# A STUDY OF THE INTERPLAY OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING PRACTICES AND PUBLICATION PRODUCTIVITY OF EARLY CAREER ACADEMICS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*The purpose of this paper is to examine the interplay that exists between knowledge sharing and the publication productivity of early-career academics (ECAs) in selected universities across Ogun State, Nigeria. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The study population comprised 645 Early Career Academics (ECAs) drawn from three purposively selected universities. Data gathered from 179 ECAs across three universities using a structured questionnaire were analysed with descriptive statistics, and the hypothesis was then tested with correlation analysis. Findings revealed that a significant majority of ECAs (121, 69.6%) have produced 7-10 and above journal articles between 2019 and 2023, indicating a high level of publication in articles in scholarly journal. Meanwhile publications in conference papers and chapters in books were low. A majority of the respondents have positive perception towards knowledge sharing and also share knowledge to a high extent. It further indicated that academics share knowledge predominantly through face to face interaction. The challenges to knowledge sharing and research productivity of ECAs include: insufficient research facilities being the most significant challenge in terms of research productivity. Time constraints were the most significant challenge in terms of knowledge sharing. The correlation analysis reveals that knowledge sharing is positively and significantly related to research publication output of ECAs. The study finally concludes that knowledge sharing is important as it enhances the research and publication output, thus, university management should sustain and maintain KS for improved publication productivity of ECAs in universities understudy.*

**Keywords:** Knowledge Sharing, Sharing Practices, Research Productivity, Research Output Publication, Early Career Academics (ECAs), Universities, Academia

## Introduction

Over the past decade, publication productivity of academics in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) has been a subject of significant debate by scholars in different fields. Publication productivity is simply the number of peer-reviewed scholarly publications produced by an academic staff, researcher, a research group, or an institution. These publications could be in form of articles in scholarly journals, conferences papers, chapters in books, books, etc. Publication productivity or output is paramount to the career trajectory of academics especially Early Career Academics (ECAs) worldwide. Publication productivity holds immense

significance as it forms the basis for staff promotions, tenure acquisition, and pay rise (Oyeyemi, Ejakpovi, Oyeyemi, & Adeniji, 2019). It enhances the social prestige of academic staff status to the rank of a professor, irrespective of their gender. In other words, it serves as a crucial platform for early-career academics to attain success in their field. Having publications in reputable journal outlets enables academics to earn recognition in academic circles locally and internationally (Feyera, Atelaw, Hassen, & Fufa, 2017).

Interestingly, the benefits of the publication productivity of academics extend beyond the individual academics to include their employing institutions. Publication productivity of academic staff is one of the key weightage in global university rankings (Fauzi, Nya-Ling, Thursamy, & Ojo, 2019). University rankings boost reputation among students, academics, employers, and governments. It encourages collaborations and partnerships with other top-ranked institutions and stakeholders (Bidandi, Anthony, & Mukong, 2022). Additionally, they attract global talent and funding. It is therefore not surprising that universities with high rankings strategically capitalise on the publication productivity of their academic staff. This is the more reason why university should pay attention to factors that can boost the publication productivity of early career academics.

Early career academics (ECA) are academics who are at the grade level of assistant lecturer up to lecturer I. ECAs as emerging scholars navigate the intricate pathways of research, teaching, and service, determined to make their mark in their respective fields (Flander, Guzmán, Schilter, Tulppo, & Da Wan, 2023). ECAs are expected to conduct research, and their productivity is to be measured in various ways (Bamigboye, Adenekan, & Olude, 2018) depending on the university. For ECAs to succeed in their research endeavours, knowledge sharing (KS) is crucial (Fauzi, et al., 2019). KS within and across academic and research communities, play a crucial role in driving impactful research and improving publication productivity. KS foster an atmosphere where academics can openly exchange knowledge, perspectives, resources, research skills, and best practices with one another. By actively participating in knowledge sharing activities, ECAs can improve their research methods, gain constructive feedback, identify possible research gaps and eventually increase their chances of producing high-quality publications that contribute meaningfully to their fields of study. Diyaolu and Owenezi (2020) explained that sharing knowledge among academics helps those involved to develop new ideas, techniques and more experiences that could help in the improvement of their professions. Knowledge sharing is not just a desirable practice but a necessary one in the academic community and it is integral to research productivity and the overall mission of higher educational institutions.

