KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOUR OF LIBRARY PERSONNEL IN ONDO STATE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract
  This study investigated the benefits and challenges of knowledge sharing among library personnel working in tertiary institution libraries of Ondo State. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised one hundred and fourteen library personnel working in Ondo State tertiary institutions. The study adopted the total enumeration technique. A structured questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. Out of one hundred and fourteen (114) copies of the questionnaire administered, ninety-two (92) copies were found useful for this study, giving a response rate of 80.7%. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. Results revealed that library personnel benefit immensely from knowledge sharing as the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that knowledge sharing leads to improvement in work practices (= 3.48), generation of new knowledge (= 3.32), provision of timely services (= 3.25), and so on. Results also revealed that virtually all the listed barriers militate against knowledge sharing among library personnel, such as lack of motivation and shortage of infrastructure. The study recommended adequate provision for staff training and technological infrastructure to motivate knowledge-sharing behaviour among library personnel as well as improve library services.

Keywords: Academic libraries, Behavior of Library Personnel, Benefits, Challenges, Knowledge, Knowledge Sharing, Tertiary institutions.

Introduction
  Libraries serve as hubs of knowledge and information, enriching communities by providing access to resources that educate, inspire, and empower. At the heart of every library are its personnel, dedicated individuals who curate collections, assist patrons, and uphold the institution's mission. Libraries are indispensable as they work to fulfil the vision and mission of the parent

institutions by disseminating knowledge to the scholarly community. There has been a change in the roles and services rendered by academic libraries as regards managing knowledge in this era of information explosion. These roles demand much of the library personnel's tasks to be done collaboratively as no one can claim possession of the needed knowledge in one's profession.

The environment where academic libraries operate is changing as the world is tech-driven, which may necessitate library personnel to equip themselves with more skills and knowledge (Ajie, 2019). For effective library service delivery, there is a need for library personnel to network, cooperate, and depend on one another's knowledge. Library personnel play a vital role in knowledge management programs by identifying, acquiring, developing, resolving, storing, and sharing knowledge. Recognizing the importance of knowledge-sharing has created a demand for knowledge-sharing behaviour in tertiary institutions, which are regarded as knowledge-intensive organizations (Enakrire & Onyancha, 2020). Abubakar & Kabir (2022) defined knowledge-sharing behaviour as personnel's activities that pertain to the interchange of ideas, skills, information, and experience between personnel or groups of people within an organization to improve the organization's sustainability.

Previous research has proven the importance of knowledge-sharing behaviour (Ali and Dominic, 2017; Abubakar & Kabir, 2022). The effectiveness of libraries in achieving their mandate relies not only on the availability of resources but also on the extent to which knowledge is shared among library personnel themselves. Therefore, knowledge sharing among library personnel is crucial because it makes them well-informed. The ability to provide result-oriented services to library and information users can be made possible or marred by library personnel's knowledge-sharing behaviour. Being knowledge workers, they need essential knowledge and expertise in their tasks, as this will support super library services. Knowledge-sharing behaviour is a vital process that impacts individual and organizational performance.

However, alongside the benefits of knowledge sharing, academic libraries in the digital era face significant challenges that hinder personnel's knowledge sharing. Studies have shown that knowledge-sharing activities are not frequent in academic libraries due to a lack of infrastructure (such as computers, servers, and alternative sources of power and so on) that promote effective knowledge-sharing within the organisation (Awodoyin, Osisanwo, Adetoro and Adeyemo, 2016). Literature has also shown that library personnel are reluctant to share knowledge,

as there is no systematic approach to knowledge sharing in academic libraries (Bumbie-Chi, 2020, Ondieki, Maina, and Macharia, 2023). Odunewu & Haliso (2019) and Ike (2023) also affirmed that knowledge sharing is on an informal basis and uncoordinated in academic libraries; there is no policy guiding their knowledge sharing.

Moreover, academic libraries face evolving challenges such as limited budgets, technological constraints, changing user expectations and so on. Amidst these challenges, the importance of fostering a culture of knowledge sharing among library personnel cannot be overstated. Knowledge sharing cannot be mandated but can only be encouraged and facilitated. As a result, it is important to explore the benefits and challenges of knowledge sharing among library personnel working in academic libraries of Ondo States, to enhance personnel's positive knowledge sharing behaviour.

