

EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING MOTIVATION AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING INTENTION AMONG ACADEMIC STAFFS IN NIGERIAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

Knowledge is viewed as a crucial and useful resource for helping higher education institutions in today's information-based economy in enhancing collaboration and innovation, accelerating learning and professional development, and enables faculty members to stay updated with the latest advancements in their respective fields, enhancing their teaching methods and improving the quality of education. However, many universities have not fully recognized the importance of knowledge sharing among their members, hindering efforts towards establishing a culture of sharing and collaboration. In this study, 328 academic staff members from Nigerian public universities studied the relationship between knowledge sharing intention, management support, and motivation. This research is a descriptive correlative study that emphasizes the causal connection between variables. Structured equation modeling (SEM) was used to analyze the data after it was collected via a questionnaire survey. The findings of this study demonstrate that management support and knowledge sharing motivation have a favorable and significant impact on intention to share information. Universities need to pay greater attention to these determinants since improving academic staff readiness on knowledge sharing and awareness would improve university performance. Investigating the factors influencing knowledge sharing intention in higher education institutions informs practice and policy development, enhances research and teaching outcomes, and contributes to innovation and decision-making processes within the academic environment.

Keywords: effective institution, economic growth, knowledge sharing, innovation, professional development

1. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge will invariably act as the driving force for improved productivity, economic development, and performance as the modern world economy progressively becomes knowledge- and information-based (Paulin & Suneson, 2012). In comparison to other sources such as land, labor, money, or other tangible resources, knowledge has become a main source of competitive advantage and vital to success (Hatamleh, 2016). Institutions that can efficiently gather and utilize authentic and relevant knowledge are typically believed to perform better (Allameh et al., 2014). For decades, scholars and researchers have argued that knowledge is the key to providing an organization with a competitive advantage (Elmi, 2020). Knowledge sharing has been positively correlated with increases in productivity, innovation, and performance (Antonelli & Scellato 2013). However, knowledge sharing is not easy, and the process has been described as sticky (Burmeister & Deller, 2016) because several factors such as knowledge and individual characteristics (Chang et al., 2012), as well as relationship

characteristics (Szulanski, 2000), can make knowledge sharing a challenging process. Therefore, knowledge sharing between employees is a critical process for unlocking the power of organizational knowledge (Elmi, 2020).

Organizations often regard knowledge as a crucial asset that provides a competitive advantage. However, in order to expand and gain more competitive advantages, knowledge management offers a way to match organizational objectives with knowledge. The topic of knowledge management has frequently been brought up in the context of for-profit businesses, but it is critical to remember that knowledge is extremely valuable to higher education institutions (HEIs), and so they might benefit from established knowledge management practices (Al-Kurdi et al., 2018). Universities are engaged in the creation and sharing of knowledge. Given this, it is clear to these institutions that knowledge sharing is a useful instrument for achieving their goals (Loh et al., 2010).

There is no denying the significance of knowledge sharing for an organization (Son et al., 2020), especially for knowledge-based organizations like universities (Bibi & Ali, 2017); although the majority of staffs are reluctant to share their knowledge. As a result, the primary problem for universities is determining how to manage employee knowledge and maximize the benefits of information sharing across employees (Hatamleh, 2016). In such a case, it is difficult to turn individual knowledge into organizational knowledge (Son et al., 2020). Hence, universities require systems, frameworks, and cultures that encourage knowledge sharing (Abbasi et al., 2021). Kang and Kim (2017) stated that the effectiveness of information transfer is crucial to a company's sustainability. It is also seen as a fundamental capability for a university seeking a competitive advantage and a sign of market recognition (Zhao et al., 2017; Sukier et al., 2020).

The willingness of staffs to share knowledge they have gained or developed with others is referred to knowledge sharing intention (El Said, 2015). Meanwhile, the purpose to share knowledge denotes how someone want to share knowledge with others, and the intention is the result of a relationship or relational interaction between the person and other persons, which is represented in behavior (Mustika et al., 2022).

