

Knowledge Sharing Practices and Library Usage as Concomitant Variables among Registered Library Users in Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The researcher examined knowledge sharing practices and library usage as concomitant variables in Anambra State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were involved in the study. Correlation research design was adopted for this study which involved the explanatory method and simple linear approach. The population of this study is made up of all the registered library visitors in public libraries in Anambra State. A sample of 163 people was involved in the study using incidental sampling technique. Two instruments were used for data collection; Knowledge Sharing Practice Scale (KSPS) with a total of 20 items and Library Usage Scale (LUS) with 10 items in four point rating format. The face and content validities were established by subjecting the instruments to a critical assessment by specialists in measurement and evaluation as well as library and information science. The reliability of the instruments was ensured using Cronbach alpha statistics which gave an index of 0.81. Pearson r statistic was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested with t-test of significance of simple linear correlation statistic at 0.05 level of significance. It was found in this study that; explicit and implicit knowledge sharing practices are both related with library usage. Thus, explicit and implicit knowledge sharing practices are all significantly related to library usage. This implies that knowledge sharing practices and library usage are concomitant variables. The researcher recommended among others that: users of public libraries in Anambra and the populace at large should continue to do so since it is related to knowledge sharing practices for development of knowledge.

Keywords: Knowledge, Knowledge Sharing, Library Usage.

INTRODUCTION

A library is an information bank meant to satisfy the information needs of a society. Lending credence to this, Obialor (2018) saw a library as a collection of sources of information, made accessible for a defined community for reference or borrowing. She further stressed that library provides a physical or digital access to information and may be a physical building or a virtual space. The library is an acknowledged agent that provides reliable information and materials that is capable of enlightening the populace. This information is made available to varied individuals with different needs, motives, drives, perceptions, requirements and behavioural patterns (Osuiigwe, 2012). According to Kolawole (2012), the library is one means or channel by which relevant issues and information are passed to people either in print or non-print. This information is needed in all

spheres of life to facilitate decision making and engender progress.

In addition to providing materials, libraries also provide other information related services to library users in finding and organizing information and interpreting information needs. Furthermore, libraries are beginning to be more concerned about serving the various strata of the society. Giving the heterogeneous nature of the society, it is important that libraries identify the various categories of people who make up the society in order to serve their information needs for knowledge creation. The essence and purpose of establishing the public library lies in the need for availability of accurate, updated and unswerving information and the benefits adequate usage of such information would have on the individual. Hence, information is power and when well applied is more powerful while

lack of knowledge is a huge factor militating against progress in every sphere of human endeavour. Based on the preceding discussions, World Bank (2008) opined that from a global perspective, libraries through various institutions are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations. One of the means of achieving the above expectations is through knowledge acquisition and dissemination.

Knowledge is important to the society and should be properly managed. It is a critical and strategic resource that leads to new ideas and spurs innovation. Knowledge management includes acquiring, sharing, and storing knowledge. However, the most crucial activity of all is knowledge sharing. Most knowledge is held or stored in the heads of the people; sharing helps to disseminate knowledge to the populace. However, many barriers hinder knowledge sharing in the society. Therefore, focusing on increased knowledge sharing practice will give the society a competitive advantage.

Knowledge can be defined as an integration of experiences, values, information and individual understandings (Rajalakshmi & Banu, 2012). Knowledge is defined as human understanding of a specialized field of interest that has been acquired through study and experience (Folorunso, Vincent, Ogunde & Agboola, 2012). Knowledge can be uttered, summarized, written down and gathered to form experiences and new knowledge in the society. To learn and acquire new knowledge, individuals should interact and share implicit and explicit knowledge with each other. In this way, individuals improve their capacity to define a situation or problem, and apply their knowledge to problem solving (Nonaka, Von Krogh & Voelpel, 2006). Hence, knowledge sharing practice is a crucial issue in organizations and society at large. Knowledge sharing practice is defined in accordance with Sa'enz, JAramburu and Rivera (2009) conceptualization; as a process where individuals mutually exchange their implicit (tacit) and explicit knowledge to create new knowledge. It is the process involving knowledge exchange between individuals and groups of people. It also involves exchanging of information or assistance with others.