## Problem Statement

Notably, researchers have observed a divergent trend in research output across different regions. While other parts of the world are witnessing a surge in article publications and rapid growth in research development, African countries are grappling with a gradual decline in knowledge production and research quality (Kpolovie & Onoshagbegbe, 2017; Basiru, 2018; Lovakov, Panova, & Yudkevich, 2022; Haruna, Momoh, & Ismail, 2023). Igere (2022) also noted this decline in Nigeria, and stated that it has brought about stagnation among academic staff in terms of career growth and non-promotion. This study therefore examines how knowledge sharing behaviours relates to research and publication productivity of ECAs.

**Research Questions**
The following questions guided the study:
1. What is the perception of Early Career Academics about knowledge sharing in the Selected      Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent do Early Career Academics share knowledge in the Selected Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria?
3. What is the research publication output of Early Career Academics in the Selected Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria?
4. What are the challenges that Early Career Academics face in sharing knowledge and publishing their research in the Selected      Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria?

**Hypothesis**
A null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance
$H_0$: There is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and research productivity of ECAs in in the Selected Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria.

**Literature Review**
In scholarly discourse, research denotes a systematic pursuit of knowledge. Lawal and Olawale (2020) defines research as an investigation to discover facts through a systematic process of data collection and analysis that can aid generalisation. Extant scholarly literature acknowledges research as an important component of academic work, frequently regarded as the second most esteemed aspect after teaching responsibilities (Okonedo & Popoola, 2012; Ajegbomogun & Popoola, 2014; Oyeyemi, Ejakpovi, Oyeyemi, & Adeniji, 2019; Lawal & Olawale, 2020). Publication output, often regarded as the outcome of research efforts (Abramo & D'Angelo, 2014), constitutes a fundamental concept within academia. It serves as a metric for academic staff accomplishments. Okonedo (2015) mentioned that research publications serve as conduits through which scholars contribute to the existing body of knowledge. Publication outputs can take various forms, including but not limited to: journal article, books (including textbooks and edited books), book chapters, monograph, and conference papers. The specific categories and requirements for each type of output can vary based on the institution. Publication output is very critical to academic staff worldwide, as it serves as a prerequisite for promotion, contributes to academic prestige, and facilitates professional recognition (Haruna, Momoh, & Ismail, 2023).

Over time, numerous empirical researches have been undertaken to gain insights into research output of academics in higher education institutions. In a study conducted by Bamigboye, Adenekan, and Olude (2018), the research productivity of the academic staff at the Federal University of Agriculture in Abeokuta, Nigeria was examined. The researchers employed a stratified random sampling method to select a sample of 536 academic staff members. A simple random sampling technique was utilised to select a representative 20% of the academic staff from 10 colleges. Findings from their study revealed a high level of research output among academic staff. Another study by Lawal and Olawale (2020) surveyed academic librarians' research productivity in Bowen University, Iwo from 2017 to 2019. A questionnaire was adopted as a research instrument to collect data from the 10 academic librarians through a

total enumeration method. They found that the research productivity of the librarians was low. In a more recent study, Haruna, Momoh, and Ismail (2023) conducted a study on research and publication productivity of the academic staff of Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, Edo State, Nigeria. Questionnaire method was used to gather data from two hundred and fifty (250) academic staff. The study reported low publication productivity among the academic staff.

Knowledge sharing is one of the key aspects of knowledge management (Eiriemiokhale & Idiedo, 2020). Knowledge management is a process involving various activities such as creation, processing, storage, disseminating and use of knowledge in an organisation (Isah & Ibrahim, 2023). Similarly, Lo and Tian (2020) identified four components of KM: Creation: the process of identifying and creating knowledge; Capture: tasks related to storing and organizing knowledge; Distribution: activities associated with knowledge transfer or dissemination; Sharing: the process of sharing and reviewing organizational knowledge. Of all the knowledge management processes, knowledge sharing (KS) is considered as the most important process by most scholars (Lo & Tian, 2020; Syed, Danish, & Gul, 2021). It has become increasingly significant as a research subject in the scholarly domain (Fauzi, Tan, Thurasamy, & Ojo, 2019), especially to those at the bottom-level. Lawal, Oriogu, and Ogbuiyi (2017) argued that the essence of knowledge sharing is even more desired in universities. They emphasised that the potential role of knowledge sharing in contributing to the success of organizations in general, and universities in particular, should not be overlooked. Knowledge sharing among academics entails the process of exchanging, disseminating, and creating knowledge, ideas, and expertise among individuals within and across academic communities (Jameel, Massoudi, & Agha, 2021). It is a vital aspect of academic work, as it fosters scientific knowledge, the improvement of teaching and learning outcomes, development of collaborative networks, and promotion of innovation. Academics often share their knowledge through various channels such as conferences, publications, workshops, and online platforms.