Knowledge sharing is critical to the success of organizations in general (Charband and Navimipour, 2019) and higher education institutions in particular (Chandran and Alammari, 2021) since it promotes the interchange and distribution of important information, ideas, and knowledge among individuals and groups. There are several aspects that influence an individual's propensity to share information (Ergün & Avcı, 2018) such as personality traits, benefits, trust, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and management support. Organizations, educational institutions, and researchers must all understand the factors that impacting knowledge sharing intention. In order to expand the learning process, it is crucial to research ways to increase people's awareness of sharing knowledge and figuring out the root of this issue.

In order for Nigeria to establish national unity, education has been a crucial instrument. To generate a sufficient pool of educated, highly trained, and highly motivated labour force as well

as responsible citizens with high moral and ethical values, education and skill training are given high priority in nation building (Chung, 2022). In this respect, Nigeria has participated in several initiatives to establish a national network for research and education to promote institutional collaboration across the administrative and academic sectors (Akparobore, 2015). Despite the fact that knowledge sharing is widely acknowledged to be a solution for addressing academic demands in the face of diminishing resources, there is little evidence that academic staff in Nigerian universities are seriously considering its use (Lawal et al., 2014). A common complaint from academic personnel is that they are unaware of the technologies available for knowledge sharing that might improve research and scholarly publishing. In the academic setting, it is critical for academic staff from various parts of the world to collaborate and share essential research data and information but limited studies were conducted in developing country such as Nigeria particularly among academic staff (Akosile & Olatokun, 2019; Akparobore, 2015; Awodoyin et al., 2016; Bello, 2014).

Although there have been many studies that have examined knowledge sharing and some of its factors and have been concerned with barriers to knowledge sharing among staffs (Abbasi et al., 2021; Abd Aziz, 2020; Abdel Fattah et al., 2020), few studies have been conducted on knowledge sharing in the setting of knowledge-intensive institutions like HEIs, particularly those that take motivation and management support in developing countries (Fullwood et al., 2013; Goh and Sandhu, 2013; Howell and Annansingh, 2013; Wang and Noe, 2010). It is still a concern of researchers that the factors that affect knowledge sharing are not well understood (Hatamleh, 2016). Motivational variables have recently been listed as potential influences on successful information sharing among academic staffs (Wang & Noe, 2010; Shanshan, 2014). Motivation has been identified as a major factor in determining both human and work-related behavior (Hatamleh, 2016). Human behavior is determined by behavioral intentions, according to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). As a result, individual behavior for knowledge sharing is determined by behavioral intention, which in turn is influenced by motivational factors (Hatamleh, 2016).

It is understood that one of the enablers with a substantial potential role in enhancing organizational knowledge is managerial support for knowledge creation and dissemination (Connelly and Kelloway, 2003; Gupta, 2008). To provide a supportive environment and provide sufficient resources for constructing organizational knowledge, management support is essential (Lin, 2006). As a result, management support is a key factor in knowledge management, and more especially, knowledge sharing. The success or failure of knowledge management may depend on managerial support (Al Saifi et al., 2016). As a result, universities should focus more on these factors if they want to increase their academic staff's willingness to share knowledge and awareness. A theoretical gap in the literature regarding the factors that improve academic staff's intention to share knowledge in Nigerian public universities has been identified in this study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The Nigerian higher education system has 618 institutions and 1.8 million students enrolled, making it one of the largest in sub-Saharan Africa (Olowoye, 2020). Nigeria's educational system suffers several difficulties. As an illustration, expensive costs for books and computers have decreased people's enthusiasm in academic endeavours, which has resulted in subpar teaching and research. As a result, the educational system is being revitalized thanks to the internet's low cost information access and email's introduction of a trustworthy mode of communication for academics. Despite the speedy and low-cost dissemination options given by these instruments, relatively few academics have taken advantage of this opportunity to communicate local and indigenous research results with the rest of the globe (Osunade et al., 2007). All of this has resulted in the country's higher education programs being of poor quality. However, knowledge sharing is critical to national development and advancement, particularly in African countries where access to information and knowledge is critical for tackling difficulties and closing socioeconomic gaps.

