) demonstrated that understanding the roles and motivations of all of the people involved in the purchasing decision became a relevant selling skill. “Despite recognition of the complexity of the purchase decision making, sales management specialists tended to present the human interaction in the selling and negotiation as an adversarial interface” (McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003).

The Industrial Marketing and Purchasing (IMP) Group (Hakansson, 1982) advocated the simultaneous analysis of buyer-seller relationships, a so-called inter-actionist approach that highlighted the interaction process, participants and environment and atmosphere.

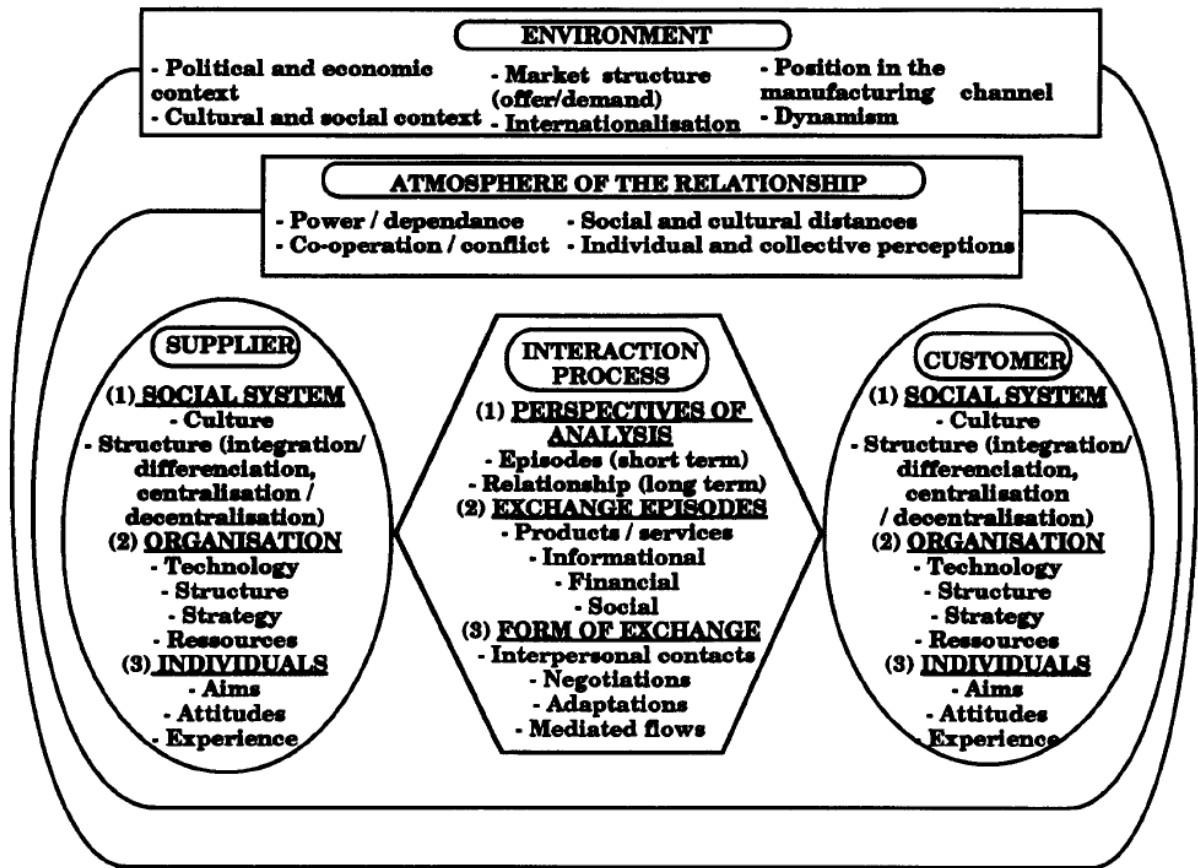


Figure 1: - The IMP Interaction Model – Turnbull and Valla (1986)

The IMP interaction Model contained a number of components including ‘*the interaction process*’ which expresses the exchange between the two organisations along with the their progress and evolution throughout time, ‘*the participants including the Supplier and Customer*’ involved within the interaction process, i.e. individuals from the supplier and the customer involved in the interaction process. Further components included the ‘atmosphere’ affecting and being affected by the interaction and the ‘environment’ within the interaction process.

Relationships were thus deemed a valuable resource and an investment to increase economic and technological efficiency, to serve as an information channel and reduce uncertainty (McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003).

The emergence of relationship marketing in the late 1980s led to a growing interest in getting and keeping customers through relationship management (Christopher, Payne & Ballantyne 1991; Grönroos 1994, 1997; Sheth and Parvatiyar 1995; Aijo 1996; Gummesson 1997). No longer was the transaction the primary goal, it became merely a necessary but not sufficient part of the process. Relationship marketing is defined as “the process of creating, maintaining and enhancing strong value-laden relationships with customers and other stake-holders’ (Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong, 2002). That being said value in itself is quite complex, given that it is a subjective consideration of the pay-off between benefits and sacrifices relative to the competitive offering (Rogers, 2007). An alternative definition of relationship marketing provided by Grönroos (1991) conceptualizing the relationship marketing approach states that ‘marketing is to establish, maintain and enhance relationships with customers and other partners at a profit, so that the objectives of both parties are met. This is achieved by a mutual exchange and fulfilment of promises’. Christopher, Payne and Ballentine (1991) consider relationship marketing as an approach that aligns marketing, customer service and quality. It also encompasses factors such as an emphasis and focus upon customer retention; an orientation towards product benefit; a longer timescale; a high-service orientation; a high customer commitment and high customer contact as well as the notion that quality of the concern of all. The concept of relationship marketing differed to the more traditional approaches to sales and marketing, due to its focus upon customer retention rather than transactional interchanges (McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997; McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003).

The historical context provides a useful grounding to better understand and review the potential enablers and inhibitors of a KAM approach.

2.2 Defining 'Key Account'

To explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors of a KAM approach one must first define exactly what a 'Key Account' is. According to Ryals and Rogers (2007) many companies still conflate 'Key Customer' with 'Large Customer'. Millman (1996) provides a similar explanation with "most selling companies interpreting the 'strategic importance' of key accounts in the Pareto sense, i.e. 80% of sales or profits generates from 20% of customers." Other definitions range from future growth potential, prestige/reference value, and access to new markets/technologies; to opportunities for cross selling and increased geographical spread. A widely accepted definition of 'Key Account' is that "Key Accounts are "customers in industrial and business-to-business markets identified by selling companies as of strategic importance" (Campbell and Cunningham, 1983; Fiocca, 1982; Millman, 1994; Yorke and Droussiotis, 1993, Millman 1996; McDonald, Millman & Rogers, 1997) however this lack of universal definition of Key Accounts Management, both in industry and academia presents a challenge. Even where a clear definition of a Key Account exists and the account has been identified correctly Rogers (2007) notes that "companies have to be sure that strategic relationships are indeed strategic before investing in a KAM approach, which can be expensive and complex.....large accounts are not necessarily key and satisfied customers are not necessarily loyal and things change over time".

2.3 Defining 'Key Account Management' (KAM)

There is also no one standard definition of KAM, however numerous authors have sought to conceptualize its aims and objects. Barett (1986) outlined that KAM consists of targeting the major customers of the Company, by providing them with special treatment in the field of market, sales administration and service. This type of strategy generally relies upon a Key Account Manager and enables the organisation to generally improve the quality of the business

relationships with the customer, improve communication between the two parties and the quality of services whilst maintaining the same level of relationship as the size of the account grows. A further explanation is provided by (Millman & Wilson, 1995) as follows “KAM is a systematic process for managing business-to-business relationships that are of strategic importance”. McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997 explain that “KAM is an approach adopted by selling companies aimed at building a portfolio of loyal key accounts by offering them, on a continuing basis, a product/service package tailored to their needs.

Thus it is clear that KAM is more than just an approach, it is a process with specific components at play, targeted at accounts of strategic importance with the aim of relationship progression. Accordingly it is important to understand the interplay of the components within the process, as potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM.

2.4 The process of Key Account Management

Relationships are dynamic entities that evolve over time, with each specific transaction being affected by the history of the relationship and the relationship modified by each specific exchange (Ford, Håkansson and Johanson, 1986). Correspondingly KAM is a strategic long-term activity (McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997) with research undertaken suggesting that selling companies practicing KAM consciously plan to move key accounts from prospects towards higher relationship levels. Millman & Wilson (1995, 1996) building on previous models such as that of Ford (1980); Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh (1987); Lamming (1993) and Wotruba (1991) developed a ‘Relational Development model’ in which they identified the six-stages of KAM relationship development. This model is illustrated in Figure 2 demonstrating the various stages of relationship

development moving from transactional relationships through early-KAM; mid-KAM; partnership-KAM through to synergistic-KAM.

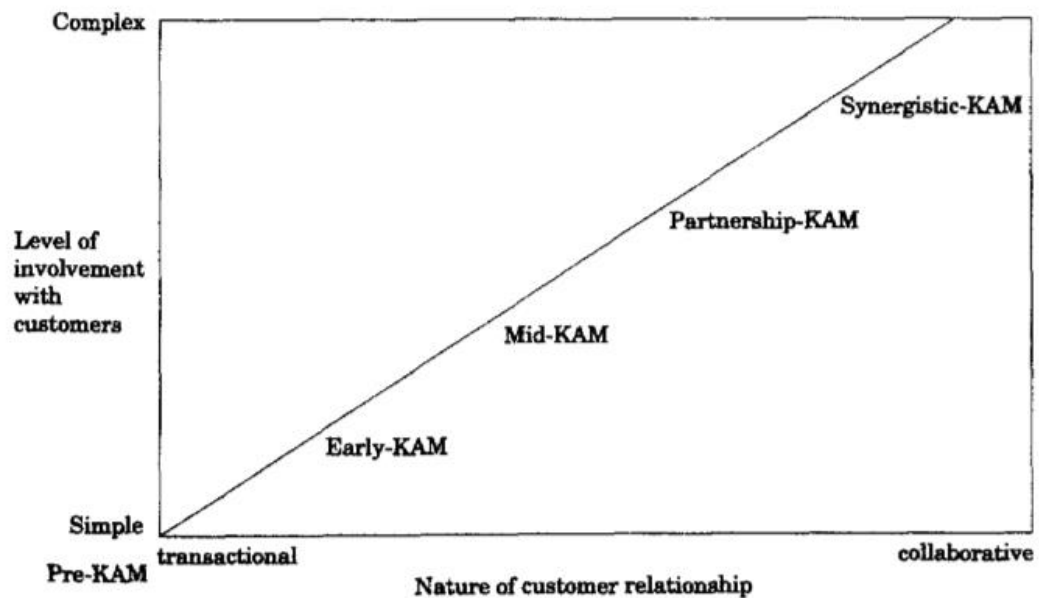


Figure 2 - Key Account Relational Development Model, Millman & Wilson (1995, 1996)

The work of Millman & Wilson (1995, 1996) was built on by Blythe (2002) who proposed 'selling strategies' corresponding to each stage of the Key Account Relational Development Model. The six-stage model and corresponding strategies illustrated in Figure 2 above along with the corresponding selling strategies, proposed by Blythe, are shown in Table 1:

<i>KAM Relationship Development Phase</i>	<i>Corresponding Selling Strategy</i>
<i>Pre-KAM</i>	<i>The task at this stage is to identify those customers with the potential for moving towards 'Key Account' status, thereby avoiding wasting investment on those accounts that lack the potential to progress. A 'Pre-KAM' selling strategy relates to identifying key contacts and decision-making units; establishing product needs; displaying willingness to address problems and advocating Key Account status in-house to stakeholders.</i>
<i>Early KAM</i>	The task at this stage is to explore the opportunities for closer collaboration through the identification of motives, culture & concerns of the customer. The 'Early KAM' selling strategies include building social networks, identifying process-related problems, signalling the willingness to work together to provide cost-effective solutions and building trust through performance and open communication.
<i>Mid-KAM</i>	At this stage of relationship, both trust as well as the range of problems to be resolved increase and the account review process tends to shift upwards to senior management within the organisations. The 'Mid-KAM' selling strategies include focusing on product-related issues; managing the implementation of process-related solutions; building inter-organisational teams; establishing joint systems and beginning to perform non-core management tasks.
<i>Partnership KAM</i>	The relationship, at this point, is at a mature stage of key account development process. The supplier is regarded as an important external strategic resource and the level of trust will be sufficient for both parties to be willing to share sensitive information. Pricing will be long-term and stable, perhaps even fixed. 'Partnership KAM' selling strategies include focusing on integrating processes and extending joint problem solving; focusing on cost reduction and joint value-creation initiatives along with addressing key strategic issues.
<i>Synergistic KAM</i>	This advanced stage, i.e. quasi-integration, is the highest level of the relational development model. At this point both parties see one other as one organisation and parts of a larger entity yielding joint-value and synergistic benefits. At the "Synergistic KAM" stage the strategy is to focus upon value creation; the creation of semi-autonomous project teams (possible due to the development of trust between both parties) and the development strategic alignment. There will be interfaces at each and every level. Exit barriers will often exist at this stage but are not likely to have been tested.

<i>Uncoupling KAM</i>	This stage describes relationship breakdown, which occurs when transactions and interaction cease due to the costs of maintaining the relationship exceeding their benefits. At this point the strategy is simply to withdraw from collaboration and partnership. This 'Uncoupling KAM' stage emphasises the needs for contingency plans as emphasised by Anderson and Jap (2005). Breakdowns can occur at any stage, however the reason that occurred most frequently is 'the breakdown of trust' (McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997).
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Table 1: Key Account Relational Development Model (Millman & Wilson, 1995, 1996) with corresponding selling strategies (Blythe, 2002) adapted from Al-Hussan (2011).

There has however been little research on the enablers and inhibitors at each stage of the process within the literature reflecting the dynamic nature of KAM and the evolving nature of relationships over-time. Gaining an understanding of the enablers and inhibitors at each stage would help an organisation maximize the likelihood of success of a KAM approach over time. Furthermore there has been very limited research on the progression of relationships in an international or inter-cultural environment.