Several studies have reported the relationship between the two constructs of knowledge sharing and research productivity in different geographical contexts. The study conducted by Bamigboye, Adenekan and Olude (2018) examined the relationship between knowledge sharing and research output among academic staff of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. Findings of the study revealed a significant relationship between knowledge sharing and research output among academic staff at the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. Subsequently, Fauzi, Nya-Ling, Thursamy and Ojo (2019) investigated the role of knowledge sharing on research productivity by employing a quota sampling method in selecting academics from public and private universities in Malaysia. The study suggests that academics knowledge-sharing behaviour has a substantial impact on their research productivity. In a related study, Owate, Iroeze and Echem (2020) conducted a descriptive survey research involving a sample of 30 academic librarians in the Donald Ekong Library of the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. They explored the knowledge sharing and research productivity of academic librarians. Their findings, similar to the previous studies, revealed that knowledge sharing among academic librarians is relevant to their research productivity. Lastly, Aulawi (2021) assessed the effect of knowledge sharing on academic staff research productivity at a private university in Indonesia. Results revealed that knowledge sharing positively and significantly influenced the university's research productivity. In addition,

it was revealed that existing expert groups, knowledge-sharing agendas, collaborative research, facility support, funds, partnerships with external institutions, and human resources development programs contributed to the enhancement of lecturers' ability to generate ideas and engage in research endeavours.

**Methodology**

The survey research design was used in this study. The population consist of 645 ECAs in three universities in Ogun state: Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Olabisi Onobanjo University and Covenant University. The sample size of 215 was obtained using multistage sampling method. First, the researcher purposefully selected homogeneous faculties/colleges in the three universities: science, engineering, and social science/management. Second, the researcher further selected departments that were common in the already selected faculties/colleges. Third, a census method was applied to capture the 215 ECAs in the selected departments. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire (quantitative survey questions). Thirty copies of the questionnaire were pretested among ECAs in a university that was not part of the study population. The reliability coefficient obtained include: $\alpha = 0.775$ (publication output); $\alpha = 0.798$ (knowledge sharing perception), $\alpha = 0.730$ (extent of knowledge sharing), $\alpha = 0.762$ (channel of knowledge sharing), $\alpha = 0.769$ (challenges hindering knowledge sharing and research productivity), respectively. All scales in the instrument yielded good reliability, thus being acceptable for this study as the values are above the Obeka (2011) threshold value of 0.70. Out of the 215 copies of questionnaire distributed, 200 were retrieved, and 179 were found usable for the study. Descriptive statistics presented in frequency count, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyse the research questions. Pearson product moment correlation was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The software used to analyse the data was the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS).

**Result and Discussion**

**Research Question 1:** What perception do ECAs have towards knowledge sharing?
Research question one was analysed using mean and standard deviation. The interpretive decision rule applied in Table 1 include: $\leq 1.79$ =strongly disagree; 1.80-2.59= disagree; 2.60-3.39= undecided; 3.40-4.19 =Agree; 4.25-5.00 =strongly agreed. In order to address the negative statement on Table 1, items 4, 5 and 6 were reverse coded.

**Table 1: Perception of ECAs towards knowledge sharing**

| S/no | Perception | $\bar{x}$ | S.D. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I share my knowledge in an appropriate and effective way | 4.18 | **0.974** |
| 2. | I think I don't have to share the knowledge I acquired with my hard earn money (R) | 4.12 | **1.273** |
| 3. | Sharing my knowledge with other university members is a wise move | 4.11 | **1.068** |
| 4. | I do not enjoy sharing my knowledge (R) | 3.93 | **1.389** |
| 5. | Sharing my knowledge with other university members is a valuable experience | 3.86 | **1.184** |
| 6. | I am not encouraged to share my knowledge in this university because of favouritism.(R) | 3.77 | **1.426** |
| | | **Weighted Mean =3.96** | |

*Note: (R) means the negative statements were reversely coded to ascertain consistency of the responses*

In Table 1, respondents were asked to rate their perception towards knowledge sharing. The table indicates that they have a positive perception towards knowledge sharing. This was buttressed by the respondents claimed that: they share their knowledge in an appropriate and effective way; they believe they should share the knowledge they acquired with their hard-earned money; the idea of sharing knowledge with other university members is a wise move; they enjoy sharing their knowledge; sharing their knowledge with other university members is a valuable experience among others. The weighted mean for the scale is 3.96. Hence, ECAs have a positive perception towards knowledge sharing in the study.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do ECAs share knowledge?
The decision rule applied to the data in Table 2 was as follows: $\leq 1.79$= Very Low Extent; 1.80-2.59= Low Extent; 2.60-3.39= undecided; 3.40-4.19= High Extent; 4.25-5.00 =Very High Extent.

