KNOWLEDGE-SHARING STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AMONG LECTURERS IN KANO-BASED UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract
This study investigated the strategies used for knowledge sharing for academic activities among university lecturers in Kano State. Specifically, the study sought to determine the knowledge-sharing strategies adopted by lecturers and identify the information and communication technologies (ICTs) utilized for knowledge sharing. The study employed a descriptive survey design of the cross-sectional type. The population comprised 2,611 lecturers drawn from three public universities in Kano State: Bayero University Kano (BUK), Northwest University Kano (NWUK), and Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology, Wudil (ADUSTech). A sample size of 346 lecturers was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan sampling table. Data were collected using a self-designed structured questionnaire. The findings revealed that lecturers employed several knowledge-sharing strategies, including symposiums (93.5%), interviews (91.6%), exhibitions and book fairs (91.3%), communities of practice (89.8%), and home and office visits (89.5%). The findings further showed that lecturers utilized a range of ICTs for knowledge sharing, with WhatsApp (63.8%) and email (55.1%) being the most frequently used technologies. These findings indicate that both formal and informal approaches, as well as digital technologies, play important roles in facilitating knowledge exchange among lecturers. Based on the findings, the study recommends that lecturers should diversify and strengthen their knowledge-sharing practices by adopting more effective and innovative strategies and technologies to enhance collaboration, information exchange, and academic productivity.
Keywords: Knowledge sharing, knowledge-sharing strategies, lecturers, universities, Kano State

1.1 Introduction

In contemporary knowledge-driven societies, universities play a critical role in the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge. As centres of teaching, research, and Innovation universities rely heavily on the intellectual contributions and collaborative efforts of academic staff. The rapid growth of information and the increasing complexity of academic work have made collaboration and the exchange of ideas essential for improving

teaching effectiveness, advancing research, and fostering innovation. Consequently, the ability of lecturers to share knowledge and expertise has become a fundamental factor in enhancing academic productivity and institutional development.

Knowledge sharing (KS) refers to the process through which knowledge is exchanged among individuals, groups, or organisations. It involves the transfer of both tacit and explicit knowledge from one person to another for mutual benefit and improved performance. Bulan and Sensuse (2012) describe knowledge sharing as a process through which knowledge is communicated and exchanged among individuals, while Neha (2012) emphasises that knowledge sharing forms the foundation of knowledge management. In academic environments, effective knowledge sharing among lecturers is essential for sustaining teaching, research, and other scholarly activities. Without effective knowledge-sharing practices, the value of knowledge management becomes limited, particularly in universities where knowledge creation and dissemination constitute core responsibilities.

Knowledge-sharing strategies refer to systematic approaches through which knowledge is created, distributed, and applied within knowledge-intensive institutions such as universities (Nassoura, 2011). In higher education institutions, lecturers engage in several academic activities, such as conferences, workshops, seminars, academic meetings, and collaborative research, to enhance their competencies and professional development. Effective knowledge-sharing strategies enable lecturers to remain abreast of emerging knowledge and developments in their respective fields. Studies have shown that universities increasingly recognise the importance of knowledge-sharing strategies for improving organisational competence and academic productivity (Lerro & Schiuma, 2013).Consequently, university administrations are expected to create enabling environments that encourage collaboration, trust, and continuous learning among academics in order to strengthen knowledge-sharing practices and enhance institutional competitiveness (Mairer, 2004).In this study, knowledge-sharing strategies refer to the various approaches through which lecturers exchange and disseminate knowledge within the university system.

Advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs) have significantly transformed knowledge-sharing practices in academic institutions. Knowledge-sharing technologies include digital tools and communication platforms that facilitate the creation, storage, and dissemination of knowledge among professionals (Subashini, Rita, & Vivek, 2012). The technological revolution of the twenty-first century has greatly influenced academic activities by enabling faster and more efficient knowledge exchange among lecturers. Technologies such as online collaboration tools, digital repositories, and communication platforms support both the transfer of explicit knowledge and the sharing of tacit knowledge among academics (McKenzie & Winkelen, 2004). However, while technology serves as a vital enabler of knowledge sharing, it should complement rather than replace organizational culture, collaboration, and human interaction (Tsui, 2005; Coakes, 2006).