2.5 Dimensions of Key Account Management

Homburg, Workman and Jensen (2002) consolidated the concepts and theories of KAM into four major dimensions after undertaking a review of related literature. This information was distilled into four dimensions, namely "Activities", "Actors", "Resources", and "Formalization" and can be seen in Figure 3.

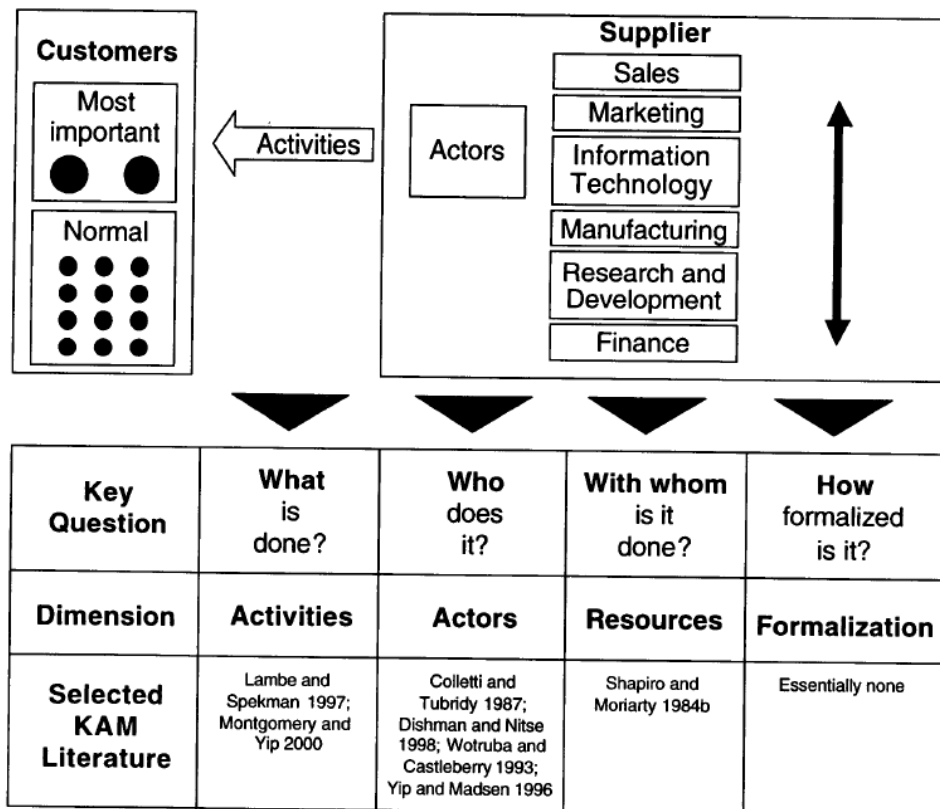


Figure 3: - Dimensions of KAM model - Homburg, Workman and Jensen (2002).

These dimensions are outlined in Table 2 below:

ARA Dimensions of the KAM model	Explanation of the ARA Dimension
Activities (A)	<p>‘Activities’ represent the actions between the two companies, i.e an activity occurs when one or several actors combine, develop, exchange or create resources by utilising other resources (Håkansson & Johnson, 1992).</p> <p>Relationship marketing literature suggests an inventory of activities that a supplier can carry out for their Key Accounts such as special pricing; customization of offering; special services; customization of services; information sharing; joint coordination of the workflow and taking over business processes that the</p>

	customer currently carries out or outsources (Homburg, Workman and Jensen, 2002).
Resources (R)	Performing activities requires resources. Actors are the ones who bring resources and all resources are controlled by actors, either by single actors or by many actors who combine their resources to create a shared resource (Hakansson & Johnson, 1992). Technological, human, marketing and other resources which interacting organisations share and decisions about which can become dependent upon one another are resources.
Actors (A)	‘Actors’ are defined as those who perform activities and/or control resources. Organisations and individuals party to business relationships, including key account managers, senior managers and sales teams can be actors.

Table 2: Homburg, Workman and Jensen (2002) dimensions of KAM

The Homburg, Workman and Jensen (2002) model does have a number of shortcomings. Unlike the IMP Interaction model of Turnbull and Valla (1986) the unidirectional flow of ‘Activities’ from the supplier to the customer, fails to capture the interactive, symbiotic nature of a KAM approach. Furthermore, the model fails to take into consideration the role-played by the external environment, such as macro-economic factors and competitive landscape on the organisations and their interaction. Finally factors such as culture, personalities and relationships are omitted from the model. However despite these shortcomings, the model does provide a useful framework for exploring and evaluating the various dimensions as enablers or inhibitors of KAM.

2.6 Key Account Management and distribution intermediaries

An under-represented area within the academic literature relating to KAM is that of distribution intermediaries. The distribution intermediary, represents both a ‘customer’ and a ‘link within the value-chain’, which can be replaced or bypassed by the manufacturer at any point dependent upon its route-to-market

strategy. Gadde and Snehota (2001) identified three ‘types of distribution’ intermediary namely ‘trader’, ‘distributor’ and ‘provider’. The ‘trader’ is a predominantly transactional focused organisation with little value added services. The ‘distributor’, whilst a more sophisticated intermediary organisation is exemplified by its passive role in the marketing strategy of the supplier. Finally the ‘provider’, plays an active role in the value chain. In the current business environment, the provider role has become increasingly significant, for example a European study concluded that the focus of wholesaling has shifted “from facilitating the sale of what is produced to identifying customer needs and then sourcing solutions” (Gadde, 2014). The impact of the distribution intermediary, and in particular their impact upon premium manufacturers, within the emerging markets is highlighted by Oki (2013). In a study of distributors in Vietnam selling premium Japanese electronic goods, Oki (2013) highlighted the challenges of immature brand management, representation and lack of staff training with a resultant inability to articulate the differentiators of premium products. The challenge of moving an account not only from pre-key account status to synergistic account status is aligned to the challenge of developing an account from trader to provider.

Within the academic literature relating to Key Account Management little attention is paid to the position of the ‘customer’ within the value chain, whether this be a channel intermediary or an end-consumer.

2.7 Key Account Management within the context of Emerging Markets

With established markets becoming saturated, a growing number of multinational companies are now beginning to recognize and explore the enormous business opportunities and are now making significant efforts to gain market share within the emerging markets (Hart and Milstein, 1999; London and Hart; 2004; Prahalad, 2010; Douglas and Craig, 2011; Kumar, Shah & Rajan, 2013).

The emerging market universe is broad, encompassing more than 140 countries, many undergoing recent positive structural reforms. The list is also a dynamic one as 'frontier markets' begin to develop attractively, while more mature emerging markets migrate out of the universe as they attain developed-market status (Eerdmans, 2013). This surging growth of many emerging markets is changing the structure of the global economy and the trend is accelerating such that the term 'emerging' will increasingly cease to apply to many countries and a shift in categorization will be required ("Emerging Markets: Crossing the Rubicon", 2012). For multinational companies operating in these markets, reaching the four billion people presents both tremendous opportunities and unique challenges (London and Hart 2004). It is important to recognize that these markets differ in terms of demand characteristics, the nature of competition and the development of the market infrastructure (Douglas and Craig, 2011). To get products to customers, in markets where global manufacturers need strategies for navigating both the traditional and the modern retail landscapes conventional wisdom may not be appropriate. "The world over, multinationals struggling to get their products to consumers confront a bewildering kaleidoscope of strategic and operational challenges". (Diaz, Magni & Poh, 2012). In the complex, heterogeneous retail landscape found within the emerging markets, a manufacturer being able to successfully navigate these challenges becomes all the more critical. Just as in mature markets, it is supply chains that compete, not companies, with the unique set of relations that typify the web of inter-connections between organisations in a network representing the true value chain (Martin, 1992). Many multinationals have found that despite offering great products, excellent distribution chains and affordable pricing strategies success is not guaranteed (Kumar, Shah and Rajan, 2013).

In this environment, the role of the Key Account Manager is of heightened importance. For Key Accounts Managers working with distribution intermediaries, they must ensure that the value chain is optimized and that competitive advantage is achieved and maintained. In high-growth (emerging) markets, “where manufacturers must expand their market coverage and recruit an increasing number of distributors to achieve success” (Walters & Samiee 2003) a key challenge for firms aiming to capitalise on their potential is therefore the effective management of their distributors (Anderson & Coughlan 1987; Zhang, Cavusgil & Roath, 2003).

Within the emerging markets, sellers facing a proliferation of distribution intermediaries, just to get goods to the end-user presents a challenge especially in the context of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach “given the challenge of allocating resources to manage these accounts effectively” (Al-Hussan & Brennan, 2009).

Whilst multinational companies increasingly view these markets as potential sources of future growth, there is almost no empirical research on strategies for pursuing these opportunities (London & Hart, 2004). Accordingly there is little research on the types of enablers and inhibitors that a supplier may encounter when dealing with distribution intermediaries within the emerging markets.

2.8 Key Accounts Management Teams & Support Team structure

It is often necessary to use sales teams to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of customers (Brown, Evans, Mantrala and Challagalla, 2005). Accordingly there has been a shift in the level of analysis from the Key Account Manager to the broader selling team (Weitz and Bradford, 1999) due to the growing recognition that functional groups, other than sales, play an important role in

the process of interacting with buying organisations (Hutt, Johnston and Ronchetto, 1985; Spekman and Johnston, 1986).

Key Accounts Managers often do not have formal or informal teams, but are expected to have influence and be able to get things done for their customers. Weitz and Bradford (1999) suggested that team-based selling is important because an “individual sales person does not possess the knowledge or intra-firm influence to propose and implement a programme that has the potential for building a competitive influence for the buyer-seller dyad” with many organisations replacing ‘lone wolf’ sales people with relationship managers who are supported by a diverse group of employees inside and outside the sales department (Bradford et al. 2010). Arndt and Harkins (2013) highlight a number of selling conditions in which it is beneficial for multiple employees to collaborate in the sales-process, such a high-work load (Jones, Dixon, Chonko and Cannon, 2005), high-customisation (Moon and Armstrong, 2004; Jones, Dixon, Chonko and Cannon, 2005), high complexity (Üstüner and Godes, 2006; Pinker and Shumsky, 2000; Weitz and Bradford, 1999) and high risk (Moon and Armstrong, 1994) all of which can be said of doing business in the emerging markets.

Furthermore Sales Personnel are very expensive assets (Moncrief & Marshall, 2005) who, often believe that they are spending too much time on activities such as technical support, approving sales, paperwork, internal meetings and data entry (Cummings, 2004; Jaramillo, Mulki and Locander, 2006; Barber and Tieje, 2008) with time better spent on sales activities and building customer relationships than less productive non-sales related activities (Moncrief & Marshall, 2005; Arndt and Harkins, 2013).

As such the selling company must also invest in the whole customer focused (selling) team, not just the Key Accounts Manager. Thus to coordinate the

interaction with each key account, selling companies form dedicated teams led by the key account manager (McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003). Team selling implies that multiple contacts are established between the selling and buying organisation (Cron and DeCarlo, 2006) with team members spending less time in front of the buying company than they Key Account Manager, but they make sure everything happens at the interface – with the buyer and seller relationship multi-layered and multi-faceted. This move is illustrated in Figures 4 and 5, the bow-tie relationship characterizing the point at which the Key Account Manager is the sole contact within the selling organisation facilitating the relationship, the diamond-team illustrating the point at which multiple-cross links have been created between the two organisations.

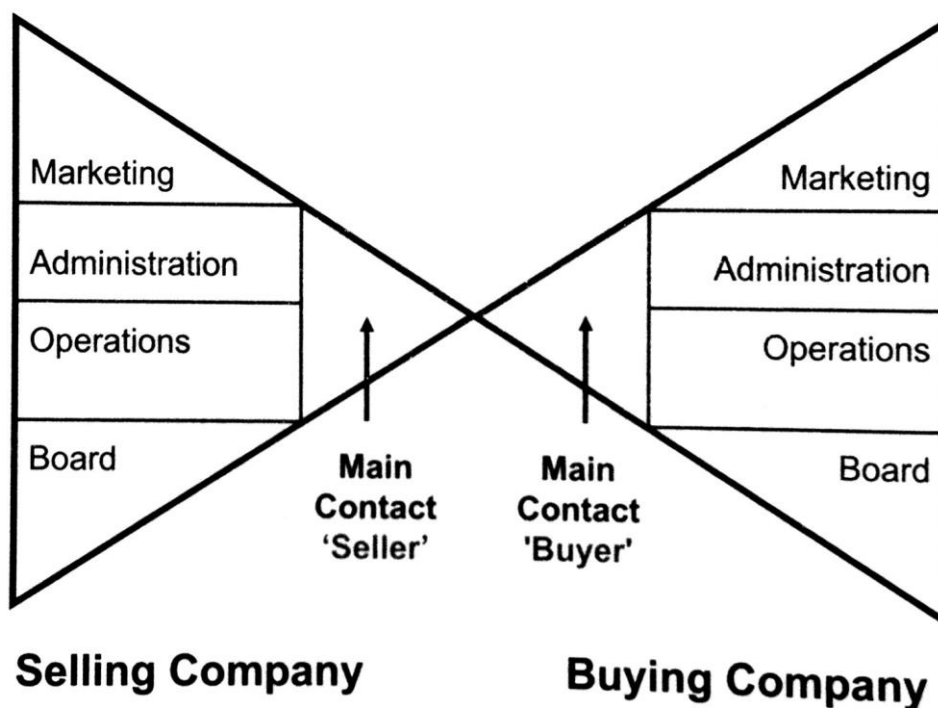


Figure 4: The bow-tie relationship. Source McDonald, Millman and Rogers (1996)