Statement of problem

The performance of academic libraries and indeed the tertiary institutions could improve when appropriate knowledge is made available and shared by the library personnel. Research has shown that the exchange of ideas, best practices, expertise, and resources among library personnel enhances collective learning and improves service delivery. It fosters collaboration and innovation within library systems. Effective knowledge sharing not only strengthens the capacity of library personnel but also enriches the experiences of library users. Since knowledge is stored in individual brains, library personnel must collaborate and rely on one another's knowledge to keep meeting patron's diverse information needs.

However, despite its significance, studies have shown in diverse quarters that library personnel in Nigerian tertiary institutions have not exhibited positive knowledge-sharing behaviour. For example, academic libraries have no systematic approach to knowledge sharing, their knowledge sharing has always been on an informal basis, uncoordinated and there is reluctance to share knowledge among library personnel. Library personnel face obstacles, such as traditional hierarchical structures, lack of incentives, inadequate technological infrastructure and so on, these obstacles often impede the flow of knowledge within library settings. Addressing these barriers and cultivating a culture of knowledge sharing is crucial to unlocking the full potential of academic libraries as vibrant centers of learning in the academic community. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the benefits and challenges of knowledge sharing among library personnel working in Ondo State tertiary institutions.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. identify perceived benefits of knowledge-sharing practices among library personnel in Ondo State tertiary institution libraries
2. find out challenges militating against knowledge sharing among library personnel in Ondo State tertiary institution libraries.

Literature Review

Benefits of Knowledge Sharing in Academic Libraries

Knowledge sharing is the process of gathering, comprehending, disseminating, and repeating facts, concepts, and resources among people who are connected in certain ways. In the field of library and information science, knowledge is continuously generated. Given the significance of knowledge-sharing behaviour, library personnel ought to be highly engaged in it and behave in a way that promotes it. Several research works have highlighted the benefits of knowledge sharing among library personnel. Knowledge sharing, according to Khan (2019), can enhance learning, personal development, and library operations. For the library to succeed and remain in operation, staff members must share knowledge about studying, comprehending, and sharing resources. Library personnel gain from knowledge sharing by providing better information, encouraging staff to acquire more knowledge, reducing duplication of tasks, improving productivity, and retaining knowledge from retiring personnel. This fosters continuous learning, innovative ideas, and improved service to users (Onwubiko, 2022).

Kipkosgei, Kang and Choi (2020) stressed that knowledge-sharing behaviour builds ties and relationships among library personnel which, in turn, enhances team performance. Many researchers emphasize on the benefits of knowledge sharing as a medium for enhancing what individual personnel know and how that can affect the overall organizational performance. According to other studies, implementing knowledge-sharing improves organizational effectiveness (Olatokun & Njideaka, 2020). Knowledge-sharing behaviour allows library personnel to share their knowledge and experiences to provide their patrons with fast, efficient, and effective information services.

Knowledge-sharing behaviour as an essential asset in any organization aids performance and productivity. Thus, knowledge-sharing behaviour among library personnel could likely result in increased productivity. According to Olayemi and Olayemi (2021), the sharing of knowledge helps to take full

advantage of organizations' capacity to manage knowledge and permits individual personnel to work and achieve goals more efficiently. Knowledge-sharing behaviour among library personnel could help in the generation of new ideas which can later be implemented and promote the survival and effectiveness of the library. Knowledge-sharing behaviour improves personnel's decision-making skills, performance, problem-solving efficiency, relationships with colleagues, and work quality (Mwawasi, 2022). Knowledge-sharing behaviour assists academic libraries in meeting users' needs and generates solutions that help them develop and maintain a competitive advantage Chipeta, 2018).

Asrar-ul-Haq and Anwar (2020) highlighted the importance of knowledge sharing in enhancing capacity and fostering learning. He stressed that tertiary institutions and academic libraries will be more successful if there is more appropriate and relevant knowledge. Every organization, including academic libraries, will remain successful only when they continuously construct innovative knowledge, disseminate it among personnel and rapidly apply it for the development of society (Mwawasi, 2022). In another study, Olayemi and Olayemi (2021) posited that knowledge sharing facilitates better decision-making, utilises the existing computer systems, encourages the free flow of ideas and knowledge, improves customer service satisfaction, and boosts revenues. It also enhances the value of existing products, reduces costs in human labour and hours, streamlines operations helps to make better use of employees' working time, and improves the collective organization memory. Library personnel should be quite interested in knowledge sharing based on the importance associated with knowledge sharing.