This study examines knowledge-sharing strategies and technologies used for academic activities among lecturers in universities in Kano State, Nigeria. The research adopts a quantitative methodology using a cross-sectional survey design and considers a population of 2,611 lecturers across the selected universities in the state. The study is guided by several theoretical perspectives, including the Knowledge Sharing Model, Social Capital Theory, Knowledge Sharing Capability Model,

and the Organizational Knowledge Creation Theory (SECI Model). These frameworks provide a conceptual basis for understanding knowledge-sharing strategies and technologies used in academic activities among lecturers in universities in Kano State.

Statement of the Problem

Academic activities in universities are significantly influenced by the extent to which knowledge is shared within the academic environment. Effective knowledge sharing promotes innovation, creativity, and collaboration among staff, thereby enhancing institutional productivity. According to UNESCO (1998) and Aslam (2013), knowledge production and sharing are strategic tools for strengthening organizational competitiveness and development. As centres of academic excellence, universities contribute significantly to socio-economic development through the creation and dissemination of knowledge. They are also expected to facilitate continuous knowledge exchange and develop repositories that future scholars and researchers can utilise to improve teaching and research practices.

Knowledge sharing can occur through various means, ranging from informal discussions among colleagues to the documentation and reuse of experience-based knowledge within an organization. Such practices make valuable knowledge accessible to others and facilitate the creation of new ideas, technologies, and academic processes. Consequently, knowledge sharing is widely regarded as a critical factor in the success of knowledge-management initiatives in higher education institutions, particularly universities.

Despite its importance, several barriers hinder effective knowledge sharing in universities. Yang (2013) identified challenges such as the perception that "knowledge is power," lack of awareness of the usefulness of one's knowledge to others, knowledge hoarding, lack of trust, limited time, individualistic attitudes, inadequate technologies, and weak knowledge-capture mechanisms as factors that may restrict knowledge exchange. These challenges highlight the need for empirical investigation into the strategies and technologies used to facilitate knowledge sharing among university lecturers.

Furthermore, there appears to be limited empirical evidence on the knowledge-sharing strategies and technologies adopted for academic activities among lecturers in universities in Kano State. This apparent gap in the literature provides justification for the present study, which seeks to examine the strategies and ICTs used by lecturers to facilitate knowledge sharing in selected universities in Kano State.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the knowledge-sharing strategies and technologies used for academic activities among lecturers in Kano-based universities. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the knowledge-sharing strategies employed by lecturers in the universities under study; and
2. Identify the ICTs used by lecturers for knowledge sharing in the universities under study.

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Concept of Knowledge Sharing and Knowledge-Sharing Strategies

Knowledge sharing can be viewed as a practice that facilitates the exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas for effective academic and professional activities. In the university context, it enables lecturers to generate new knowledge, disseminate it, and preserve it in institutional

repositories such as libraries and digital archives. Universities are not only centres for acquiring knowledge but also environments that encourage interaction and collaboration among scholars. Jones et al. (2011) observed that knowledge sharing provides a platform through which lecturers can exchange ideas and collaborate, including through partnerships with external organisations.

Knowledge-sharing strategies are particularly important in higher education institutions because most employees are knowledge workers. Such strategies help ensure that lecturers remain abreast of current developments and emerging knowledge in their respective fields, thereby strengthening academic activities. For this reason, lecturers in higher education institutions must actively develop and adopt effective knowledge-sharing strategies. It is therefore the responsibility of university administrations to create supportive environments that encourage knowledge-sharing practices.

Mairer (2004) highlighted collaboration, trust, training, and recognition of individual needs as essential factors in promoting knowledge sharing among academics and enhancing institutional competitiveness. Consequently, academic activities in higher education institutions can be significantly improved when management organizes and supports knowledge-sharing programmes that strengthen the strategies adopted by lecturers.