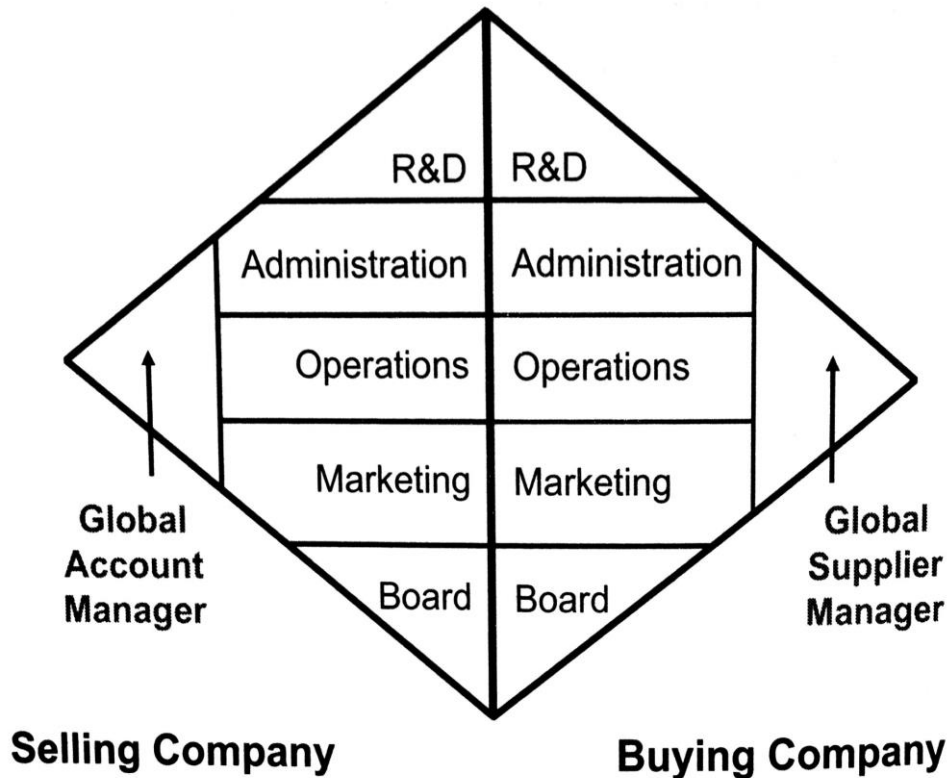


Figure 5: The diamond-team or partner relationship. Source McDonald, Millman and Rogers (1996)

The Key Account Manager is therefore effectively ‘conducting the orchestra’ (McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997). It is important to emphasise that such contacts need to be coordinated effectively and efficiently even when formal sales teams do not exist in the selling firm (Guenzi, Georges & Pardo, 2009).

Research has indicated that due to the complex boundary-spanning role of Key Accounts Managers, aligned to the need to prioritise an organisations resource, the performance of a Key Account Manager is inversely proportional to the number of accounts they are required to manage (Senqupta, Krapfel and Pusateri, 1997; Abratt and Kelly, 2002). It is not only an increased number of accounts to be managed that may lead to over-load, for example Cheverton (2006) highlights the potential of overload at the point of transitioning between the ‘bow-tie’ and ‘diamond’ relationship.

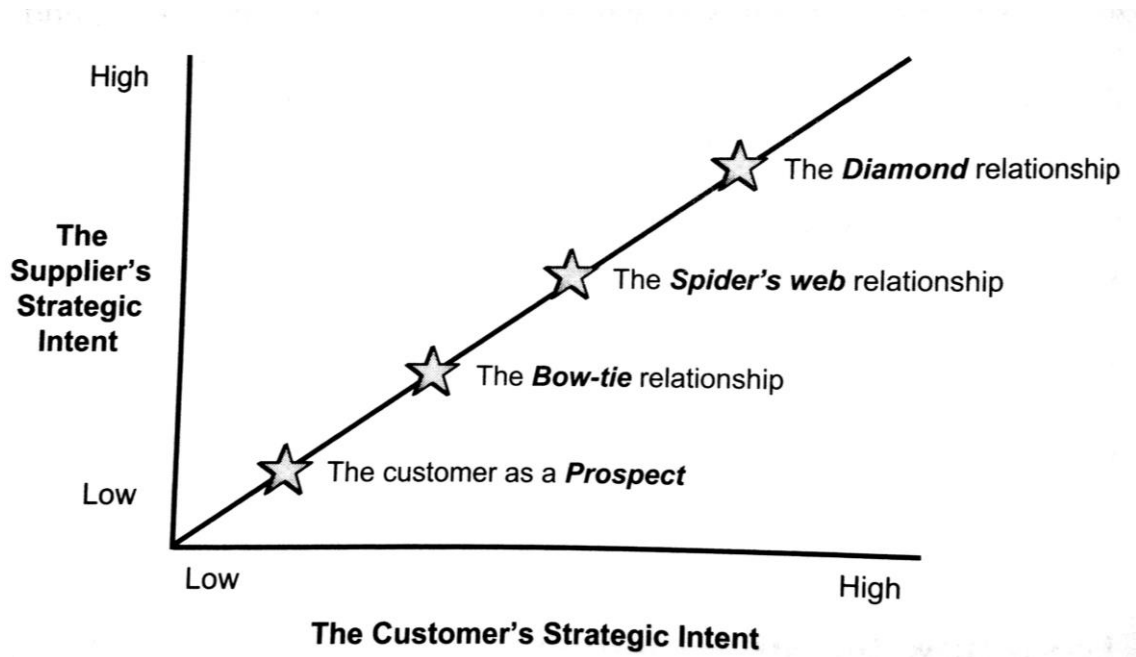


Figure 6 - The relationship development model - Cheverton (2006) adapted from McDonald, Millman and Rogers (1996).

At this point contacts are beginning to form, with so much communication flowing through the Account Manager, there is a real danger of work overload (Figure 7).

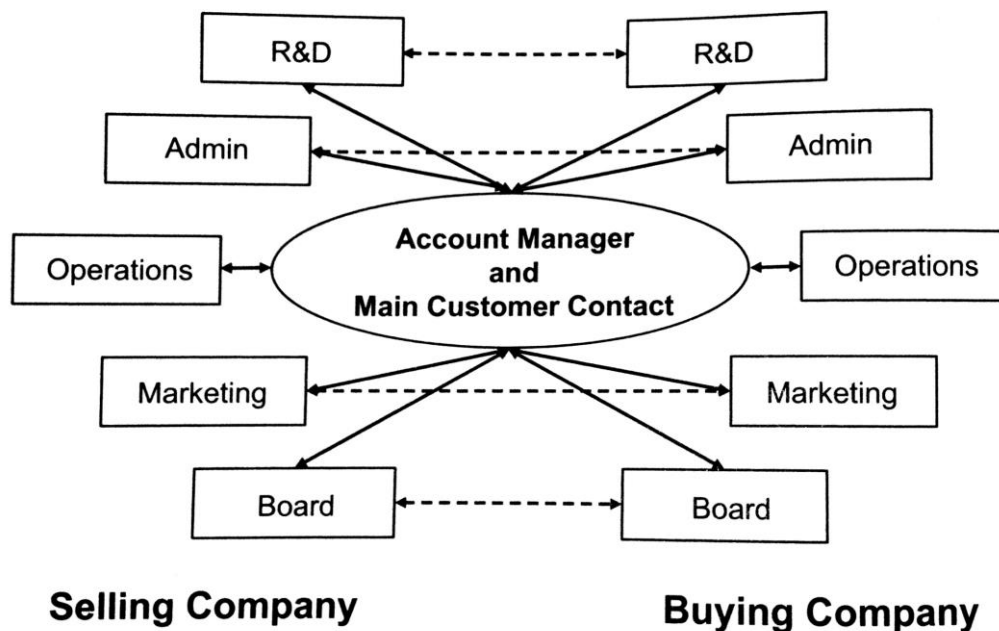


Figure 7: 'Work overload' - the spider's web relationship. Source: Cheverton (2006).

These models provide useful insight, as it is possible that the potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM may differ depending upon the stage of relationship development between seller and buyer and the structure of the organisation. Whilst it is not possible to address this issue within this study, it is nevertheless, an important issue to be aware of.

2.9 Benefits and drawbacks of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach

Whilst some authors highlight the risks and drawbacks of a Key Accounts Management (KAM) approach (Cardozo, Shipp & Roering, 1987; Anderson & Jap, 2005 and Piercy and Lane, 2000) most of the academic literature is broadly supportive of the benefits of a KAM approach (Abbrat & Kelly, 2002). The focus of the research into KAM has largely been on topics such as the conceptualization of the components of KAM (Homburg, Workman and Jensen; 2002); Key Success Factors (Caplan, 1997; McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997; Napolitano, 1997; Sen Gupta, Krapfel and Pusateri, 1997; Hannah, 1998, Abratt and Kelly, 2002); barriers (McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997; Ryals and Rogers, 2007) and the stages of implementation (Davies and Ryals, 2009; Capon and Senn, 2010). Accordingly the issues of Enablers and Inhibitors of a KAM approach are of particular interest.

2.10 Enablers and Inhibitors of Key Accounts Management

Following an extensive review of the academic-literature, various inhibitor and enablers of a KAM approach were identified. A summary of these is show in Table 3.

Enabler/Inhibitor	Academic Papers	Summary of Enabler/Inhibitor
Senior manager buy-in	Brady, 2004; Homburg et al. 2002; Montgomery, Yip and Villalonga 1998; Napolitano, 1997.	Executive management sponsorship & involvement the most critical indicators of success for the KAM process.
Company wide knowledge of Key Account Management	Napolitano, 1997; Workman et al., 2003; Yip and Madsen 1996	Increased overall knowledge of KAM improves.
A Key Account Management Champion	McDonald et al. 2000	Any move from a (transactional) sales approach to Key Accounts Management approach represents a strategic shift for any organisation. Therefore a pioneer or group of pioneers must therefore drive this move towards a Key Accounts Management approach through the organisation (McDonald et al. 2000).
Active involvement of top management in KAM	Napolitano 1997; Millman and Wilson 1999; Workman et al. 2003	Manager buy-in active involvement is necessary for success.
An organisational culture that supports Key Account Management	Homburg et al. 2002; Millman and Wilson 1999; Pardo 1999; Workman et al. 2003, Capon and Senn 1010.	Research has indicated that organisational culture is one of the major influences on Key Account Management implementation and outcomes.
Everyone in the organisation understanding Key Account Management	Homburg et al. 2002; Brady 2004; Reisel et al., 2005; Workman et al., 2003; Yip and Madsen, 1996	Aligned to the organisation moving towards the selling company looking towards the lifetime value of customer, it is necessary that everyone in the organisation fully understand the principles and objectives of a Key Accounts Management approach. This is characterized as 'Espirit de corps' i.e. everyone understanding the principles of KAM."
Defined key account selection process and criteria	Napolitano (1997); Wong (1998); Spencer (1999); McDonald et al. (2000); Ojasalo (2001); Abratt and Kelly (2002); Gosselin and Bauwen (2006); Ryal and Rogers (2007).	<p>The literature indicates that it is essential for an organisation to have clarity as to which key accounts to focus resources on, with clear planning processes in place to support decision-making.</p> <p>However this task is far from easy, with clear challenges in account evaluation (Wengler, Ehret & Saab, 2006)</p> <p>Many criteria are used for the targeting of accounts including qualitative measure such as current or potential (high or potential) turn-over or profit, high proportion of the given market share or segment. Qualitative reasons may include image & reputation, innovating capacity and reference in order to enter a new market (Pardo, 1997).</p>

Clearly identified key accounts	McDonald et al. (2000); Ojasalo, (2001); Gosselin and Bauwen (2006); Ryal and Rogers (2007)	Identification of accounts that offer the best opportunity for growth - one of the key facets of a Key Accounts approach, is the selling organisations targeting of specific customers, thus these accounts to be targeted must first be selected. Most industrial companies have only a few customers that account for a major part of their total sales and the relationship with these accounts are decisive for the performance of the company whatever measures of performance on may use (Hakansson and Snehota, 1995).
Challenges of account valuation	Wengler, Ehret & Saab, 2006;	The challenges of formally and systematically evaluating the value (or potential) value of an account are highlighted as a barrier to adopting a Key Accounts Management approach.
On-going monitoring and measuring of relationships	McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003	The cornerstone of improving performance in relationships with customers is monitoring and measurement, with each relationship being assessed at transactional, process and strategic levels to ensure alignment of objectives and fit between organisations.
Individual account plans	McDonald et al. 2000; Ojasalo, 2001; Ryals and Rogers, 2007	The literature indicates that each account should be planned separately to ensure appropriate evaluation.
A well developed feedback process with key customers	Napolitano 1997	The drive towards these targets is underpinned by a well-developed feedback process with Key Accounts (Neoplitano 1997).
Joint activities with key accounts	Koka and Prescott 2002; Workman et al., 2003	Social exchanges such as KAM can provide competitive benefits.
A business case for KAM	Reinartz and Kumar 2000, 2002	Key Account Management represents a move from a transactional to relationship marketing approach. Accordingly the success of any move towards a Key Account Management approach is therefore underpinned by the selling company adopting a forward-looking view of the lifetime value of customers.
Targets for key accounts	Neoplitano 1997	Aligned to the need for individual account plans, each account should have its own target to enable ongoing evaluation of performance (Neoplitano 1997).
Benchmarking against other organisations for KAM	Neoplitano 1997	The successful implementation of a Key Accounts Management approach is underpinned by an evaluation procedure within the organisation.