**Table 2: Extent of knowledge sharing by ECAs**

| S/n | Extent of knowledge sharing | $\bar{x}$ | S.D. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | By sharing knowledge, I can use the experience of others in finding solution to problems I encounter with research activities | 3.92 | 1.141 |
| 2. | I share knowledge about new trend in my field | 3.78 | 1.200 |
| 3. | I share new working skills I learn with my colleagues | 3.69 | 1.118 |
| 4. | My colleagues share new practice in my field with me | 3.65 | 1.072 |
| 5. | I find it difficult to share from my colleagues (R) | 3.54 | 1.290 |
| 6. | My colleagues share with me new working skills they learn | 3.44 | 1.204 |
| 7. | I share only the important knowledge on what matters with my colleagues | 3.40 | 1.119 |
| | **Weighted Mean =3.63** | | |

*(R) Indicates the negative statement was reverse coded to ascertain consistency of the responses*
Source: Field survey, 2023

Table 2 illustrates the degree of knowledge sharing among ECAs. The results in Table 2 suggest that the respondents share knowledge to a high extent, with a weighted mean of ($\bar{x}$ =3.63). This was buttressed by the respondents' claims that: by sharing knowledge, they can use the experience of others in finding solutions to problems they encounter with research activities ($\bar{x}$ = 3.92); they share knowledge about new trends in their field ($\bar{x}$ =3.78); they share new working skills they learn with their colleagues ($\bar{x}$ =3.69); they share new practices in their field ($\bar{x}$ =3.65)
among others (see details in Table 2).

**Research Question 3:** What is the research publication output of ECAs?
Presented in Table 3 is the rating of bottom-level academics' publications in 4 different types of publication and their percentages. The ratio of 5-point scale was applied 10 and above (5), 7 to 8 (4), 4 to 6 (3), 1 to 3 (2), None (1). The decision rule for Table 3 is: $\leq 1.79$= very low, 1.80-2.59 = low; 2.60-3.39 = moderate; 3.40-4.19 = high; and 4.25-5.00 = very high

**Table 3:** Publication output level of ECAs within the period of 5 years (2019-2023).

| Publication output | None 1 | | 1-3 2 | | 4-6 3 | | 7-9 4 | | 10 or< 5 | | $\bar{x}$ | S.D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fq | % | Fq | % | Fq | % | Fq | % | Fq | % | | |
| Articles in Scholarly journals | 5 | 2.8 | 22 | 12.3 | 31 | 17.3 | 36 | 20.1 | 85 | 47.5 | 3.97 | 1.182 |
| Conferences proceedings | 39 | 21.8 | 88 | 49.2 | 39 | 21.8 | 4 | 2.2 | 9 | 5.0 | 2.20 | 0.972 |
| Completed research | 25 | 14.0 | 89 | 49.7 | 49 | 27.4 | 6 | 3.4 | 10 | 5.6 | 2.37 | 0.959 |
| Chapters in books | 13 | 74.3 | 41 | 22.9 | 4 | 2.2 | - | - | 1 | 0.6 | 1.30 | 0.567 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Mean =2.46 | |

*Key: Fq = Frequency; S.D. = standard deviation; $\bar{x}$ = mean*

In Table 3, respondent were asked to rate their publication output, responses shows that 85 (47.5%) academics published over 10 articles in learned journals, 36 (20.1%) published between 7-9 articles in learned journals, 31 (17.3%) published between 4-6 articles, and 22 (12.3%) published between 1-3 articles in learned journals. The majority of academics (48.2%) published between 1 and 3 conference proceedings, and 89 (49.1%) had between 1 and 3 completed research, respectively. Articles in learned journals have the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$ =3.97), followed by completed research ($\bar{x}$ =2.37), conference proceedings ($\bar{x}$ =2.20), chapters in books, which had the lowest mean score ($\bar{x}$ =1.30) (see results in Table 3). It can be inferred that while the articles in learned journal was high, others were low.