Knowledge sharing can be achieved through several approaches, including coaching, mentoring, storytelling, forums and meetings, communities of practice, conferences, workshops, seminars, websites, and discussion forums.

Napierala, Selig, and Berge (2005) describe coaching as a knowledge-sharing approach in which less-experienced members learn by working closely with more experienced colleagues who guide them and share their tacit knowledge during tasks. Similarly, mentoring is regarded as a form of tacit knowledge transfer involving a relationship between an experienced individual and a less-experienced colleague who receives guidance, support, and feedback (Karkoulian, Halawi, & McCarthy, 2008). Mentoring may be formal, where it is supported by organizational structures, or informal, where individuals independently establish developmental relationships.

Other interpersonal approaches, such as storytelling and face-to-face interactions, also facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge. Tobin and Snyman (2008) note that storytelling allows individuals to communicate experiences and lessons learned, while Koskinen and Pihlanto (2008) argue that stories transmitted through communication networks help preserve knowledge over time. Similarly, face-to-face meetings provide opportunities for direct interaction, immediate feedback, and practical learning, making them effective for sharing experiential knowledge (Russel & Simone, 2005; Salis & Williams, 2010). Zaglago et al. (2016) further emphasise that such interactions are particularly useful during the early stages of collaborative relationships because they help build trust and strengthen long-term knowledge exchange.

Academic institutions also employ collective platforms such as communities of practice (CoPs), conferences, workshops, and seminars to facilitate knowledge sharing. Communities of practice are informal networks of individuals who collaborate, exchange ideas, and develop skills related to their professional tasks (Faraj & Wasko, 2001). Conferences provide opportunities for researchers, lecturers, and policymakers to present findings and exchange ideas, thereby stimulating professional growth and innovation (Tsui et al., 2006). Workshops and seminars, on the other hand, are participatory training sessions in which

participants collaboratively discuss problems and share expertise in order to reach solutions or develop a common understanding.

With the advancement of information technologies, digital platforms such as websites and online discussion forums have also become important tools for knowledge sharing. Websites enable academics to disseminate lectures, presentations, and research outputs to a wider audience, while online forums create spaces for moderated discussions and the exchange of ideas among faculty members. These technologies enhance communication, networking, and collaboration within academic communities.

Empirical studies further highlight the significance of these strategies in higher education. For instance, Abbas (2017) examined knowledge sharing and dissemination among academics in Nigerian universities using a quantitative approach involving 364 academic staff. The findings indicated that knowledge sharing occurred through conferences, workshops, seminars, membership in professional associations, and willingness among colleagues to share resources and expertise. The study emphasised the need for universities to strengthen the use of modern technologies to enhance communication, networking, and collaboration in research and teaching activities.

Although several studies, such as those conducted by Yu-chu, Yi-ling, and Yu-Hua (2012) in Taiwan, Uchenna et al. (2013) in Malaysia, Boh (2006), and Abbas (2017) in Nigeria, have examined knowledge-sharing strategies in different contexts, limited research exists on this topic within universities in Kano State. Moreover, many available studies are international, reflecting the relatively recent development of knowledge-management research in Africa, particularly Nigeria. Consequently, a gap remains in the literature regarding the application of diverse knowledge-sharing strategies for academic activities among lecturers in universities in Kano State. This study therefore seeks to address this gap by examining the knowledge-sharing strategies adopted by lecturers in these institutions.

ICTs for Knowledge Sharing

The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has become increasingly important in facilitating knowledge sharing among professionals. Shahid and Alamgir (2011) emphasize that ICT tools are essential for effective knowledge exchange in the global professional environment. Similarly, Fombard and Bothma (2009), in their study of knowledge-management strategies in law firms in Botswana, identified several ICT tools used to support knowledge sharing. Their findings revealed that telephones and computers were used by all respondents (100%), followed by personal networked computers (81.4%), email (71.4%), and the Internet (69.3%). Other systems, such as case-management systems (59.3%) and legal information systems (40.0%), were also utilized. However, the use of more advanced technologies, such as intranets, document-management systems, records-management systems, and videoconferencing, was relatively low, largely because many of the law firms consisted of only one or two lawyers, reducing the need for complex knowledge-management systems.