Appointed Key Account Managers	McDonald et al. 1997; Weeks and Stevens 1997; Homburg, Workman and Jensen 2002; Workman, Homburg and Jensen 2003; Davies and Ryals 2009; Guenzi, Georges and Pardo, 2009; Davies and Ryals 2013	Skill sets for KAMs are different to those in sales - a key facet of almost all Key Account Management programmes is the introduction of a specialized customer-facing role, the Key Account Manager (McDonald et al. 1997; Weeks and Stevens 1997; Homburg, Workman and Jensen 2002; Workman, Homburg and Jensen 2003; Davies and Ryals 2009; Guenzi, Georges and Pardo, 2009; Davies and Ryals 2013). The role of the Key Account Manager was primarily conceptualized in the decades between 1990's and 2000's, particularly in the business-to-business arena where specialised forms of managing customers have gained increasing importance (Homburg, Workman and Jensen 2002; Davies and Ryals 2009). As such, the success or failure of any Key Accounts Management programme is inextricably intertwined with the Key Account Manager themselves.
Selection of Key Account Managers	Neoplitano (1997); Hannah (1998)	The skill set for Key Account Managers is different to that of other sales personnel. Key Account Managers must possess high level selling skills, armed with superior relationship skills that transcend traditional measures of sales performance.
Fully trained Key Account Managers	McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997; Ojasalo 2001; Shetcliffe 2004; Weeks and Stevens 1997; Yip and Madsen 1996	Key Accounts strategists have highlighted the difficulties in designing appropriate and sufficiently extensive training and development programmes for Key Accounts Manager partly due to the breadth of the skillset required in their boundary spanning position.
Key Account Management Teams (and support teams)	Alonzo, 1996; Weitz and Bradford, 1999; Arnett et al., 2005; Brown, Evans, Mantrala and Challagalla, 2005; Moncrief and Marshall, 2005; Guenzi and Pardo & Georges, 2007.	Use of teams to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of customers.
Specific motivation and reward schemes for Key Account Managers	Sengupta, Krapfel and Pusateri, 1997; Cummings, 2004; Jaramillo, Mulki and Locander, 2006; Barber and Tietje, 2008; Weilbaker, 1999; Ryals and Rodgers, 2006.	In line with the longer-term nature of Key Accounts Management, Account managers are usually rewarded with higher salary and less bonus KAM to foster a great degree of forward looking; rather than transactional; behaviour.
Changes in organisational structure to accommodate Key Account Management	Coletti and Tubrity 1987; McDonald et al. 1997; Millman and Wilson 1996; Pardo 1999	KAM organisations should be structured differently to Sales organisations.
Established policies and procedures for handling key accounts	Gosselin and Bauwen 2006; McDonald et al. 2000; Senn 1999	Formalised arrangements for accounts lead to improved co-ordination.
Key Account Managers having good access to internal resources	Ojasalo 2001, 2002; Workman et al. 2003; Ryals and Humphries 2007	Key accounts are 'better served' and therefore the managers need influence over gaining the necessary service levels

Differentiated and higher service levels for key accounts	Workman et al. 2003; Ivens and Pardo 2007	Key Accounts should be provided with higher service levels. In accordance with the need to prioritise the selling organisations resources, research indicates that Key Accounts should be provided with a higher level of service (Workman et al. 2003; Ivens and Pardo 2007). These performance measures may relate to types of performance beyond that of the core product offering of price, quality and delivery and include both 'responsiveness and support' & 'intangibles and investment' as illustrated within the 'Supplier performance measures' by Rogers (2007).
IT support for KAM	Caplan (1997) cited in Abratt and Kelly (2002); Ojasalo (2001); Workman et al. (2003); Brady (2004);	Key account should get higher service levels - upgrading of the duties of the admin staff to include data mining; information filtration and statistical analysis is key to success.
Integration of processes and systems - process excellence	McDonald, Millman and Rogers (1997)	One of the specialisms that a selling company needs to acquire is an understanding of processes, whole supply chains and the resultant transfer of value (McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, 2003). Loyalty grows where companies have worked together to resolve particular problems, which may occur, in the course of doing business.
Key Account Manager account load	Senqupta, Krapfel and Pusateri (1997); Abratt and Kelly (2002);	Performance of the KAM inversely proportional to the number of accounts they have
Impact of the product or service on the Key Account Customers	Pardo (1997)	The product or service itself was found to have a significant impact upon the customer and thus a significant bearing upon the Key Account Management process.
Continuous and proactive improvement of products and services	McDonald, Rogers and Woodburn, (2003).	The continuous improvement of products or services on which the respective companies identity is based. This is necessary as relationships will not be able to survive a deterioration of the competitive position of the company's core offering. In relationships between manufacturers and distribution intermediaries, it is expected that this apply to both parties in equal measure with product and service representing the core offering on the part of the manufacturer and service on the part of the distribution intermediaries.
Strong interpersonal relationships	Anderson & Jap (2005)	<p>Strong, trusting relationships amongst individuals in a partnership are amongst the core requirements for a successful partnership. However for organisations to be able to reap the benefits of the individual managers efforts managers must be able to get along (Anderson & Jap, 2005). However whilst these strong relationships are helpful, it may also provide an opportunity for covert activities designed to cheat a partner, exemplified by the growing number of scandals within the financial services industry (Anderson & Jap, 2005).</p> <p>Furthermore strong personal relationships pose risks to Corporations when sales personnel form such close personal relationships with clients that are able to take those clients with them when they leave the firm (Anderson & Jap, 2005).</p>

Global versus Local Organisational issues	Cheverton (2006)	Selling companies need to be able to accommodate the buying Companies preferences with regards to dealing with the Company at a global or local level. If both organisations are mismatched from this perspective, it becomes difficult for the selling and buying company to achieve partnership.
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Table 3: Key Account Enablers and Inhibitors - adapted from Davies, I. A. and Ryals, L. J. (2009). A stage model for transitioning to KAM. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 25 (9-10), 1027-1048.

2.11 Gaps in the Key Accounts Management Academic Literature

Despite the widespread adoption and use of a KAM approach worldwide, a number of gaps in the literature are apparent. Specifically literature relating to KAM in a global and more specifically emerging markets perspective remains limited and fragmented. These gaps in the KAM literature are outlined below:

2.11.1 Key Accounts Management within an International Context

Despite the vast literature on international business and multi-national companies, it is immediately obvious that, little focus has been given to the implementation of a KAM approach within and across borders, especially considering the increasing globalisation of trade (Davies & Ryals, 2009; Wengler et al., 2006; Gosselin & Bauwen, 2006; Boles, Johnston & Gardner, 1999; Millman & Wilson, 1996; Homburg, Workman and Jensen, 2002; Al-Hussan, 2011).

Rogers (2014) notes that “communication breakdowns are a cause of relationship discontent, and should therefore be avoided” and that “this remains an active area of discourse with a number of papers focusing upon communications and networks between companies, particularly where there are cross-cultural challenges in international selling” (Rogers, 2014). Accordingly in an international context with different languages and cultural norms this is an area that may potentially have an impact upon the KAM process, but is significantly under-represented within the literature.

2.11.2 Key Accounts Management within the Emerging Markets

With most Key Accounts Management research focusing on markets such as the United States and Europe, there is little in the way of research focusing specifically upon emerging markets and the applicability and challenges of adopting and implementing a KAM approach within this context (Al-Hassan & Brennan, 2009). Accordingly the applicability of the enablers and inhibitors of KAM within this context may also not be fully understood.

2.11.3 Key Accounts Management and strategies for customers with different position within the value chain

In addition, despite the extensive body of research there has to date been limited discussion on the particular nature of business-to-business relationships with distribution intermediaries and the specific challenge of adopting a KAM approach within this context. The position of the customer within the value chain may have a significant bearing upon KAM and accordingly the specific enablers and inhibitors of KAM may not be fully understood.

2.11.4 Key Accounts Management and the Practical Limitations of Adoption

Finally the lack of empirical studies, results in a limitation of the theoretical as well as practical guidance of adopting a KAM approach. It is insufficient to advise practitioners that suppliers should develop the appropriate orientation towards a KAM approach without providing specific information on what this orientation involves and what dimensions actually constitute towards this orientation (Gounaris and Tzempelikos, 2012).

Furthermore the stage of KAM implementation/orientation of the organisation is often not clearly detailed within the academic literature and thus it often offers little in the way of practical advice to KAM development tailored towards the organisations current stage of KAM implementation/orientation.

2.12 How this study aims to contribute to the academic literature

The purpose of this research project is to explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors of a KAM approach within the emerging markets. Developing an understanding of the perceived enablers and inhibitors will assist organisations gain an insight into how best to implement a KAM approach in order to leverage the benefits, overcome the barriers and potentially mitigate the risks of failure given the specific challenges presented by the emerging markets.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Philosophy

Given the relatively unexplored nature of KAM within the context of the emerging markets, an interpretive research approach was adopted for the purpose of this study, with interpretive research designed to “uncover meanings and understandings of the broad interrelationships in the situation being researched” (Veal, 2005).

Due to the diverse challenges presented by the emerging markets, an inductive approach was adopted due to the exploratory nature of the research being undertaken. When using an inductive approach, generalizations are made using ‘bottom-up reasoning’ (Horn, 2009). With exploratory approaches most appropriate for studies focused on theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989), a qualitative research design was adopted with “qualitative methods defined as procedures for ‘coming to terms with the meaning not the frequency’ of a phenomenon” (van Maanen, 1983).

A number of arguments in favour of a qualitative approach within an international context are provided by Marschan-Piekkari & Welch (2004) such as that it “allows for deeper cross-cultural understanding and is less likely to

suffer from cross-cultural bias and ethnocentric assumptions on the part of the researcher than survey instruments". In addition Marschan-Piekkari & Welch (2004) also outline that research instruments "need to be chosen to suit the particular location in which the research is being conducted". In particular it is argued that qualitative research "may be preferable in developing countries where secondary data for random samples may be lacking and respondents may be unfamiliar with questionnaires, and in those cultures in which particular emphasis is based upon the development of social, face-to-face and trust".

3.2 Research Approach

This dissertation is based upon a single Company, case study, the purpose of which was to explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach within the emerging markets. Three different types of case studies are possible, these are exploratory, explanatory and descriptive (Yin, 2009). 'Exploratory case studies' involve gathering information and developing ideas in under-researched problems or contexts. 'Explanatory case studies' seek to identify and explain causal-relationships. Finally 'descriptive case studies' seek to describe a specific situation or problem. The approach adopted for the purpose of this dissertation is an exploratory single-Company case study. A case study design was selected for the purpose of this study because it provides a bounded framework for collecting data from within an Organisation (Hollenbeck, Zinkhan, French & Song, 2009). Case-study research also provides an intensive, holistic description & analysis of a single phenomenon (Yin, 2009) and was thus deemed suitable for the research question at hand.

3.3 Research Phases

The stages of qualitative data analysis within this research project are shown in figure 8 below and are outlined in sections 3.3 onwards.

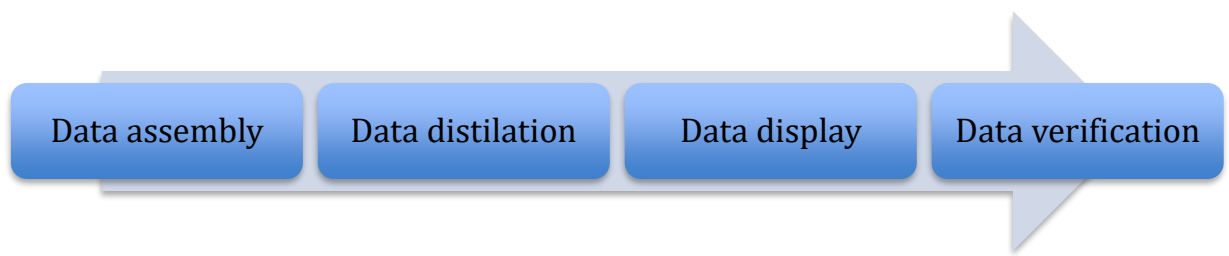


Figure 8 – Stages of qualitative data analysis, adapted from Malhotra and Birks (2000).

3.4 Research Population and Sample

During the primary data collection stage, the research population for the purpose of this case-study is defined as the broader ‘selling team’ “because an individual sales person does not possess the knowledge or intra-firm influence to propose and implement a program that has the potential for building a competitive advantage for the buyer seller dyad” (Weitz & Bradford, 1999).

As such the sample was drawn from both front-line Sales Managers responsible for managing the Key Accounts and sales support functions such as Marketing, Regulatory Affairs and Finance with over one years service within the Division responsible for the emerging markets. A one-year limit was adopted to ensure that participants had sufficient depth of insight into the subject area. Participants selected were involved in the management of accounts across all of the markets managed by the Division including the Middle East; Africa; the Commonwealth of Independent States; Central and Eastern Europe and India. Key Account Managers were predominantly located in market, with support functions, dedicated to serving the emerging markets predominantly located within the United Kingdom.

3.5 Interviewees identification and selection

A total of 15 participants were selected for interview using a purposive sampling technique. When using purposive sampling it is necessary to avoid claiming

quantitative representativeness, 'however the variety of participants may be used to support a claim for a degree of representativeness' (Veal, 2005).

KAM Personnel	KAM Support Functions
11	4

United Kingdom (Head Office) dedicated to the emerging markets	Central & Eastern Europe	Middle East	Africa	Asia	Commonwealth of Independent States
4	2	3	3	1	2

Table 4 – Interview participants work function and geographic locations

Participants were selected, by the researcher, on the basis of their experience of the emerging markets using the aforementioned purposive sampling technique from both KAM personnel and KAM Support personnel. There has been a shift in the level of analysis from the individual Key Account Manager to the broader selling team (Weitz and Bradford, 1999) due to the growing recognition that functional groups, other than sales, play an important role in the process of interacting with buying organisations (Hutt, Johnston and Ronchetto, 1985; Spekman and Johnston, 1986). It is acknowledged that this approach to the selection of participants, i.e. purposive selection brings with it a risk of researcher bias. The functions and geographic location of participants is shown in Table 4.

Following on from applying for and gaining approval from the University of Portsmouth's Ethics Committee (Appendix A1), informed consent was sought and gained from the General Manager of the Division of the Company prior to the research project commencing (Appendix A2). At the time of approaching each potential participant with an invitation to participate (Appendix A3), an

informed consent form was provided (Appendix A4). Prior to the interviews taking place a copy of the informed consent form (Appendix A4) was provided again and their signature gained prior to their participation. All of these steps agreed in advance as per the University's Ethics Approval Process. The informed consent sheet (Appendix A4) fully outlined the scope of the research project and provided the interviewee with a summary of how their data could be used and gained their consent for this use of their data in advance.

3.6 Interview Process – Data Assembly Stage

Primary data collection took place through a series of semi-structured face-to-face and telephone interviews each lasting between 25–35 minutes. The researcher had undergone training in the workplace on interview techniques, including applied training on the use of probes; open and closed questions. Given that qualitative research is primarily exploratory in nature, questions and probes are not fixed. As an interview takes place, the researcher learns more about an issue and can develop new questions or probe and decide that a question initially thought to be vital is now no longer relevant. There can also be issues that can be compared over a series of interviews or observations, but the whole data collection and assembly can evolve (Malhotra and Birks, 2000).