Knowledge sharing practice is defined by Hsiu-Fen (2007) as a deliberate act that enables other people to reuse knowledge through a transfer of wisdom and skills. It involves exchanging ideas

and experiences to create new knowledge. Wan, Wan and Seyed (2014) considered knowledge sharing practice as the process of giving and receiving knowledge. Ade and Wood (2011) defined it as "the activities of how to help groups of people working together, facilitating the exchange of their knowledge, enhancing organizational learning capacity, and increasing their ability to achieve individual and organizational goals. Similarly, the term knowledge sharing practice implies the giving and receiving of information framed within a context by the source and shaped by the prior knowledge of the recipient.

Be it explicit or implicit (tacit) knowledge, they both help in shaping an individual's cognitive power. Anasi, Akpan and Adedokun (2012) define explicit knowledge as the knowledge, which has been codified and expressed in formal language. On the other hand, tacit knowledge is harder to express, represent and communicate, it is intuitive, unarticulated and cannot be verbalized. Tacit knowledge is personal and hard to formalize. It is a less familiar, unconventional form of knowledge. As tacit knowledge is not codified, and not openly communicated, it is acquired by sharing experiences, and by observation and imitation (Ade & Wood, 2011). Tacit and explicit knowledge are complementary, that is to say, they both are essential to knowledge creation. As such, knowledge is created via a spiral type of conversions between explicit and tacit knowledge. Sharing both kinds of knowledge is therefore vital for knowledge creation.

Empirically, Balogun (2014), study revealed that employees with high level of altruism reported high willingness to share tacit knowledge compared with those with moderate or low level of altruism. Similarly, employees with high sense of self-efficacy were willing to share tacit knowledge compared with their counterparts who had moderate or low sense of self-efficacy. Tong, Tak and Wong (2014) revealed that, to share knowledge internally and externally for academics is imperative because knowledge is an intellectual asset, if shared in a proper way; knowledge strengthens and develops the society. Therefore leveraging knowledge remains important for the sustainability of career because this is linked to development of expertise. However, Onifade (2015) study reveals that librarians in federal university libraries in Nigeria had positive perception about knowledge sharing but averagely share

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knowledge. This shows that there is a link between knowledge sharing and library.

The neglect and poor attitude of individuals towards library usage is alarming. One begins to wonder how the society could advance technologically without the contribution of libraries and their usage to the populace. This is because, sharing of knowledge instigated by the use of library is crucial to such stride to development. The researcher therefore asks, what is the relationship between knowledge sharing and library usage among the populace in Anambra State, Nigeria?

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the relationship between knowledge sharing and library usage among the populace in Anambra State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to make certain:-

- The relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage, and
- The relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage.

The following research questions guided the study:

- What is the relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage?
- What is the relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage?

RESULTS

Table 1. Relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage

Variables (V:X&Y), Sample Size (n), Summation (Σ), Sum of Squares (SS), Cross-Products (CP), Variance (S^2), Covariance (Cov.), Pearson r (r), and Remarks for the relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage

V	n	Σ	SS	CP	S^2	Cov.	r	Remarks
X	163	4062	5971.963		36.864	18.916	0.71	High Positive Relationship
				3064.405				
Y	163	2588	3107.546		19.182			

Magnitude of Relationship = High

Direction of Relationship = Positive

Percentage Coefficient of Determination = 50.41%

Sample Size (n), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level (α), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Correlation between two Variables

n	r	α	df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Decision
163	0.71	0.05	161	12.842	1.96	Reject H_0

The researcher presented the coefficient of relationship between explicit knowledge sharing

The following null hypotheses were formulated and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage.