**Research Question 4:** What are the challenges that ECAs face in sharing knowledge and publishing their research?
The decision rule applied to interpret Table 4 was as follows: ≤ 1.79 indicates strong disagreement; 1.80-2.59 signifies disagreement; 2.60-3.39 represents undecided; 3.40-4.19 corresponds to agreement; and 4.25-5.00 denotes strong agreement.

**Table 4:** Challenges faced by ECAs in sharing knowledge and publishing their research

| S/n | Challenges | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | **Research productivity challenges** | Mean | SD |
| 1. | Insufficient research facilities | 3.66 | 1.438 |
| 2. | Time constraints | 3.64 | 1.230 |
| 3. | Rejection of manuscripts by journals | 3.33 | 1.244 |
| 4. | Difficulties in identifying the most suitable information resources | 3.18 | 1.256 |
| | | **Weighted mean=3.45** | |
| B | **Knowledge sharing challenges** | | |
| 1. | Time constraints | 3.63 | 1.244 |
| 2. | Lack of management support | 3.36 | 1.257 |
| 3. | Unwillingness among academics | 3.22 | 1.220 |

| | | **Weighted mean=3.40** |
|---|---|---|

Source: Field survey, 2023

It is evident from Table 4 that the respondents face challenges related to publication output and sharing knowledge, with mean scores of 3.45 and 3.40, respectively. Specifically, regarding the challenges of research productivity, insufficient research facilities emerged as the most significant challenge faced by the respondents ($\bar{x}$ =3.66), followed by time constraints ($\bar{x}$ =3.64). Majority of the respondents faced more challenges in the area of research productivity ($\bar{x}$ =3.45), and was followed by knowledge sharing ($\bar{x}$ =3.45).

**Research Hypothesis Testing**

**Null Hypothesis:** There is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and research productivity of ECAs in selected universities in Ogun State.

**Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between knowledge sharing and research productivity of ECAs**

| Variables | Mean | Std. Dev. | N | R | p-value | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research productivity | 9.8324 | 2.45747 | 179 | .334* | <.001 | Sig. |
| Knowledge sharing | 23.9665 | 5.45142 | | | | |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between knowledge sharing and the research productivity of ECAs in selected universities in Ogun State (r =.334, n = 179, p <.05). The result in Table 5 depicts that knowledge sharing influenced/enhanced research productivity of ECAs at selected universities in the study. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

**Discussion of Findings**

This study aimed to investigate knowledge sharing in relation to the research productivity of Early Career Academics (ECAs) at selected universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. The findings were discussed based on the results of four research questions and one hypothesis formulated for the study. Given that research on knowledge sharing and publication productivity among ECAs is rare, there may be a lack of preceding studies to corroborate and validate the findings. However, the present results will be substantiated by those studies that have spanned all academic grade levels and have reported congruent outcomes.

As per the study's findings, ECAs have a positive perception towards knowledge sharing. As long as their perception remains positive, it significantly contributes to knowledge sharing behaviour. This means that the willingness of ECAs to share knowledge is not a temporary or situational phenomenon, but rather a stable trait that significantly influences their behaviour. This is consistent with the assertion of Bulan and Sensuse (2012) that a positive perception contributes to an individual's willingness to share knowledge. The findings suggest a significant degree of knowledge sharing among ECAs. ECAs leverage shared knowledge to utilise the experiences of others in addressing challenges encountered during research activities gained. They exchange knowledge about emerging trends in their respective fields. Furthermore, they prioritize sharing critical knowledge pertinent to their colleagues. The high mean score across all statements assessing the extent of knowledge sharing suggests a substantial degree of knowledge

exchange among ECAs. These findings are consistent with those of Ogunmodede and Popoola (2019), albeit their research encompassed academics across all grade levels.

Findings further revealed that a significant proportion of the respondents reported having published more than 7-10 articles in learned journals over a five-year period (2019-2023), which is considered a high output. It aligns with the studies by Ajegbomogun and Popoola, (2014); Bamigboye, Adenekan and Olude, (2018); Simisaye (2018), who reported high level of article in learned journal by academic staff. Meanwhile, it was reported in the present study that ECAs publication in terms of conference papers and chapter in books were low compared to journal articles. Congruent results were found in the studies of Basiru (2018), Lawal and Olawale (2020), who reported low publication productivity among academic staff.