Due to the geographic dispersion of the respondents and the limited time available for the primary data collection it was necessary to use both face-to-face interviews and remote interviews (using telephone, Skype and FaceTime).

Interviews have numerous advantages, including the ability to achieve a greater depth of insight; the possibility to attribute responses directly to the participant and the fact that they result in the free exchange of information and are relatively easy to arrange, especially at distance (Malhotra & Birks, 2000). However whilst interviews are potentially a rich-source of data, they suffer from

biases and limitations, as is true of any research method (Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004). When conducting interpretive research, “a researcher accepts the subjectivity of the research findings” (Veal, 2005) with results “susceptible to the interviewers influence and the quality and completeness of results depend heavily upon the interviewers skills” (Veal, 2005). The data is also difficult to analyse and interpret coupled with the amount of time required to complete the interviews, the number of interviews tends to be limited (Malhotra & Birks, 2000). However despite these limitations, due to the exploratory nature of the research, on balance the approach selected was better suited to the research question, than a positivist approach which focuses on “objective description and explanation” (Veal, 2005).

Interviews were semi-structured and reflexive, broadly following an interview guide (Appendix A5) developed based upon the Dimensions of Key Accounts Management model (Homburg, Workman and Jensen, 2002) however the questions evolved as a result of the answers given. As English was not the mother-tongue of around half of the interviewees questions sometimes had to be repeated, re-explained, re-phrased or re-framed in order to provide clarity and assurance to the participants in order to elicit a response. It is acknowledged that this may have an a bearing upon the outcome of the interviews.

As mentioned, each interview was conducted according to an interview guide (Appendix A5) with additional prompts broadly based upon the Dimensions of Key Accounts Management model (Homburg, Workman and Jensen, 2002). Questions were designed to elicit discussions around experiences, aiming to facilitate discourse around real-life situations and to aid in the consideration & distillation of thoughts around the enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management Approach with the emerging markets.

Interviews were audio recorded with the full consent of participants, the interviewees were advised of the reason for the recording taking place i.e. to allow transcription. Upon completion of the interview all audio recordings were transcribed.

3.7 Transcription, Coding & Data Analysis – Data Distillation Stage

Despite the established analytical methods and statistical tools readily available for quantitative research, the analysis stage is the least developed and thus most difficult aspect of qualitative case study methodology (Miles, 1979; Tellis, 1997). So challenging is this stage that in data analysis was described as “the ‘black hole’ of qualitative research” by Lather (1991).

Data collected using qualitative techniques do not result from pre-determined structured measurements, as by their very nature, qualitative techniques allow for a great variety of response styles and formats (Malhotra & Birks, 2000). The process of data reduction involves organizing and structuring data, including a process of data reduction called coding. This involves breaking the data into discrete chunks and assigning a code to those chunks. Through following this process data can be arranged to search for patterns of similarity to identify themes within the data (Malhotra and Birks, 2000). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Coding is one of the significant steps taken during this process to organize and make sense of textual data, it is a dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorizing, with most qualitative researchers analysing their own data (Bassit, 2003). Unlike some quantitative research, qualitative research usually lacks a division of labour between data collectors and analysts (Bassit, 2003).

Tesch (1990) used the terms ‘data condensation’ or ‘data distillation’ to describe the eventual outcome of a qualitative analysis, with the data not only becoming

smaller and manageable in the analysis process as the result of interpretation and organisation, but with the establishment of 'categories' a tool and an important part of the eventual research outcome. Furthermore Ely, Anzul & Friedman (1991) outline that the process of establishing 'categories' through coding is a very close, intense 'conversation' between a researcher and the data that has implications for on-going method, descriptive reporting and theory building.

Following full transcription of the interview text in Microsoft word it was necessary to select a method of data reduction with both manual coding and computer assisted coding evaluated (in this case Nvivo) for suitability. Computers are beginning to play a bigger role in the analysis of qualitative data (Denzin and Lincoln; 2005) and with the advent of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software the management and analysis of data has become significantly easier (Browning & Sørnes, 2008), with programmes such as NVivo developed specifically for the purpose of qualitative data analysis. However despite the availability of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software, manual coding was selected as the appropriate method for data analysis. Basit (2003) concludes that the choice will be dependent on the size of the project, the funds and time available, the expertise and the inclination of the researcher (Basit, 2003; Weng, 2012) with both methods offering value.

4. Results and Discussion

In this section, the overall aims and objectives of the study shall be reviewed along with the key themes that emerged during the primary data collection phase. A framework shall then be presented illustrating the enablers and inhibitors captured during the academic literature review and primary data collection phase.

The aim of this dissertation was to explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a KAM approach within the emerging markets. Developing an understanding of the perceived enablers and inhibitors will assist organisations gain an insight in how best to implement a KAM approach able to leverage the benefits, overcome the barriers and potentially mitigate the risks of failure given the specific challenges presented by the emerging markets.

Based upon the data collected from the interviews conducted during the primary data collection phase, the enablers and inhibitors of KAM are broadly aligned to the themes within the academic literature, however some aspects were found to be different and these are discussed within this section. The key themes are outlined one by one below, clustered under Homberg et al.'s (2002) dimensions of KAM. Illustrative quotations from interview participants, captured during the primary data collection phase, accompany each theme. As outlined within the Ethics Approval (Appendix A1), to ensure participant anonymity, quotations are not attributed to individuals and the name of accounts or markets being managed by the participants have also been removed and replaced with a generic description so that the participant cannot be identified.

4.1 Formalization

4.1.1 Identification of Key Accounts – beyond the local organisation

Aligned to the literature, a key facet of a KAM programme is the identification of accounts that offer the best opportunity for growth (McDonald et al., 2000; Ojasalo, 2001; Gosselin and Bauwen, 2006). During the interviews it was clear that due to the number of individual markets the organisation was operating in, coupled with the devolved local management structure, Key Account status was very much locally derived with the criteria for classification lacking consistency. Interviews with the KAM support personnel illustrated this difference in interpretation of which customers were perceived as Key Accounts:

(Interviewer: Is there a common understanding across the Division?) I have a slightly different perspective because I am central and I look across different geographies. Within any given Territory it could be that the local sales manager is looking at two or three but for us one or two are clearly bigger.

Having clearly identified Key Accounts (McDonald et al., 2000; Ojasalo, 2001; Gosselin and Bauwen 2006; Ryal and Rogers 2007) and a clearly defined Key Account selection process and criteria (Napolitano, 1997; Wong, 1998; Spencer, 1999; McDonald et al., 2000; Ojasalo, 2001; Abratt and Kelly, 2002; Gosselin and Bauwen, 2006; Ryal and Rogers, 2007) have been identified as enablers of a KAM approach.

It was also found that there was a lack of provision of a higher level or differentiated service from the central functions for Key Accounts. The provision of higher levels or differentiated services has been identified as an enabler of KAM (Workman et al. 2003; Ivens and Pardo 2007). This lack of alignment may be due to the stage of KAM adoption by the selling organisation, however it is also possible that the number of distributors the organisation has, along with the geographic dispersion of the individual business units with a devolved management structure, all being served by central support function may have

contributed to this. The aforementioned lack of clarity as to which accounts were truly key may also represent a further compounding factor.

4.2 Actors

One of the dimensions of KAM identified by Homburg, Workman and Jensen (2002) is 'Actors'. During the course of the data collection phase 'Actors' both at the selling organisation and distribution intermediary were identified as enablers and inhibitors of the KAM process. The themes identified relating to 'Actors' are as follows:

4.2.1 Stability of the Work-Force

One of the key issues identified as a barrier to a KAM approach is the stability of the work force (Actors), not only at the selling company but also the customer's location (distribution intermediary). Interviewees noted that:

"We have had a business partner for the last 25-years, they were very successful on all levels. Then suddenly within the last 4-5 years they started losing their key people so you are seeing the people who create the business leave, then everything just toppled. There is no connection with the end-users, with the opinion leaders in the Country and there is no follow-up. The momentum carries it, then it stops."

"Its ensuring that the dealers have the appropriate personnel that can liaise with my team, with the appropriate skill-set....we do spend a lot of time trying to read between the lines and extrapolate. (Interviewer: Is it knowledge or capabilities or both?) It's a bit of both."

"(Interviewer: What happens if the management is lost?) We will lose! It will be a loss for both parties. "(if the staff are lost) the product will not be on the shelf at the right time, they will chose the wrong product."

Staff turnover rates were noted as high, by the interviewees, within the markets they were responsible for. As outlined by Garr (2011) with China, India, Brazil and the Middle East having economies growing at a combined rate of as much as 40%, many Western organisations have turned to these areas to fuel their growth. However, increased demand for the limited supply of talent in these markets has driven employee turnover rates into the double digits. Within the Middle East some unique aspects were identified, with non-nationals making-

up a large proportion of the workforce. One Key Account Manager commented that:

"In this part of the world, it is very rare that you have the nationals of the Country working within the business. They get ex-pats who can come in and work within the business, but who can leave for a better offer. It is a business dependent on people and the relationships with the end-user. It is critical for the success!"

The stability of workforce was noted as an enabler or inhibitor of KAM. This issue was impactful whether the loss was at the supplier or distributors locations with any significant changes potentially impacting upon the KAM process. The lack of IT systems (covered later in this section) also heightened the impact of the loss of key personnel at the customer's .

4.2.2 Knowledge/Capability of the workforce

A further consistent theme relating to Actors, identified by the interviewees as a key enabler and inhibitor of the KAM processes outcome was the capability of the workforce. This applied to the workforce not only at the selling company but also at the customer's location also, in this case a distribution intermediary. Interviewees noted that:

"The distributors team need a....real understanding of the market, what kind of product we are. We are a superior Company, top quality product. It should be launched in the right way"

"A key inhibitor of KAM is the quality of (customers) work force"

"The distributors team....need experience of the dental market which has a lot of differences to other markets like pharma, otherwise they will not be guided well"

"Its about knowledge and experience"

"We have a distributor, they are well experienced in the medical/pharma. The dental division managers do not have the right experience so they are sort of failures within the market"

The lack of understanding of the market, potentially linked to the specialised nature of the industry, or functional capability of the Actors (whether this be at

the selling company or the distributor) was perceived by the interviewees to be a potential enabler or inhibitor of KAM.

Possibly particular to the fact that there were emerging markets, it was noted by interviewees that there was an inter-play between political, economic and social volatility and the capability of the workforce in some cases. Interviewees noted that:

"The vision of the individual owners. They are always afraid of enlarging the business, they don't want to invest more money. This is totally different to investor companies! (Interviewer: They are not investing in the structure?) Yes, maximum profit with minimum investment, especially in our current circumstances. Most people are afraid of the future, economic and political instability."

"There is the volatility on currency, economic political, socio-economic problems.....leading to lack of investment"

Interviewees perceived volatility within the macro-economic environment as a restraining factor with regards to the distributors willingness to invest in their structure and/or personnel and thus can be considered as a potential inhibitor of a KAM approach.

In addition, the emerging nature of the distributors within the sector was noted to be acting as an inhibitor. One Key Account Manager commented that:

"The majority of my distributors, these are companies which were growing up from very small family companies. It means that these are Companies which do not have any professional background, economical or management background or professional skills. During their career, they were going from service company to small distributor so it is very, very difficult to find proper person"

As per the Key Account Relational Development Model developed by Millman & Wilson (1995, 1996) the with goal of KAM being the progression from a transactional relationship through to partnership-KAM and synergistic-KAM approach, this issue of the capability-knowledge of Actors on both side of the relationship was clearly highlighted by the interviews as representing a

potential inhibitor for progression of the relationship and the KAM approach overall.

4.2.3 Training

Due to the aforementioned issues relating to Actors; i.e. the stability of the workforce and knowledge/capability of the workforce, training was noted as an enabler of a KAM approach. Comments by interviewees included:

"We need a business partner capable of developing his team"

"We need a business partner with a level of employees, who can guide the employees well. The top management should be well qualified enough, otherwise these people will be lost".

"We provide training at all levels. I see that this is working"

"It would be nice for my team to meet and train the distributors on the key aspects of our work"

"Education – I think we are poor there, I think we could do a lot more there."

With Actors playing such a key role in the interaction between the seller and customer (distributor), the knowledge and capabilities of Actors was noted by the interviewees as having a significant bearing upon KAM outcomes. Linked to this, a further key enabler and inhibitor relating to training is the level of customer insight/mutual understanding. This allowed the identification of training needs, which could then be addressed by the seller. One Key Account Manager noted that:

"We need to understand their needs and support them. If we are smart enough we should look to the areas that they are also weak to develop them!"

Targeting training to address skills/knowledge gaps may overcome potential inhibitors to allow progression of the relationship beyond transactional. Further research is clearly required to understand this issue more fully.

4.2.4 Values

A theme identified as an enabler and inhibitor of the progression of the relationship with the Key Account was that of 'values'. The customer (distributor) operating in accordance with the ethics and values of the supplier, especially as the supplier in this case study is a US Corporation subject to US extra-territorial laws/legislation, was seen as an enabler or inhibitor of the KAM process. Interviewee's comments on the topic included:

"The integrity, its really selecting and working with the distributors that share the values of DENTSPLY and understand that we are governed by broader controls than those that are in market or cultural. It also directly affects the trust piece as well, which has a knock on affect"

"We are spending time trying to get people to understand our US Corporate requirements."

"It is imperative that from a compliance and due diligence perspective that we trust the distributor and their route to market. I think that is key."

This in turn, seemingly interlinked with the theme of Trust mentioned earlier on. Only when Actors at the customers location were operating in accordance with the values of the supplier could the relationship continue and progress beyond the transactional.

4.3 Activities/Interaction

Represented in Homburg, Workman and Jensen's (2002) dimensions of Key Account Management model as 'Activities' from the interviews it is clear that this dimension, should be replaced with 'Interaction' charactering the two-way process of interaction between both parties as per the IMP Interaction Model (Turnbull and Valla, 1986). Key themes identified relating to Activities or Interaction were as follows:

4.3.1 Strategic Alignment

The impact of the strategic alignment between both parties, on the outcomes of the KAM process was identified by the interviews as an enabler and inhibitor. Key Account Managers responded that:

"A key account is one that wants to develop both our business and their business in the same direction".