Challenges militating against knowledge sharing behaviour of library personnel in academic libraries

Despite the benefits, many factors could influence the knowledge-sharing behaviour of library personnel. Razmerita, Kirchner, and Nielsen (2016) confirmed that these factors can be divided into three categories: individual, technological, and organizational factors. Individual factors include knowledge self-efficacy, lack of time and trust, perceptions, feelings, expectations, lack of social skills, enjoying helping others, cultural differences, self-esteem, and so on. Technological factors include the development and acquisition of information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as chat rooms, bulletin boards, the internet, and intranet. Organizational factors include organizational culture, management support in terms of reward and supportive climate, job motivation

organisational structure and so on. Any of the aforementioned factors could act as an enabler or barrier to library personnel's knowledge-sharing behaviour.

Literature has shown that there is reluctance to share knowledge among library personnel because there are no regular or systematic ways of knowledge sharing by the library personnel, and making knowledge available to others to develop organizational effectiveness and add value to the operations of libraries (Awodoyin et al., 2016). Sometimes library personnel may be reluctant to share the information because they believe that by doing so, they will lose their sense of superiority and uniqueness after sharing their unique and distinct ideas and thoughts with others. Ajie (2019). further emphasized that the lack of infrastructure that fosters knowledge-sharing behaviour among coworkers is the reason why knowledge-sharing activities are not common in academic libraries. Technology is essential to knowledge sharing since it links a lot of people from different parts of the world. Lack of familiarity with the IT system may cause people to be reluctant to utilize it, which could act as a barrier to the sharing of knowledge.

In a review of knowledge-sharing behaviour literature, it was found that a relative lack of attention to the role of motivational factors hurts knowledge-sharing behaviour (Olayemi & Olayemi, 2021). Perceived lack of incentive systems (such as rewards and recognition) also acts as a barrier to knowledge sharing as well; personnel may be reluctant to share their knowledge out of concern that they won't receive fair recognition from managers and coworkers, and not receive such adequate rewards may cause resentment. Khan and Ali (2019), however, noted certain obstacles, including a lack of trust and technological support. Nazim & Ali (2021) found that top management's support, lack of trust, and a culture of knowledge-sharing at South African university libraries hindered the sharing of learned information.

Library personnel may have a bad attitude about knowledge sharing because to personal insecurity, such as the fear of being seen as ignorant and unqualified for job advancement or new professional progression. Lack of trust among coworkers and fear that knowledge will be lost or misused can also be factors in determining a person's willingness to share knowledge. Also, the belief that "knowledge is power" could be a reason why personnel are reluctant to share their knowledge. Library personnel who wish to maintain superiority over their colleagues in the organization may not contribute their knowledge. Personnel with certain knowledge have the power to control who does not know, and so the benefit of being the exclusive owner of knowledge vanishes when that knowledge

is shared. Also, lack of time can cause people to prioritize their everyday responsibilities. When time is scarce people focus more on tasks that benefit them personally than others. The barrier arises from the perception held by employees that knowledge sharing is an extra duty that needs to be done outside of their regular workday, therefore believing they need to invest additional time to share knowledge (Onwubiko, 2022).

Furthermore, one of the biggest obstacles to knowledge sharing can be a lack of awareness about what knowledge is crucial to preserve. Another barrier related to fear is that new personnel frequently feel intimidated to participate because they feel they have not earned the right to post any information. Additionally, people fear that by sharing, they will be mocked or criticized; they fear that their contributions to knowledge will be less valued in response. Knowledge sharing may be impeded by perceived ignorance; some staff members feel their knowledge is inferior to that of their library counterparts, which keeps them from sharing. Whatever the obstacle, library management needs to understand that sharing knowledge can only be encouraged and facilitated, not forced. To promote knowledge-sharing among personnel, library management must fully support initiatives that will both strengthen personnel knowledge-sharing behaviour and remove barriers to knowledge-sharing.