Early Career Academics (ECAs) encounter challenges when embarking on research and publication endeavours. These challenges encompass time constraints, difficulties in identifying the most suitable information resources, rejection of manuscripts by journals, and insufficient research facilities. Time constraints, in particular, pose a significant challenge for ECAs who are tasked with balancing a multitude of roles and responsibilities, including teaching, research, administration, and personal life. Time constraints are not exclusive to ECAs but are a common factor impacting all academic grades, as corroborated by previous studies conducted in various countries around the globe (Okonedo & Popoola, 2012; Cele & Lekhanya, 2014; Okonedo, 2015; Lessick, Perryman, Billman, Alpi, De Groote, & Babin, 2016; Oyeyemi, Oyeyemi, Lawan, Abubakar, & Rufai, 2022). These findings underscore the universal nature of time constraints in academic settings, irrespective of career stage. Further, the problem of identifying the most suitable information resources is another challenge revealed by the study. This is a common challenge for new entrants in their careers, given the large and increasing number of research publications available. Interestingly, studies encompassing academics of all ranks have reported similar findings (Okonedo, 2015). The rejection of manuscripts by journal outlets emerged as another significant challenge in the current study. This challenge is not unique to ECAs but has been identified in research focusing on all academic categories (Okonedo, Popoola, & Emmanuel, 2012; Okonedo, 2015). The barrier of insufficient research facilities was also identified in the present study and the result is consistent with the findings by Feyera, Atelaw, Hassen and Fufa (2017).

This study delineates three primary impediments to knowledge sharing among ECAs: First, the reluctance among academics, as identified in this study, resonates with the findings of previous research (Ikeda & Islam, 2013; Chalak, Ziaei, & Nafei, 2014; Santosh & Panda, 2016). Second, the lack of managerial support has been identified as a barrier to knowledge sharing among ECAs. This finding is corroborated by prior studies (Norulkamar & Hatamleh, 2014; Tahir, Musah, Abdullah, Musta'amal, & Abdullah, 2016). Lastly, time constraints as revealed in the present study have been affirmed by previous studies to pose a significant hurdle to academic knowledge sharing. For instance, Okonedo (2015), Ramjeawon and Rowley (2017), Alsaadi (2018), and Mekuria, Belayneh, and Mengstie (2022) all discovered that academics in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) encountered difficulties in sharing knowledge due to time constraints. These findings underline the intricacy of the knowledge sharing process and the complicated hurdles confronting academics in their pursuit of collaborative scholarship.

The present study suggests that knowledge sharing is positively and significantly associated with the publication productivity of ECAs. These results align with the findings of previous studies that focused on academics across all grade levels (Hossain, Bischoff, Willy, Roncace, & Walsh 2015; Bamigboye, Adenekan, & Olude 2018; Fauzi, Nya-Ling, Thursamy, & Ojo, 2019; Aulawi, 2021), which indicated a positive and significant relationship between knowledge sharing and research productivity. On the contrary, the study of Okonedo and Popoola (2012) showed that knowledge sharing was not relatively significant for research productivity.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study investigates knowledge sharing in relation to the publication productivity of ECAs in selected universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. In today's knowledge-centric society, the importance of robust knowledge sharing among ECAs cannot be overstated. It serves as a crucial catalyst for research output and academic progress. The findings of this study highlight the essential role of knowledge sharing within the academic community, not merely as a desirable practice, but as an integral component of ECAs publication productivity. Specifically, the perception towards knowledge sharing and the extent to which ECAs share knowledge was high. ECAs publication productivity in terms of journal articles was high, while those of conference, chapter in books were low. However, it is important to note that despite the positive perceptions and outcomes, there are still substantial challenges that hinder effective knowledge sharing and research productivity. These challenges, as identified in the need to be addressed to fully harness the potential of knowledge sharing and publication productivity in academia. Arising from the findings, the study recommends that management should create more opportunities for knowledge sharing. This could include organising more workshops, conferences, and symposiums. They could also explore the use of digital platforms like webinars, blogs, and social media for knowledge sharing thereby helping to overcome some of the time constraints identified in the study. Secondly, they should invest in improving research facilities and consider policies that allow academics more time for research activities. This could be attained by reducing administrative duties or providing sabbaticals for intensive research periods. Lastly, management should continue to encourage and support academics in publishing their research by providing training on writing for academic journals, or offering incentives for published work.

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