"(Interviewer: What is a Key Account?) One with Strategic alignment with our Company"

"Selection of these dealers align with the strategic vision of this Company"

Whether this is solely due to the fact that the customer in this instance was a distribution intermediary is worthy of further investigation. Rogers (2014) notes that 'research to date has focused on strategic intent, but a recent review of the literature points out that practitioners would like to see more about implementing and sustaining value'.

4.3.2 Inter-Firm/Interpersonal Trust

One of the more frequently mentioned themes during the interviews was that of 'trust', both between the customer and seller (inter-firm trust) and between individuals at both organisations (interpersonal trust). Inter-firm trust seemed to be intrinsically linked to interpersonal trust. Interviewees noted that:

"Both partners need to get together and build up trust. If there is a lack of trust, there is a lack of trust across our businesses. How we overcome that is transparency, however it is not always possible for us to be totally transparent."

"(Interviewer: What information do they share with DENTSPLY?) It depends on how much trust they have for the Company. We are working on the basis of good relation and if they see the benefit."

"If a company is fair with them and is going according to agreement and if something is said, it is done, the service is according to expectation and we are behaving in a professional way and they see the benefit of our work. This is building the relation and the trust."

The fragility of the inter-firm trust was accordingly linked to individuals at both seller and distribution intermediary remaining in-post. If a contact at either the selling company or customer leaves, the trust would need to be rebuilt. This therefore linked back to the issue of workforce stability covered earlier. One Key Account Manager noted that:

"If someone leaves we lose knowledge and relationships. Normally in those organisations, if we have someone we work with they are the go to person they give us transparent information and we know if we want to move things forward we can ask them questions. If you lose them, we have to start from scratch building up trust and transparency and that takes quite a few months."

One aspect, seemingly particular to the seller-distributor relationship type and impacting upon trust was the commitment to the relationship. Comments made during the interviews included:

"With regards to trust, it's understanding that each entity will act with all interests at heart. One of the things that we face with that is with the dealer model, as we go bigger ideally we would move away from that retaining two or three key dealers per region, but going towards a more direct sales model. That can create a lack of trust because some of those decisions we make, at the bottom of the dealers mind they are thinking are you trying to cut me out."

"There is a resistance to sharing the vision because they might open themselves up to being weakened by giving us information"

"It gets to a point where the distributor thinks they are bigger than the principle (seller)."

"Manufacturers have an upper hand, as to whom they designate as their partners. It is like giving them a cheque."

Trust therefore appeared to be a significant enabler or inhibitor of the relationship and thus KAM approach and this was intertwined with the relationships between Actors within each organisation.

The perception of the customer, that the supplier planned to bypass them and sell direct to consumers, was also noted to be undermining trust and this was an inhibitor of KAM. Comments on this theme included:

"If you look at some of our competitors, there is a resistance to sharing the vision because they might open themselves up to being weakened by giving us information"

"They are reluctant to share information because they are worried about us going in as a direct selling organization"

In a review of the instability of International Joint Ventures (IJV) Inkpen and Beamish (1997) noted that knowledge of the local environment is usual a key resource of local partners; it is also a key source of bargaining power because it makes the foreign partner dependent upon the local partner. As a foreign partner increases its knowledge of the local market, instability of the IJV relationship becomes more probable, because the foreign partner gains bargaining power. A similar theme was noted in this case.

4.3.3 Interpersonal Relationships

Linked to trust, one enabler and inhibitor identified by interviewee's consistent across all of the markets was the importance of interpersonal relationships to KAM. Comments made on the subject of interpersonal relationships included:

"Relationships help or guide"

"If he has good relationships in the market he can deliver results. (Interviewer: Are relationships really important?) Yes, really important! Once you have the relationships the sales will come "

"If he leaves, he will go to another Company and take the relationships and sales with him!"

"Personal relationships, its one of the sole, main factors towards a long term relationship. Personal relationships."

"If myself or my colleague were not there, he would have gone to the competition by now. If he left it could have a real impact upon the business."

"This part of the world is very personal. However good a professional entity are, the perception is that this personal touch secures the business."

Interviewees also noted the importance of building relationships, beyond the first point of contact at the customer's location (i.e. the customers buyer) as an enabler of the KAM process.

"For some (of the customers personnel), they are very close to me they consider me as a person, as a confident. At least this helps me to know some stories, I have relationships with the small ones and the big ones. Their management doesn't know this. I don't want them to know as this would distort the relationships."

"Relationships with a partner is a system. The system should be working on all levels, I try for example to focus on this dealer. Explain to my team what product, what meeting what managers."

In particular, the importance of relationships and their impact upon the effectiveness of the KAM approach. Thus these relationships were noted as a key enabler or inhibitor of KAM.

4.3.4 Mutual-understanding

A further key theme identified as a key enabler or inhibitor of the KAM process was mutual-understanding between the two organisations. Comments included:

"As a leadership team if we were to identify the accounts and go and visit these accounts, to have different individuals go in and understand their business and pressure points with us then I think that would help."

"I don't think we are great at understanding the needs of the distributors, I think that is an area we can improve."

"What could help is having more contact, in particular more face to face contact between our staff and the personnel at our key accounts. Exhibitions, customer visits. Not only the KAM but also the Customer Services representative."

"Some of our customers have a transactional expectation, but we are pushing for them to reach those targets. But what is missing is a relationship calibration, a measure of having collaborative interaction, having information flow"

As outlined within Table 3; the issue of the number of accounts being managed, seemed to be having a bearing upon the level of mutual understanding it was possible to achieve thus seemed to be acting as an inhibitor of KAM. One of the selling team noted that:

"At the moment we are almost disjointed because we work in so many countries. When have met, once they understand each other and once they know each other, they tend to work on things to get the same result."

Furthermore the challenges of culture seemed prevalent and a key inhibitor of KAM, with comments made including:

"We have some problems that the Company is not perceiving....in the Middle East (to do) this is not possible."

"(Interviewer: Do they feel the Company is listening?) No. For them the Company is not listening a lot. The Company is not making efforts to consider every market as a market in itself. For the Company the same policy is applied everywhere. Europe is different to the Middle East."

"The perception in the UK that you can replicate what is being done in the UK market with the Middle East, it is genuinely very different. However much you would like to have a structured approach. It deals with relations and local knowledge."

"We need to forget this is a European Office and start thinking this is a Middle East office. To align! I am in the middle and this is a challenge in itself. For them I am the link, I have to keep my role and at the same support them. This is very, very challenging."

"We do find it difficult to establish those relationships. A lot, you could describe as cultural, that is not cultural related to geography but a difference in expectations on both sides."

The topics identified here were broad, with many of the comments made by the interviewees linking to cultural issues, cultural understanding and business/market norms or requirements. Accordingly it seems that further research to understand the enablers and inhibitors of KAM within an inter-cultural, international context is required.

4.4 Resources

Represented in Homburg, Workman and Jensen's (2002) dimensions of Key Account Management model as 'Activities' from the interviews it is clear that this dimension was broadly aligned to the academic literature. 'Resources' noted as potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM were as follows:

4.4.1 Information Technology – Systems

As outlined in Table 3, IT systems were found to be a significant enabler or inhibitor. However as outlined by Caplan (1997) cited in Abratt and Kelly (2002); Ojasalo (2001); Workman et al. (2003); Brady (2004) it was not only IT support for the Key Account Manager. In this case study, with the customers as distributors, it was the distributors IT systems or more particularly a lack of them that was acting as an inhibitor of KAM. Interviewees noted that:

"Some of them don't have sales analysis systems, they don't have the tools. It may not just be people resources, IT resources or whatever. (Researcher - Does that impede the ability to work together?) It can do, if they don't know what they are selling, or how often they need to be buying it. Some of them are small businesses or family businesses."

"Some of the guys have good ERP systems, other ones spread-sheets and some pen and paper. There is a massive variation there. We cant do a one size fits all."

"If you look at something such as ordering and some of the systems, some of the big dealers are bigger than us and we are trying to force them to use our ordering system and they already have established systems and interfaces with a whole variety of global suppliers beyond medical devices. So that whole systems piece is massive and there is almost a gap in us enabling them to interface with our system, but that could be a massive win for us."

Again to move beyond the transactional, the interviewees noted that Key Account must have sufficient systems in place to enable this progression. The maturity of the business and systems was therefore acting as a constraining factor on the progression of the relationship and KAM approach overall.

4.4.2 Financial Resources

One of the key reoccurring themes throughout the interviews related to the financial stability/liquidity of the Key Accounts, with one Key Account Manager noting that:

“We need a business partner who is financially very strong to be capable of matching the time limit and the procedure of payment”

Whilst an Account may have many of the facets of a Key Account, due to insufficient financial resources, the relationship between the seller and customer may not be able to progress beyond the transactional. The customers lack of financial resources as a barrier to adopting a Key Accounts Management approach reoccurred throughout many of the interviews and was broadly consistent across many of the markets.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The aim of this case study was to explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a KAM approach within the emerging markets. The case study focused upon a Division of a US Medical Device Manufacturer operating across a number of emerging markets.

Based upon the interviews conducted the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a KAM approach were found to be broadly aligned to the themes within the academic literature, captured during the literature review stage and summarized within Table 3 of this case study.

As the customers within the context of this case study were distributors, it was found that enablers and inhibitors, relating to the dimensions of KAM identified within Homburg, Workman and Jensen's (2002) model of KAM such as Actors and Resources at both the sellers location and customer (distributors) location had an impact upon KAM outcomes.

Enablers and inhibitors, not captured during the literature review phase were identified during the course of the interviews. Two quotes captured during the primary data collection phase encapsulated the themes under-represented within the academic literature. These were as follows:

“(The) Biggest three barriers are trust, alignment and relationships”

“It should be profitable on both ends, to see eye-to-eye as to where we want to go with the business and then having the people in place. Without the right people, you can really go down the drain.”

With reference to the first of these two quotes, it is suggested that the Homburg et al. (2002) model under-represents the two-way dynamic between seller and

customer with its use of the descriptor 'Activities'. It is suggested that 'Interaction' is a more appropriate descriptor, as per the 'IMP Interaction Model' (Turnbull and Valla, 1986). Important themes relating to 'interaction' identified during the interviews include inter-firm trust; interpersonal trust; values; strategic alignment and mutual understanding. This research suggests that Organisations wishing to implement a KAM approach must give additional consideration to these elements of interaction in order build a successful KAM programme.

Two themes relating to 'Resources', as per Homburg et al.'s (2002) model, were flagged as key inhibitors for the progression of the relationship with the customer, and thus of the KAM approach overall, during the course of the interviews. The customer's lack of Information Technology (IT) systems and Financial Resources were identified by the interviewees as Inhibitors of a KAM approach. Whereas research within the academic literature relating to IT systems and its impact on KAM (Caplan, 1997 cited in Abratt and Kelly, 2002; Ojasalo, 2001; Workman et al., 2003; Brady, 2004) focused on the seller, in this instance it was systems specifically at the customers location impeding the move beyond a transaction relationship. Furthermore the seller's perceived lack of flexibility with regards to its systems and perceived lack of 'understanding' of the customer's issues, were perceived to be a further compounding factor and inhibitor of a KAM. Specific to the customer's position in the value chain, factors relating to financial strength and liquidity were consistent across the markets, impeding the customers (distributors) ability to serve their core function of consistently supplying goods to the market without interruption. Interviewees thus identified this as an inhibitor of a KAM approach. Accordingly Organisations wishing to adopt a KAM approach must take the time to fully survey resourcing challenges at both the seller and customer's location in order to implement appropriate steps to ensure the success of their KAM programme.

As identified by various authors within the academic literature (McDonald et al., 2000; Ojasalo, 2001; Gosselin and Bauwen, 2006; Ryal and Rogers, 2007) the identification of accounts that offer the best opportunity for growth is one of the core requirements of a KAM approach. Accordingly specific customers must first be selected and allocated 'Key Accounts status'. Most industrial companies have only a few customers that account for the majority of their total sales and the relationship with these accounts are decisive for the performance of the company, whatever measures of performance one may use (Hakansson and Snehota, 1995). During this case study it was found that the selection of 'Key Accounts' was being determined in-market. However there was no prioritization by the central team as there was limited formalization of Key Account status recognition across the organisation. This interplay between structure and formalization of Key Accounts status across the organisation was evident.

Enablers and inhibitors relating to 'Actors', as per Homburg et al.'s (2002) model, were also identified during the course of the interviews. These included values (ethics); stability of the work; knowledge and capability of the workforce. Training was identified as a potential enabler of a KAM approach by various authors (McDonald, Millman and Rogers, 1997; Ojasalo 2001; Shetcliffe 2004; Weeks and Stevens 1997; Yip and Madsen 1996) however this has focused upon the Key Accounts Manager. In this instance, due to issues relating to the workforce stability and issues relating to the knowledge and capability of the workforce coupled with the position of the customer within the value chain (a distribution intermediary), training for the customers staff was identified as a potential enabler of the KAM approach. This measure may potentially provide the capability of the customer to move beyond a transactional relationship as per the Key Account Relational Development Model (Millman & Wilson, 1995, 1996).

Figure 9 below illustrates the perceived enablers and inhibitors of KAM. Those identified during the course of the primary data collection phase of this study applicable to the emerging markets are shown together with the enablers and inhibitors from the academic literature and may or may not be applicable to the emerging markets.