In academic environments, several ICT facilities are commonly used to support knowledge sharing among lecturers, including the Internet, intranet systems, best-practice databases, social media platforms, and email. The Internet, described by Van der Merwe (2001) as a global network of interconnected computers, serves as a major platform for accessing and disseminating knowledge. Lesley (2015) noted that professionals frequently rely on the Internet to obtain information and solutions to professional problems, which can subsequently

be shared with colleagues. Similarly, Harden (2012) observes that lecturers use Internet resources to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration within their institutions.

Intranet systems also play an important role in supporting internal knowledge sharing. Averweg (2009) described an intranet as a private organizational network designed to provide access to internal information and knowledge resources. Rajalampi (2011) explains that intranets help professionals locate documents and identify colleagues with relevant expertise, thereby improving efficiency and collaboration within organisations. As such, intranets serve as strategic platforms for communication, knowledge access, and collaborative work among professionals.

Another important technological tool for knowledge sharing is the best-practices database, which stores valuable organizational knowledge concerning effective ways of performing tasks. According to Bhirud, Rodrigues, and Desai (2005), such databases capture professional experiences and allow members of an organization to access and contribute knowledge about effective practices. Farenhorst, Lago, and van Vliet (2007) further note that best-practices databases provide reusable knowledge that can guide decision-making and improve professional performance.

Social media platforms have also emerged as significant tools for knowledge sharing. Cevik et al. (2016) argue that social media facilitates interaction and communication among professionals, thereby enhancing knowledge exchange. Irani et al. (2017) similarly observe that social media platforms enable professionals to share explicit knowledge and connect with wider professional networks. According to Janus (2016), these platforms strengthen professional relationships and provide access to diverse knowledge resources that can support academic and professional development.

Email remains one of the most widely used ICT tools for communication and knowledge exchange. Tedmori (2008) defines email as a digital messaging system used to exchange information across computer networks. In professional environments, email serves as an important medium for collaboration and knowledge dissemination. Wedgeworth (2008) explains that the exchange of emails among colleagues facilitates knowledge sharing, while archived email communications can function as a repository of organizational knowledge that can be accessed and reused when necessary.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design of the cross-sectional type. The population comprised 2,611 lecturers working in three public universities in Kano State: Bayero University Kano, Northwest University Kano, and Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology, Wudil. Using the Krejcie and Morgan sampling table, a sample size of 346 lecturers was determined. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered by the researcher with the assistance of a research assistant. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies and percentages.

The analysis presented in Tables 1 and 2 is based on 323 valid responses. This represents approximately 93.4% of the 346 questionnaires administered.

Results and Findings

Knowledge-Sharing Strategies Adopted by Lecturers in the Universities

Table 1: Knowledge-Sharing Strategies Adopted by Lecturers in Kano-Based Universities

Knowledge-Sharing Strategy	Yes: Frequency	Yes: Percentage	No: Frequency	No: Percentage
Conferences	162	50.2%	161	49.8%
Workshops and seminars	139	43.0%	184	57.0%
Circular letters and newsletters	99	30.7%	224	69.3%
Discussion forums and media forums	81	25.1%	242	74.9%
Face-to-face conversations	126	39.0%	197	61.0%
Research and technical reports	109	33.7%	214	66.3%
Interviews	296	91.6%	27	8.4%
Inaugural lectures and presentations	236	73.1%	87	26.9%
Exhibitions and book fairs	295	91.3%	28	8.7%
Symposiums	302	93.5%	21	6.5%
Communities of practice	290	89.8%	33	10.2%
Social media platforms	263	81.4%	60	18.6%
Home and office visits	289	89.5%	34	10.5%
Meetings	248	76.8%	75	23.2%
Others	294	91.0%	29	9.0%

Note: Percentages are based on 323 valid responses.