Methodology
A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised of one hundred and fourteen (114) librarians and library officers working in eight (8) academic libraries of Ondo State tertiary institutions. The selected tertiary institutions are Federal University of Technology, Akure; Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko; Ondo State University of Science and Technology, Okitipupa; Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo; Federal Polytechnic, Ile-Oluji; Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo; Federal College of Agriculture, Akure; and Elizade University, Ilaramokin. A total enumeration technique was adopted. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. Out of one hundred and fourteen (114) copies of the questionnaire administered, ninety-two 92(80.7%) copies were found useful for the study. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Result and Discussion
Research Question One: What are the benefits of knowledge sharing among library personnel in Ondo State tertiary institutions?

Table 1: Perceived benefits of knowledge-sharing practices among library personnel

Rank	Benefits of Knowledge Sharing	SA		A		D		SD			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		STD
1	Leads to improvement in work practices	50	54.3	38	41.3	2	2.2	2	2.2	3.48	0.654
2	It facilitates learning of best library practices	43	46.7	39	42.4	6	6.5	4	4.3	3.40	0.647
3	It leads to the generation of new ideas and knowledge	41	44.6	37	40.2	8	8.7	6	6.5	3.32	0.783
4	It assists library personnel in the provision of timely services	37	40.2	43	46.7	10	10.9	2	2.2	3.25	0.765
5	It helps the library to avoid the repetition of error	38	41.3	42	45.7	9	9.8	3	3.3	3.25	0.736
6	Cost effectiveness-knowledge is developed and then re-used by many people.	35	38.0	48	52.2	6	6.5	3	3.3	3.25	0.721
7	Helps library personnel to understand and respond	36	39.1	40	43.5	11	12.0	5	5.4	3.23	0.866

	effectively to users' needs									
8	It makes academic libraries more relevant to their community	34	37.0	38	41.3	16	17.4	4	4.3	3.16	0.842
9	It helps in providing solutions to problems encountered on the job.	26	28.3	42	45.7	15	16.3	9	9.8	3.12	0.875
10	It can help libraries survive in competitions	37	40.2	37	40.2	10	10.9	8	8.7	3.12	0.924
11	Knowledge sharing helps the organization to achieve its objectives	26	28.3	55	59.8	6	6.5	5	5.4	3.11	0.748
12	It helps an organization to connect professionals across platforms and distances	34	37.0	42	45.7	9	9.8	7	7.6	3.11	0.845
13	Improves performance of the library and their prospect	43	46.7	45	48.9	2	2.2	2	2.2	3.00	0.961
14	Reduced risks associated	20	21.7	51	55.4	10	10.9	11	12.0	2.92	0.917

with knowledge loss										
Average mean = 3.19										

Key: SA=Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed, D=Disagreed, =Mean, STD=Standard Deviation, %=Percentage, N=Total number of Respondents (n) = 92

The results in Table 1 above showed that library personnel benefit immensely from knowledge sharing as majority of the respondents strongly agreed that knowledge sharing leads to improvement in work practices (= 3.48), assists in learning the best library practices (= 3.40), it leads to the generation of new ideas and knowledge (= 3.32), the provision of timely services (= 3.25), avoiding the repetition of error (= 3.25), and provision of cost effectiveness-knowledge for re-use by many people (= 3.25). The findings on the benefits of knowledge sharing revealed that library personnel at Ondo State University benefit immensely from knowledge sharing. They agreed that knowledge sharing leads to improvement in work practices, assists in learning the best library practices, leads to the generation of new ideas and knowledge, provides timely services, avoids the repetition of errors, and provision of cost effectiveness-knowledge for re-use by many people. This particular finding coincides with that of Mayekiso (2013), Anna and Puspitasari (2013), AlRashdi and Srinivas (2016), Awodoyin et al. (2016), Olayemi & Olayemi (2021), Mwawasi (2022), and Chipeta (2018). This implies that library personnel in Ondo State University libraries are drawn to the gains of knowledge sharing as they agreed that knowledge sharing enhances their effectiveness, boosts personnel's confidence and strengthens their bonds and connections.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges to knowledge sharing among library personnel in Ondo State tertiary institutions?