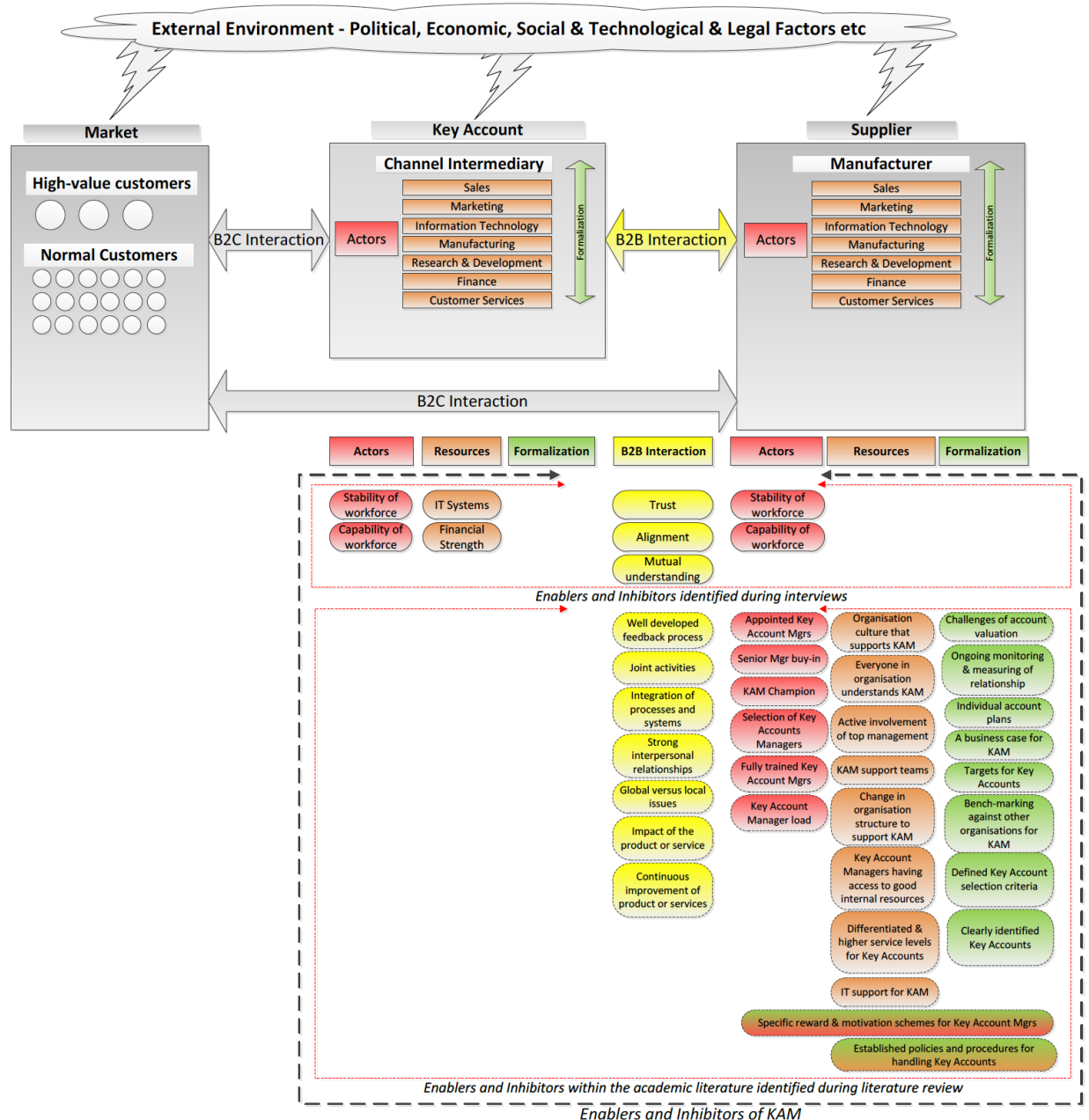


Figure 9: Framework illustrating the perceived Enablers and Inhibitors of KAM mapped against the Dimensions of KAM as per Homburg et al. (2002) model.

These enablers and inhibitors are mapped against Homburg et al's (2002) dimensions of KAM model. It is recognised that no Dimension is standalone and there is interplay between each, accordingly no perceived enabler or inhibitor only impacts upon one dimension of KAM. However for the purpose of this framework enablers and inhibitors are aligned to one Dimension of KAM for simplicity. Two factors cannot be pegged to any one dimension of KAM and these are shown accordingly straddling two or more dimensions.

5.1 Research limitations

Given the time and resource constraints and the fact that this research project is based on a single company case study, this research is exploratory with limited generalizability. Furthermore as previously mentioned the language barriers encountered during the primary data collection phase with the resulting need to reframe questions; the cultural barriers encountered and the fact that the researcher is an employee of the Company are all likely to have had a bearing upon the interview process and the data subsequently collected. Furthermore as this study focuses upon customers, who are distribution intermediaries, further research is required to understand which enablers and inhibitors of KAM are specific to distributors. Finally it is acknowledged that the emerging market universe is a broad, culturally diverse grouping encompassing more than 140 countries. Indeed the list of Countries itself is dynamic, as markets develop and may eventually attain developed-market status (Eerdmans, 2013). Accordingly with such a heterogeneous grouping of markers, each with their own specificities many themes which whilst valid, may or may not be applicable to other markets. Accordingly further research is required to understand the specificities of each market or grouping of similar markets.

However despite these limitations, this research has highlighted several themes worthy of attention, discourse and future research under-represented within the existing academic literature.

5.2 Suggestions for future research

As the customers in this case study were distributors, it is possible that enablers and inhibitors identified within this study may only be applicable to distribution intermediaries. It is suggested that more research is required to understand and delineate the enablers and inhibitors of a KAM approach for customers at different positions within the value chain and at both the seller and customer's locations. Work is also required to understand whether these are specific to the emerging markets only.

Further research is also required to validate whether these enablers are applicable, only within the emerging markets, or both emerging and mature markets.

Research is also required to understand the potential enablers and inhibitors of a KAM approach for organisations operating within the emerging markets and at different stages of the Key Account Relational Development Model (Millman & Wilson, 1995, 1996) and with different structures (i.e. bow-tie; diamond; spiders-web etc.) as per McDonald, Millman and Rogers (1996) and Cheverton's (2006) models. It is possible that the enablers and inhibitors may differ in accordance with these factors.

Finally more research is required to understand the inter-cultural aspects of Key Account Management with businesses increasingly exploring the opportunities presented by the emerging markets. Further research will help to maximise the chances of success and mitigate the risk of failure when adopting a KAM approach.

Quantitative research could help to validate the generalizability of these exploratory findings.

5.4 Executive summary and implications for managers and executives

Organisations operating within the emerging markets and wishing to adopt a KAM approach can take guidance from the existing academic literature with regards to the potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM. Importantly, various factors are likely to have an impact upon the enablers and inhibitors of KAM encountered. These include the structure of the selling organisation and the position of the customer within the value chain. Where a customer is a distribution intermediary the potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM, outlined within the academic literature, may apply to both dimensions of KAM (Actors, Resources; Activities and Formalisation) at both the seller's location and customers (distributors) location. Accordingly when dealing with distribution intermediaries it is recommended that Key Account Managers remain alert to both enablers and inhibitors of KAM at both the seller and customer (distributors location). Measures to address some of the inhibitors, such as training, can then be deployed to mitigate their potential impact.

Enablers and inhibitors identified during the primary data collection phase were found to be broadly aligned to the themes currently captured within the academic literature, however several areas were found to be under-represented.

The Homburg et al. (2002) model under-represents the dynamic between seller and buyer with its 'Activities' and it is proposed that 'Interaction' is a more apt descriptor. Organisations must give careful consideration to the importance of 'Activities', or more specifically the process of 'Interaction' between seller and buyer, along with how to deploy the appropriate mix of 'Activities' in light of the challenges that exist, i.e. inter-cultural barriers, language barriers etc.

Strong interpersonal relationships between 'Actors' at the buyers and sellers location along with interpersonal and inter-firm trust; mutual-understanding &

strategic alignment were found to be enablers/inhibitors of KAM. This study also highlights several themes relating to 'Actors' as potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM including the knowledge and capability of the workforce; the stability of the workforce and values. Enablers and inhibitors of KAM were found to relate to 'Actors' at both at the buyer & sellers location. Training conducted by the buyer for the seller was highlighted as a potential enabler of KAM.

Potential enablers and inhibitors of KAM were identified relating to 'Resources' such as IT systems and financial resources at the sellers location and 'Formalisation' such as the identification of Key Accounts beyond the local organisation at the sellers location.

Finally the external environment and macro-economic issues such as political and economic factors were also found to have an impact upon the dimensions of KAM and thus play a mediating role upon the enablers and inhibitors.

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Appendices

A1 Ethics Approval Submission

PBS ETHICS APPROVAL V3: 2007

Ethical Review Checklist – Staff and Doctoral Students

This checklist should be completed by the researcher (PhD students to have DoS check) and sent to Sharman Rogers who will coordinate Ethics Committee scrutiny.

No primary data collection can be undertaken before the supervisor and/or Ethics Committee has given approval.

If, following review of this checklist, amendments to the proposals are agreed to be necessary, the researcher must provide Sharman with an amended version for scrutiny.

1. What are the objectives of the research project?

The objective of the research project is gaining an understanding of the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach within emerging markets.

2. Does the research involve *NHS patients, resources or staff*? ~~YES~~ ☒ NO (please circle).

If YES, it is likely that full ethical review must be obtained from the NHS process before the research can start.

3. Do you intend to collect *primary data* from human subjects or data that are identifiable with individuals? (This includes, for example, questionnaires and interviews.) ☒ YES / NO (please circle)

If you do not intend to collect such primary data then please go to question 14.

If you do intend to collect such primary data then please respond to ALL the questions 4 through 13. If you feel a question does not apply then please respond with n/a (for not applicable).

4. What is the *purpose* of the primary data in the dissertation / research project?

The purpose of the research is to explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management (KAM) approach within the emerging markets from the perspective of front line KAM's and KAM Associates. Therefore primary data is

proposed to be collected through semi-structure depth interviews to gain insight into the perceptions of these individuals.

5. What is/are the *survey population(s)*?

For the purpose of this in-company case study, the survey population is defined as KAM and KAM support Associates from functions such as marketing, finance, professional services/clinical education and regulatory affairs.

6. How big is the *sample* for each of the survey populations and how was this sample arrived at?

The total survey population will be determined using data from the Company HR system, a classification of all roles already having been undertaken by the Organisation. The total survey population is believed to be around 20-30 KAM's and around 80 KAM support Associates. Only participants with over one years continuous service within an emerging market context to ensure sufficient depth of experience will be invited to participate. The exact number of participants is expected to be in the region of 15 – 20 participants based on samples used for similar studies.

7. How will respondents be *selected and recruited*?

It is proposed that purposive sampling technique is used for the purpose of this case study. The participants will be approached directly with a written invitation to participate accompanied by a briefing form outlining details of the study.

8. What steps are proposed to ensure that the requirements of *informed consent* will be met for those taking part in the research? If an Information Sheet for participants is to be used, please attach it to this form. If not, please explain how you will be able to demonstrate that informed consent has been gained from participants.

An information sheet will be provided for to all prospective research participants at the time they are invited to participate in the study. A duplicate of the information sheet will be provided to participants once again ahead of the interview commencing along with a pre-defined verbal briefing. An informed consent sheet will be signed by participants before commencing with the interviews.

9. How will *data* be *collected* from each of the sample groups?

In depth interviews will be conducted and recorded for transcription.

10. How will *data* be *stored* and what will happen to the data at the end of the research?

Data will be stored in a secure password protected folder for a period of five years after completion of the research and then will be destroyed.

11. How will *confidentiality* be assured for respondents?

Confidentiality will be assured for respondents as only the researcher will be present for the interviews. To ensure the anonymity of participants, a specific number will be assigned to each rather than identifying them by name. The interview audio file and transcripts will be assigned a reference number so as to ensure that participants are not

referred to by name at any point. In addition, the name of accounts or markets being managed by the participants will be removed and replaced with a generic description within the transcripts so that the identity of the participant cannot be worked out by others. Data collected will be for research purposes only.

12. What steps are proposed to safeguard the *anonymity* of the respondents?

Respondents will not be named in any of the transcripts or raw data audio files. These shall be assigned a code to hide respondents identities. The name of accounts or markets being managed by the participants will be removed and replaced with a generic description within the transcripts so that the participant cannot be identified by others.

13. Are there any *risks* (physical or other, including reputational) *to respondents* that may result from taking part in this research? ~~YES~~ / ☐ NO (please circle).

If YES, please specify and state what measures are proposed to deal with these risks.

14. Are there any *risks* (physical or other, including reputational) *to the researcher or to the University* that may result from conducting this research? ~~YES~~ / ☐ NO (please circle).

If YES, please specify and state what measures are proposed to manage these risks.¹

15. Will any *data* be *obtained from a company or other organisation*. ☐ YES / NO (please circle) For example, information provided by an employer or its employees.

If NO, then please go to question 18.

Yes, information will be provided by employees of DENTSPLY Limited is the British arm of US-based dental product manufacturer DENTSPLY International.

16. What steps are proposed to ensure that the requirements of *informed consent* will be met for that organisation? How will *confidentiality* be assured for the organisation?

The researchers participation in the MA Sales Management programme is being sponsored by the organisation. Informed consent will be obtained from the General Manager and Vice President of DENTSPLY Limited in writing ahead of the research project commencing. The final research project will be presented to the Company and the final results will be presented as confidential if they so wish.

17. Does the organisation have its own ethics procedure relating to the research you intend to carry out? ~~YES~~ / ☐ NO (please circle).

If YES, the University will require written evidence from the organisation that they have approved the research.

¹ Risk evaluation should take account of the broad liberty of expression provided by the principle of academic freedom. The university's conduct with respect to academic freedom is set out in section 9.2 of the Articles of Government and its commitment to academic freedom is in section 1.2 of the Strategic Plan 2004-2008.

Written approval will be provided by the General Manager and Vice President of DENTSPLY Limited in writing ahead of the research project commencing.

18. Will the proposed research involve any of the following (please put a ✓ next to 'yes' or 'no'; consult your supervisor if you are unsure):

- Vulnerable groups (e.g. children) ? YES ☐ NO ☒
- Particularly sensitive topics ? YES ☐ NO ☒
- Access to respondents via 'gatekeepers' ? YES ☐ NO ☒
- Use of deception ? YES ☐ NO ☒
- Access to confidential personal data ? YES ☐ NO ☒
- Psychological stress, anxiety etc ? YES ☐ NO ☒
- Intrusive interventions ? YES ☐ NO ☒

19. Are there any other ethical issues that may arise from the proposed research?

No – I do not believe so.