Knowledge sharing is critical in a knowledge-based company, such as a university or college, because the majority of employees are knowledge workers. As units of knowledge creation, higher education institutions benefit from effective knowledge management, especially knowledge sharing. Academics understand the value of knowledge sharing and frequently share knowledge with administration and colleagues in their regular operations (Ramayah et al., 2014). This idea was supported by Cheng et al. (2009), who stated that the influence of KS at higher education institutions (HEIs) where knowledge production, distribution, and application are established within the institution may be even bigger than its impact in commercial organizations (Alsaadi, 2018). Lawal et al. (2014) emphasized the value of knowledge sharing among academic staff members, which includes sharing information about relevant documents, sharing relevant documents, sharing relevant documents, sharing information about the content of relevant documents, and sharing information about creative and efficient ways to cite relevant documents and information sources. In this regard, academics' knowledge is regarded as a crucial resource and an advantage for universities since they produce knowledge via research, transmit information to students through instructional activities, and collaborate with industry (Fullwood & Rowley, 2017). The engagement of academic staffs in knowledge sharing activities is crucial for the effectiveness of knowledge management initiatives, teaching, and research output (Fullwood et al., 2019).

According to Ajzen (2001) the intention of people determines the actually desired behavior. The willingness of employees to share information was characterized by Bock et al. (2005) as the knowledge sharing intention. Knowledge sharing means working together to solve the issues, come up with new ideas or implementing procedures and providing knowledge to others (Wang & Noe, 2010). However, because behavioural intention plays a part in guiding people's behavior, it is recognized as a motivating element (Abdel Fattah et al., 2020). The results of the study conducted by Framarin (2008) demonstrate that the construct behavioral intention needs aspects of ability in an effort to carry out a certain behaviour. Theory of planned behaviour is consistent with the idea that a person's desire to engage in a certain behaviour is

driven by their perception of control over that behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), and motivation (intention) and ability (behavioral control) are both necessary for behavioral accomplishment (Liao et al., 2013).

Many factors can affect people's intentions to share their knowledge, but the key to influencing people's desire to share is the ease of sharing (Hatamleh, 2016). The motivating component of individuals' willingness to share contributes to the ease of sharing. Different studies used the Theory Reasoned Action (TRA) to explain the relationship between motivating elements and information sharing (Hatamleh, 2016). Initiating and maintaining goal-directed behavior are referred to as being motivated (Sun et al., 2021). It is assumed that employees' motivation at work reflects their own self-imposed intentions and demands inside their own workplace (Locke and Latham, 2004), and to assess an individual's work's direction, intensity, and duration of work (Van Iddekinge et al., 2018). Among the various antecedents to knowledge sharing, research indicated that motivation plays a vital role (Bock et al., 2005; Gagne, 2009; Witherspoon et al., 2013).

Knowledge-sharing motivation is the propensity of an individual to behave in a certain way, or rather, a certain degree of expression of whether or not to act in this way, driven by the decision-making process of the behaviour choice (Jin et al., 2022). Ofoegbu (2004) defined motivation as the word used to explain those processes, both initiative and rational, through which individuals attempt to satisfy; the fundamental urges, perceived wants, and individual objectives that lead to human behaviour. Motivational processes are those personal or internal processes that result in actions such as choice, effort, or persistence (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2020). People that are intrinsically motivated are more likely to actively share their expertise since doing so will increase their happiness and recognition (Sun et al., 2021).

Hypothesis 1. Knowledge sharing motivation positively influences knowledge-sharing intentions.

Numerous research has examined management support in relation to organizational behavior aspects (Wang & Neo, 2010). According to Wang and Wang (2012), management support is when managers encourage staff members to share their knowledge and provide support for initiatives that promote employee knowledge sharing. Recent studies have indicated that the management's support is crucial for knowledge sharing (Chen & Cheng, 2012). In reality, companies need to assess their ability to share information across cultural boundaries (Ali & Dominic, 2017).