Table 1 shows that **symposiums (93.5%)**, **interviews (91.6%)**, **exhibitions and book fairs (91.3%)**, **communities of practice (89.8%)**, and **home and office visits (89.5%)** were the most frequently reported knowledge-sharing strategies among the respondents. Similarly, a substantial proportion of respondents reported using **social media platforms (81.4%)**, **meetings (76.8%)**, and inaugural lectures and presentations (73.1%) as strategies for knowledge sharing. These findings suggest that both formal academic activities, such as symposiums and inaugural lectures, and interactive or technology-mediated channels, such as social media and interviews, play important roles in facilitating knowledge sharing among lecturers.

However, some strategies were less frequently used. For instance, conferences recorded almost equal responses, with 50.2% indicating that they used conferences for knowledge sharing and 49.8% indicating that they did not. In addition, workshops and seminars (43.0%)**,** face-to-face conversations (39.0%)**,** and research and technical reports (33.7%) recorded relatively lower levels of reported use. The least frequently reported strategies were discussion and media forums (25.1%) and circular letters and newsletters (30.7%)**.**

Overall, the findings indicate that respondents relied substantially on interactive, collaborative, and technology-mediated approaches, particularly symposiums, social media, and communities of practice, for knowledge sharing. At the same time, more traditional channels, such as newsletters, forums, and technical reports, were less frequently reported. This pattern highlights the importance of dynamic and participatory approaches to knowledge dissemination in contemporary academic environments.

ICTs Used for Knowledge Sharing among Lecturers in Kano-Based Universities

Table 2: Knowledge-Sharing Technologies Used by Lecturers in Kano-Based Universities

ICT	Yes: Frequency	Yes: Percentage	No: Frequency	No: Percentage
Email	178	55.1%	145	44.9%
World Wide Web/Internet	150	46.4%	173	53.6%
Content management systems	92	28.5%	231	71.5%
Decision-support systems	79	24.5%	244	75.5%
Business integration technology	46	14.2%	277	85.8%
Collaboration tools	57	17.6%	266	82.4%
Online discussion forums	85	26.3%	238	73.7%
Web conferencing	69	21.4%	254	78.6%
Mobile technologies	99	30.7%	224	69.3%
Virtual teamwork	61	18.9%	262	81.1%
WhatsApp	206	63.8%	117	36.2%
Instagram	60	18.6%	263	81.4%
YouTube	74	22.9%	249	77.1%
2go	61	18.9%	262	81.1%
Skype	74	22.9%	249	77.1%
Wikis	48	14.9%	275	85.1%
Podcasts	23	7.1%	300	92.9%
Intranet	24	7.4%	299	92.6%
Extranet	9	2.8%	314	97.2%
RSS	9	2.8%	314	97.2%
Blogs	20	6.2%	303	93.8%
Facebook	47	14.6%	276	85.4%
Twitter	38	11.8%	285	88.2%
Yahoo Messenger	15	4.6%	308	95.4%

Note: Percentages are based on 323 valid responses.

Table 2 shows that **206 (63.8%)** of the respondents reported using **WhatsApp** to share knowledge with colleagues in the universities. This was followed by **178 (55.1%)** who used **email**, **150 (46.4%)** who used the **World Wide Web/Internet**, **99 (30.7%)** who used **mobile technologies**, and **92 (28.5%)** who used **content-management systems**. In addition, **85 (26.3%)** of the respondents reported using **online discussion forums** for knowledge sharing.

Further analysis shows that **79 (24.5%)** respondents used decision-support systems, while **74 (22.9%)** each reported using YouTube and Skype. Similarly, **69 (21.4%)** respondents used web conferencing, **61 (18.9%)** used 2go, and **60 (18.6%)** used Instagram. Furthermore, **57 (17.6%)** respondents used collaboration tools, **48 (14.9%)** used wikis, **47 (14.6%)** used Facebook, and **46 (14.2%)** used business integration technologies. Other technologies included Twitter (38; 11.8%), intranet (24; 7.4%), blogs (20; 6.2%), and podcasts (23; 7.1%). The findings further indicate that relatively small proportions of respondents used Yahoo Messenger (4.6%)**,** extranet services (2.8%)**,** and RSS (2.8%) for knowledge sharing.