Details of applicant

The member of staff undertaking the research should sign and date the application, and submit it directly to the Ethics Committee. However, where the researcher is a supervised PhD candidate, the signature of the Director of Studies is also required prior to this form being submitted.

	Name	Signature
Researcher	Darren Joseph Bayley	
Director of Studies	Director of Studies - Beth Rogers (Supervisor – Liz Meech)	
Date		

Approval by Ethics Committee

I/We grant Ethical Approval

FREC

Date

AMENDMENTS

If you need to make changes please ensure you have permission before the primary data collection. If there are major changes, fill in a new form if that will make it easier for everyone. If there are minor changes then fill in the amendments (next page) and get them signed before the primary data collection begins.

CHANGES TO ETHICS PERMISSION

VERSION: ____

Please describe the nature of the change and impact on ethics:

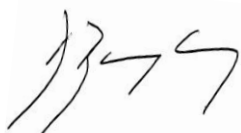
Please print the name of:

I/We grant Ethical Approval

Researcher Darren Joseph Bayley FREC

Elizabeth Meech

Signed:



(Signed)



Date **3.8** 12/09/2013

Date 16/12/2013

(please cut and paste the next section, together with the heading at the top of this page, as many times as required)

VERSION: ____

Please describe the nature of the change and impact on ethics:

A2 Consent from Organisation



DENTSPLY Limited
Building 3, The Heights
Weybridge
Surrey
KT13 0NY
+44 (0)1932 853 422
enquiry.uk@dentsply.com
www.dentsply.co.uk

5 January 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

I Gerard Campbell, Vice President and General Manager of DENTSPLY Limited, confirm that I consent to Darren Joseph Bayley conducting research within the Organisation necessary for fulfillment of a research project which forms part of the requirement for the award of MA in Sales Management from the University of Portsmouth.

Yours faithfully

Gerard P. Campbell
Vice President and General Manager

A Company incorporated in the Cayman Islands with limited liability under Registration No. 222917 and with an address at the offices of Campbell Corporation Services Ltd., Box 248, George Town, Grand Cayman. Operating from a registered branch in England (BR 000033).

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A3 Participant invitation letter (overleaf)

January 2014

Dear <name>

This letter is an invitation to participate in a research study. As a part-time student of the University of Portsmouth, I am currently conducting research under the supervision of the Portsmouth Business School on the topic of Key Accounts Management within the context of the emerging markets. As such, I would be most grateful if you would be able to spare some time to assist me.

I am writing to you in the capacity of a student researcher and not as an employee of DENTSPLY Limited. You are under no obligation to participate, your choice will have no impact, either positive or negative, on any working relationship we might have.

I would be grateful if you could please take the time to review the full details outlined overleaf within the *Participant Information Sheet*.

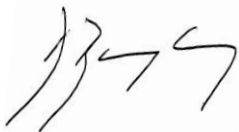
If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information about participation, please contact me at +44 (0) 7596 977060 (personal number) or by email up102839@myport.ac.uk. You can also contact the Research Project Supervisor (Liz Meech – Lecturer at Portsmouth Business School) whose contact details can be found on the attached *Participant Information Sheet*.

This study has been reviewed and received clearance from the University of Portsmouth Research Ethics Committee. DENTSPLY Limited has also given written consent to this Research Study being conducted within the Organisation. Both of these approval documents are available for inspection upon request.

If you would like to participate, please complete and return the *Consent Form*, which can be found at the end of the *Participant Information Sheet*. I will then schedule a time for you to participate at your convenience.

Thank you in advance for your interest and support.

Yours sincerely



Darren Bayley

A4 Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form

January 2014

Participant Information Sheet
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Study Title: A case study exploring the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach within the emerging markets.

REC Ref No:N/A.....

We would like to invite you to take part in our research study. Before you decide we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear.

What is the purpose of the study?

To explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors to adopting a Key Accounts Management (KAM) approach within the emerging markets. Inhibitors are barriers or challenges to achieving something, enablers are factors that could enhance or promote the chances of achieving something.

Through completion of this case study it is hoped to gain an understanding of the perceived enablers and inhibitors of achieving a Key Accounts Management Approach. This it is hoped will assist DENTSPLY International judge how best implement a Key Accounts Management approach able to leverage the benefits, overcome the barriers and potentially mitigate the risks of failure given the specific challenges presented by the emerging markets.

Why have I been invited?

You have been identified as an Associate of DENTSPLY International with significant experience of working within a selling team interfacing or serving customers within the emerging markets.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide to join the study. Before commencing, the researcher will describe the study and go through this information sheet. If you agree to take part, you will then be asked to sign a consent form.

What will happen to me if I take part?

This study will involve participating in an in-depth interview taking around 60 minutes. During the interview you will explore the perceived enablers and inhibitors to adopting a Key Accounts Management (KAM) approach within the emerging markets. These interviews may take place face-to-face or by telephone, according to your location, and they will be audio-taped if you give permission for that to happen. Recording is desirable to allow the details of the interviews to be transcribed and coded following the interview. Should you not wish to be recorded, notes can be taken during the interview instead.

Selected participants will be contacted after the interview with a summary of the interview for you to check.

What will I have to do?

You will be asked to discuss your perceptions of the perceived enablers and inhibitors to adopting a Key Accounts Management (KAM) approach within the emerging markets. You may refuse to answer any particular question if you are concerned about it, e.g. for commercial sensitivity or personal risk reasons at any point, should you wish to do so.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Participation will involve giving up some time to participate in an interview. The interviews are expected to take around one hour to complete.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Respondents often mention the benefit of reflecting on their experiences of a particular topic. It is also hoped that there will be a direct benefit for the business, which in turn will benefit employees.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Your line manager will be aware of your participation, however absolute confidentiality will be assured, as only the researcher will be present for the interview. To ensure your anonymity a specific code will be assigned to you rather than identifying you by name. The name of accounts or markets being managed will be removed and replaced with a generic description within the transcripts in case any of the comments are quoted in the final results.

Measures will be taken to ensure the security of raw data and transcripts, with data recorded using code numbers rather than the names of identifiable individuals. At no point will your name be mentioned during the interview.

Data (raw audio file and transcripts) will be stored in a secure password protected folder for a period of five years in line with the University of Portsmouth's requirements after completion of the research and then will be destroyed.

It is possible that some of the audio recordings and transcripts collected will be reviewed by authorised personnel from University of Portsmouth, but will not be reviewed by any employee of DENTSPLY International (other than the researcher). Authorised individuals from the University of Portsmouth may also review the data gathered to check that the study is being carried out correctly. All will have a duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You may withdraw at any time and request your data to be destroyed.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak to the researcher or their supervisor, who will do their best to answer your questions [0044 2392 844017]. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, you may contact the University of Portsmouth Complaints Officer.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The data will be analysed and will be used within the researchers post-graduate dissertation.

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is being organised by Darren Bayley, under the supervision of the University of Portsmouth Business School. The General Manager of DENTSPLY International has given his consent for the research to take place within the Organisation in accordance with the guidelines set-out by the University of Portsmouth.

Who has reviewed the study?

Research in the University of Portsmouth is looked at by independent group of people, called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your interests. This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the Business School Research Ethics Committee.

Further information and contact details

The research supervisor for this project is Liz Meech, Lecturer at Portsmouth Business School (Tel - 0044 2392 848484).

The programme leader is Dr Beth Rogers, Head of the Marketing and Sales Subject Group, Portsmouth Business School on (Tel 0044 2392 844017).

Concluding statement

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet. If you decide to participate please proceed to sign the consent form and keep a copy of it with this information sheet for your records.

Consent Form

Study Title: A case study exploring the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach within the emerging markets.

REC Ref No: N/A

Name of Researcher: Darren Joseph Bayley

Please initial box

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated January 2014 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason (up to the point when the data is analysed)

I understand that data collected during the study, may be looked at by individuals from University of Portsmouth, or from regulatory authorities. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my data

I agree to my interview being audio recorded

I agree to being quoted verbatim (anonymously)

I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant:

Date:

Signature:

Name of Person taking consent: ***Darren Joseph Bayley*** Date:

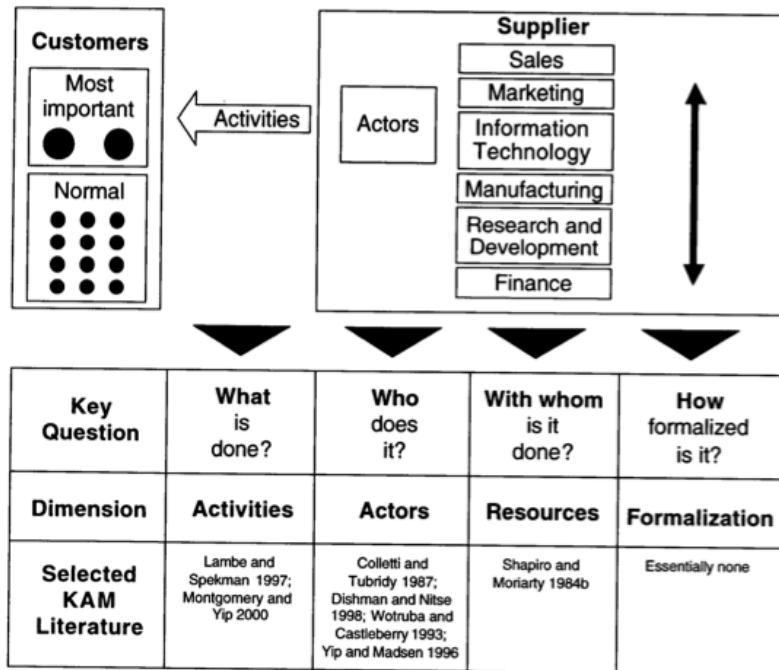
Signature:

When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher's file

A5 Interview guide

A case study exploring the perceived enablers and inhibitors of adopting a Key Accounts Management approach within the emerging markets.

- Interview topic guide follows the same format as that employed by Al-Husan and Brennan (2009) – the purpose of which was to “examine the nature, development and implementation of SAM with particular attention to organisational design and account selection”.
- The interview topic guide has then been keyed again the ‘Conceptualization of KAM model’ (Homburg, Workman and Jensen, 2002). The proposal is to use this to explore the issue, however rather than just using it to just explore the supplier, the interview will also use the same dimensions outlined in the model to explore the customer.



Topic – not in order of delivery	Supplier	Customer	ARA
1	Barriers and Challenges? (Inhibitors) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ With regards to establishing ‘long-term’, collaborative, ‘mutually beneficial partnerships/relationships’ in order to maximize long-term profitability-with DENTSPLY’s most important or strategic customers what barriers to challenges do you foresee? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prompts > Actors - Prompts > Resources - Prompts > Activities 		
2	How to enhance or promote? (Enablers)		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ With regards to establishing 'long-term', collaborative, 'mutually beneficial relationships/partnerships' in order to maximize long-term profitability with DENTSPLY's most important or strategic customers, what factors could enhance or promote the likelihood of achieving this goals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prompts > Actors - Prompts > Resources - Prompts > Activities 		
3	Interviewee background and responsibilities? (Actor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can you tell me about your background and responsibilities? ➤ How long have you been with the Company? etc 		Actors
4	Structure and management of KAM function? (Actor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Who is responsible for coordinating the relationship between customers and DENTSPLY? ➤ How well do those responsible for coordinating the relationship with customers understand the complexities of your role (to selling team)/How well do the support functions understand the complexities of your role liaising with the customer and or the requirements of the customer (to the KAM) 	Structure and management of customer purchasing/decision making function? (Actor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Who is responsible for coordinating the relationship between customers and DENTSPLY at the distributor end? ➤ How well do those responsible for coordinating the relationship with customers understand the complexities of your role/How well do the support functions understand the complexities of your role liaising with the customer and or the requirements of the customer 	Actors
5	Criteria for allocating accounts to KAM status? (Formalization) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If we refer to a "Key Account" when talking about DENTSPLY's distributor customer base, what is (do you think is) meant by that? ➤ When it comes to the determining which is a 'Key Account' who is involved in that process and what determines that? 	Criteria for allocating accounts to preferred supplier status? (Formalization) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When it comes to a Customer determining which is a 'Preferred Supplier' who is involved in that process and do you believe determines that? 	Formalization
6	Approach to KAM (Activities) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For accounts determined to be Key Accounts (i.e. those of strategic importance) who is involved in the planning process at DENTSPLY. 	Approach to purchasing (Activities) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Who is involved in the planning process for purchasing? 	Activities
7	Allocation of resources to KAM (Resources) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When a Customer has been determined a being a 'Key Account' are they treated 	Allocation of resources to preferred suppliers, i.e. sales teams etc (Resources) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ When a Supplier has been determined a being a 'Preferred 	Resources

	<p><i>differently and could you provide some examples for me?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Please describe any special service or activities DENTSPLY provides to its Key Accounts?</i> ➤ <i>In terms of DENTSPLY's resources or services levels are they prioritized for its 'Key Accounts'? Could you please provide some examples for me?</i> ➤ <i>Who determines the priorities of the support functions/broader selling team (i.e. marketing, customer services, finance)?</i> 	<p><i>Supplier' are they treated differently and could you provide some examples for me?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Please describe any special service or activities provides to its Preferred Suppliers?</i> ➤ <i>In terms of the distributors resources or services levels are they prioritized for its 'Preferred Suppliers'? Could you please provide some examples for me?</i> ➤ <i>Who determines the priorities of the support functions/broader selling team (i.e. marketing, customer services, finance)?</i> 	
8	<p>Information sharing with key accounts (Activities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Are you aware of any Individual Account Plans that exist and if so, who are these shared with?</i> ➤ <i>What information is shared with normal and key accounts?</i> 	<p>Information sharing with key suppliers (Activities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Are you aware of any Individual Plans for suppliers that exist and if so, who are these shared with?</i> ➤ <i>What information is shared with normal and preferred supplier?</i> 	Activities
9	<p>Involvement of 'top managers' with Key Accounts (Actors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Can you tell me about the involvement of the Divisional Leadership Teams involvement with "Key Accounts"</i> 	<p>Involvement of 'top managers' with Key Suppliers (Actors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Can you tell me about Customer (i.e. the distributors) top managers involvement of with Suppliers, especially preferred suppliers?</i> 	Actors