Employees who receive assistance from management are more likely to care about their coworkers, assist one another with work-related challenges, and increase the company's social capital (Kang et al., 2008). According to Lee et al. (2016), top management support is measured by the amount of encouragement given to staff members to share their knowledge. If management supports them, staff members could feel more appreciated if they share more information (Nguyen, 2020a). In order to create social capital that is beneficial to all workers, employees need strong top management support. With this support, academic staffs are more confident that the organization values the knowledge they share (Nguyen 2020a). They tend to

believe more that if they share their knowledge, others will exchange, leading to knowledge sharing behavior (Hsu and Lin, 2008). Management support contributes to the development of a culture of knowledge exchange in which employees assist one another and improve the company's social capital (Kang et al., 2008). As a result, research is needed to find any other impacts that may not have been identified in the existing literature, as well as to obtain insights into practice that will help in determining what additional management activities could enhance knowledge sharing (Al Saifi et al., 2016).

Hypothesis 2. Management support positively influences knowledge-sharing intentions.

3. METHODS

Research of this type uses a quantitative approach, which relies on numerical data about the variables being studied for testing theories by statistical analysis. In order to gather data and analyze responses, this study employs a survey approach utilizing a questionnaire as a research instrument. The gathered data is collated and then processed using a statistical test of structural equation modeling (SEM – AMOS). This study used a Likert-type scale questionnaire comprised 5 indicators that measured respondents' perspectives on knowledge sharing motivation, 9 items measured management support and 15 indicators measured perspectives of knowledge-sharing intentions. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), the Likert Scale was used to assess how strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with the statements provided. The Linkert scale, which was employed in this study, comprises five scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Stratified random sampling method was used to identify 328 academic staffs who worked in Nigerian public universities. Respondents expressed their views on the significance of knowledge sharing motivation and management support on enhancing the intention of sharing knowledge in Nigerian public universities.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.812 for the five indicators of knowledge sharing motivation, 0.756 for the 15 indications of knowledge-sharing intention, and 0.891 for management support. Thus, all variables have acceptable reliabilities (Table 1).

Table 1: Reliability Test Result

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N	Inference
Knowledge Sharing Motivation	0.812	5	Reliable
Management Support	0.756	9	Reliable
Knowledge Sharing Intention	0.891	15	Reliable

Correlation

Pearson's correlation coefficients between knowledge management motivation, management support and knowledge-sharing intentions were calculated to establish the strength of the relationships between above mentioned variables as proposed in Table 2. The results indicated

a moderate correlation between knowledge management motivation and knowledge-sharing intentions ($r = 0.513$). Guilford (1942) suggests a cut-off point of 0.30 for determining the practical significance of correlation coefficients but the correlation between management support and knowledge-sharing intentions was 0.761 which falls in the category of high correlation.

Table 2: Correlation Result

Variable	1	2	3
1. Knowledge sharing intention	-		
2. Knowledge Sharing Motivation	0.513	-	
3 Management Support	0.429	0.761	-

Model Fit Analysis

In this study, the overall fitness of the study model was evaluated using AMOS 26.0 (Hair et al., 2019). Greater than 0.90 fits the requirements, as shown by the following values: RMSEA = 0.053, GFI = 0.82, AGFI = 0.87, NFI = 0.96, and NNFI = 0.94. Greater than 0.80 satisfies the requirements, with CFI = 0.95, IFI = 0.95, and RFI = 0.89. Greater than 0.50 passes the requirements, with PNFI = 0.61 and PGFI = 0.75.