Table 2: Challenges to knowledge sharing among library personnel in Ondo State tertiary institutions

Rank	Challenges of knowledge Sharing	SA		A		D		SD			
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		STD
1	Lack of motivation (incentives and	43	50.0	39	45.4	5	2.3	5	2.3	3.30	0.808

131

	recognition) to share knowledge									
2	Shortage of infrastructure to support knowledge sharing practices	41	47.7	37	43.0	8	9.3	6	0.0	3.23	0.866
3	Lack of time to share knowledge and time to identify colleagues in need of specific knowledge	37	43.0	37	43.0	12	10.5	6	3.5	3.14	0.884
4	Lack of trust among personnel	37	43.0	37	43.0	10	11.6	8	2.3	3.12	0.924
5	Lack of knowledge sharing policies	30	34.9	40	46.5	17	12.8	5	5.8	3.03	0.857
6	inferiority and superiority complexes among junior and senior personnel	30	58.1	38	40.7	15	0.0	9	1.2	2.97	0.943
7	Lack of social networking skills	20	23.3	42	48.8	20	17.4	10	10.5	2.78	0.912
8	Inability to use modern technology	26	30.2	27	31.4	27	24.4	12	14.0	2.73	1.017
9	Unclear intents and objectives of management	10	11.6	49	50.0	29	33.7	4	4.7	2.71	0.719
10	Lack of benefits to oneself	25	29.1	29	33.7	22	18.6	16	18.6	2.68	1.058
11	Uncertainty regarding what knowledge one	10	11.6	43	50.0	31	36.0	8	2.3	2.60	.799

		SA	%	A	%	SD	%	D	%	Mean	STD
	supposed to shared										
12	Lack of interpersonal and communication skills	19	23.3	29	47.7	23	16.3	21	12.8	2.50	1.064
13	Preference for knowledge sharing in face-to-face networks	16	40.7	33	43.0	23	12.8	20	3.5	2.49	1.022
Average mean = 2.87											

Key: SA=Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, SD=Strongly Disagreed, D=Disagreed, =Mean, STD=Standard Deviation, %=Percentage, N=Total number of Respondents (n) = 92

The responses in Table 2 showed that virtually all the listed challenges were militating against knowledge sharing among library personnel. The challenges include; lack of motivation (= 3.30), shortage of infrastructure (= 3.23), lack of time to engage in knowledge sharing (= 3.14), lack of trust among personnel (= 3.12) and so on, while "preference for knowledge sharing in face-to-face networks was rated low (= 2.49). The findings show that, there exists a number of barriers, which hinders knowledge sharing. Library personnel in Ondo State University identified challenges militating against knowledge sharing to include; lack of motivation, shortage of infrastructure, lack of time to engage in knowledge sharing, lack of trust among personnel and so on. These findings are similar to that of Awodoyin et al. (2016), Tahleho (2016) Nazim & Ali (2021), Olayemi & Olayemi (2021), Onwubiko, (2022), Mwawasi (2022), who reported same barriers of knowledge sharing among academic library personnel. The above findings imply that there exist several barriers, which hinder knowledge sharing among library personnel.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The digital era has transformed the landscape of knowledge management in academic libraries, presenting new opportunities and challenges for information professionals. The result of this study established the benefits of knowledge sharing to academic libraries and library personnel as it could promote service delivery, lead to improvement in work practices, assist in learning the best library practices, lead to the generation of new knowledge, as well as strengthen bonds and connections between professionals. Despite the benefits of knowledge

sharing, findings revealed that library personnel lack time and motivation to share knowledge, lack of trust among personnel hinders their knowledge sharing, and there is also a shortage of infrastructure to support knowledge-sharing practices in academic libraries. With appropriate knowledge sharing, academic library personnel will enhance their capacity for knowledge creation; it will strengthen relationships among library personnel and promote inter-networking between personnel, libraries, and users. The study therefore recommended that library personnel should imbibe the culture of knowledge-sharing practices such as cross-fertilization of ideas, job rotation, in-house seminars and so on. This will enable every library personnel to be more knowledgeable in every aspect of the library. Management should encourage knowledge-sharing among library personnel through adequate provision for staff recognition, training and technological infrastructure to motivate knowledge-sharing behaviour among library personnel as well as improve library services.

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