Overall, the findings reveal that lecturers in Kano State universities utilize a wide range of knowledge-sharing technologies to support academic activities. However, WhatsApp and email emerged as the most frequently used technologies**,** indicating their important roles in facilitating communication, collaboration, and knowledge exchange among academic staff.

Discussion of Findings

The study sought to identify the knowledge-sharing strategies used by lecturers in Kano-based universities. The findings revealed that human-based or personalization strategies constituted a major component of knowledge sharing among the respondents. The most frequently reported strategies included symposiums, 302 (93.5%); interviews, 296 (91.6%); exhibitions and book fairs, 295 (91.3%); communities of practice, 290 (89.8%); and home and office visits, 289 (89.5%). Social media platforms were also widely used, with 263 (81.4%) respondents reporting their use for knowledge sharing.

The findings can be understood within the distinction between **codification** and **personalization** strategies. Codification involves capturing, storing, and disseminating knowledge through systems and technological platforms, whereas personalization emphasizes direct interaction and the exchange of knowledge between individuals. Both strategies are important for effective knowledge management because they influence the way organisations create, preserve, access, and utilize knowledge.

According to Storey (2010), knowledge-sharing strategies help organisations establish objectives and missions and determine how these goals can be implemented and achieved. Knowledge-sharing strategies are generally categorized into codification and personalization approaches. The codification strategy focuses on the use of computers, databases, documents, and other technological systems to capture and disseminate knowledge, whereas the personalization strategy focuses primarily on people and interpersonal relationships.

The findings of this study indicate that personalization-based strategies involving social interaction, direct communication, and collaborative academic activities were particularly prominent among the lecturers. The high levels of reported use of symposiums, interviews, exhibitions and book fairs, communities of practice, and home and office visits demonstrate the continuing importance of interpersonal

interaction in knowledge sharing. At the same time, the substantial use of social media and other ICTs demonstrates that technology-mediated knowledge sharing is also an important component of academic communication among lecturers.

The findings therefore suggest that effective knowledge sharing among lecturers in Kano-based universities requires a complementary combination of personalization and codification strategies. While interpersonal interaction facilitates the transfer of tacit knowledge, technological platforms provide opportunities for capturing, storing, disseminating, and accessing explicit knowledge. Universities should therefore encourage lecturers to integrate both approaches into their academic activities.

Conclusion

This study examined the knowledge-sharing strategies and technologies used for academic activities among lecturers in universities in Kano State. The study established that lecturers employ a variety of knowledge-sharing strategies, including symposiums, interviews, exhibitions and book fairs, communities of practice, home and office visits, social media platforms, meetings, and inaugural lectures and presentations.

The study also established that lecturers use a range of ICTs to facilitate knowledge sharing. WhatsApp and email were the most frequently reported technologies, followed by the World Wide Web/Internet, mobile technologies, and content-management systems. These findings demonstrate that both interpersonal and technology-mediated approaches contribute to knowledge sharing among lecturers.

The study concludes that strengthening the integration of personalization and codification approaches, supported by appropriate ICTs, can improve knowledge exchange, collaboration, and academic activities among lecturers in Kano-based universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Lecturers should diversify their knowledge-sharing strategies by combining interpersonal approaches, such as mentoring, coaching, brainstorming, communities of practice, and face-to-face interactions, with technology-mediated approaches to improve knowledge exchange.
2. Universities should strengthen communities of practice by encouraging lecturers to formalize and sustain communities of practice around academic disciplines, research interests, and teaching-related activities.
3. Universities should promote the use of modern knowledge-sharing technologies by be providing and integrated into academic communication, collaboration, research, and teaching activities.
4. Lecturers should make greater use of collaborative technologies that facilitate virtual meetings, collaborative research, online discussions, document sharing, and virtual teamwork.

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