Path Analysis

Path analysis is a statistical method for calculating the relationship between variables that are observed in a system. It allows researchers to analyze and quantify direct and indirect effects among variables and explore the causal relationships within a theoretical model. By constructing a path diagram and conducting the analysis, researchers can gain insights into complex relationships and test hypotheses in various fields. The result of this study indicated that knowledge sharing motivation have a significant positive relationship with knowledge sharing intention ($\beta = 0.549$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, the relationship between management support and knowledge sharing intention was significant ($\beta = 0.437$, $p < 0.001$) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Path Analysis

Hypothesis	Estimate	β	P value	Inference
KSM → KSI	0.250	0.549	0.001	Significant
MS → KSI	0.247	0.437	0.001	Significant

This study found that management facilitates knowledge sharing in a significant way. Managers should encourage employees to put their knowledge into practice through the use of a documented process that can easily be accessed by colleagues. According to Fauzi et al. (2019), a significant positive correlation exists between management support and knowledge sharing behavior among Muslim academics in Malaysian higher education institutions. Management support exerts the greatest influence on academics' knowledge sharing behavior, according to the study. According to Fauzi et al. (2019), academics, as the core entity of

education at higher learning institutes (HLI), have the noble task of spreading and sharing knowledge.

The findings of this study are consistent with the literature, which shows that management support is a significant component in facilitating information sharing. Furthermore, management support is regarded as critical in the effective adoption and use of new practices, such as the use of social media for knowledge sharing at HEIs, and therefore indispensable in recognizing and resolving difficulties when risks and disputes develop. It is also suggested that in order to properly manage the creation and evolution of the knowledge sharing environment, it is vital to understand both what drives the majority of staff members to engage and what stops them from engaging in knowledge sharing (Abd Aziz, 2020).

Alawamleh and Kloub (2013) support the significance of a participative leadership style of management and support that enables and develops opportunities for individuals to engage, interact, and become intimately familiar with one another, thereby increasing the degree of trust among team members. They expanded the context for comprehending the phenomenon of leadership management and support by highlighting the significance of an organizational management structure that is flexible and adaptable, capable of reacting quickly to changes, and particularly suited for fostering a culture of knowledge sharing among academics in higher education institutions.

In a knowledge-based environment like a university, where knowledge production, distribution, and application are ingrained in the institution, Bello (2014) asserts that knowledge sharing is envisioned as an important and natural activity, indicating the eagerness of academics to share knowledge. The results of Bello's (2014) study showed that attitude is substantially related to the intention to share information, intention is significantly related to knowledge-sharing behavior, and intrinsic motivation is strongly related to knowledge-sharing behavior. The study's conclusions include information about faculty members' attitudes, intentions, and motives regarding knowledge sharing as well as suggestions for improving it within institutions.

The results of this study showed that motivation of academic staffs in Nigerian public universities companies was positively related to knowledge sharing. Motivation is thought to be a key determinant of knowledge sharing intention since these optimistic viewpoints encourage group members to collaborate and share information for the greatest benefit (Sun et al., 2021). According to Shen and Chang (2018), those with intrinsic motivation seek self-actualization and are hence more eager to actively share their valuable knowledge (Nguyen et al., 2019). Research hypotheses and findings of this study are consistent with those of previous scholarly studies.

5. CONCLUSION

For many organizations throughout the world, and especially in this research study for higher education institutions in Nigeria, knowledge has always been the fundamental force and primary capital in organizational activity. Once knowledge is produced, sharing it leads to an

economy of scale since two or more people may utilize it concurrently, which encourages the production of new knowledge (Zahari et al., 2014). Zahari et al., (2014), stated that organizations must encourage staff to collaborate more successfully to pool resources and share organizational knowledge more productively in order to foster a culture of knowledge sharing that will help staff members execute their duties more effectively.

According to the study's findings and earlier research, motivation has always been a key part of organizational behavior, and when employees are motivated to fulfil their jobs by their own preferences and ideas, they perform better than those who are not. As a result, while considering applicants, we should seek for workers who possess great intrinsic drive so that they can fully commit to their work and actively participate in knowledge-sharing with other employees. Therefore, managers may implement various techniques to motivate academic staff members to share knowledge in order to improve knowledge sharing among them.

Faculty members should be more enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge with the general public and the community because academia is a profession in which everyone expects them to do so without prejudice or hindrance. To realize that knowledge sharing can be improved from the grassroots, all stakeholders, associates, and related bodies pertaining to the management of HLIs, including the university's top management, the government, and academics themselves, must play their part. This is to ensure that knowledge may be freely shared with the academic community and the general public.

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