METHODOLOGY

Correlation research design was adopted for this study which involved the explanatory method and simple linear approach. The population of this study is made up of all the registered library visitors in public libraries in Anambra State. A sample of 163 people was involved in the study using incidental sampling technique. Two instruments were used for data collection; Knowledge Sharing Practice Scale (KSPS) with a total of 20 items and Library Usage Scale (LUS) with 10 items in four point rating format. The face and content validities were established by subjecting the instruments to a critical assessment by specialists in measurement and evaluation as well as library and information science. The reliability of the instruments was ensured using Cronbach alpha statistics which gave an index of 0.81. Pearson r statistic was used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested with t-test of significance of simple linear correlation statistic at 0.05 level of significance.

practice and library usage in table 1. With a cross-product of 3064.405 which was divided by

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the square root of X and Y sum of squares of 5971.963 and 3107.546 respectively, the result (index) of 0.71 was realized. This shows that the coefficient of relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage is positively high. The percentage coefficient of determination reveals that 50.41% of the positive variation in explicit knowledge sharing practice could be attributed or explained by library usage.

The significant test of the coefficient of relationship between explicit knowledge sharing

practice and library usage was also presented. The result gave the degree of freedom as 163; the t-calculated value of 12.842 was seen to be greater than the t-tabulated value of 1.96. Since the-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis; thus concluding that the high positive relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage is significant.

Table 2. Relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage

Variables (V:X&Y), Sample Size (n), Summation (Σ), Sum of Squares (SS), Cross-Products (CP), Variance (S^2), Covariance (Cov.), Pearson r (r), and Remarks for the relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage

V	n	Σ	SS	CP	S^2	Cov.	r	Remarks
X	163	4062	5971.963		36.864	13.724	0.52	Moderate Positive Relationship
				2223.301				
Y	163	2687	3010.712		18.585			

Magnitude of Relationship = Moderate

Direction of Relationship = Positive

Percentage Coefficient of Determination = 27.04%

Sample Size (n), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level (α), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Correlation between two Variables

n	r	α	df	t_{cal}	t_{tab}	Decision
163	0.52	0.05	161	7.813	1.96	Reject H_0

The researcher presented the relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage in table 2. With a cross-product of 2223.301 which was divided by the square root of X and Y sum of squares of 5971.963 and 3010.712 respectively, the result (index) of 0.52 was realized. This shows that the coefficient of relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage is positively moderate. The percentage coefficient of determination reveals that 27.04% of the positive variation in implicit knowledge sharing practice could be attributed or explained by library usage. The significant test of the coefficient of relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage was presented. The result gave the degree of freedom as 163; the t-calculated value of 7.813 was seen to be greater than the t-tabulated value of 1.96. Since the-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, the researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis; thus concluding that the moderate positive

relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage is significant.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

It was revealed in this study that there is a high positive and significant relationship between explicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage. This shows that explicit knowledge sharing practice has high significant link with library usage in Anambra State. As one engages in library usage, there is a high tendency for him/her to also engage in explicit knowledge sharing practice. This finding is in relation with Tong, Tak and Wong (2014) study which revealed that, to share knowledge internally and externally for academics is imperative because knowledge is an intellectual asset, if shared in a proper way, knowledge strengthens and develops the society. Therefore leveraging knowledge remains important for the sustainability of career because this is linked to development of expertise. The similarities recorded between the findings could be attributed to the influencing power of library usage on knowledge sharing practice.

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The study further revealed that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between implicit knowledge sharing practice and library usage. This shows that implicit knowledge sharing practice has moderate significant link with library usage in Anambra State. As one engages in library usage, there is a high tendency for him/her to also engage in implicit knowledge sharing practice. To this effect, Balogun (2014), study revealed that employees with high level of altruism reported high willingness to share tacit knowledge compared with those with moderate or low level of altruism. Similarly, employees with high sense of self-efficacy were willing to share tacit knowledge compared with their counterparts who had moderate or low sense of self-efficacy.

However, Onifade (2015) study reveals that librarians in federal university libraries in Nigeria had positive perception about knowledge sharing but averagely share knowledge. This shows that there is a link between knowledge sharing and library.

CONCLUSION

It was concluded in this study that explicit and implicit knowledge sharing practices are both related with library usage. Thus, explicit and implicit knowledge sharing practices are all significantly related to library usage. This implies that knowledge sharing practices and library usage are concomitant variables.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

- Users of public libraries in Anambra and the populace at large should continue to do so since it is related to explicit knowledge sharing practices for development.
- Use of library should be encouraged in this dispensation so as to enhance explicit knowledge sharing practices for better knowledge creation.

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