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# Knowledge Sharing Practices and Behaviors in University Libraries: A Survey

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# Knowledge Sharing Practices and Behaviors in University Libraries: A Survey

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## Abstract

In the world we are today knowledge which is acquired through information has become one of the essential commodity for the survival of any organization including institutions like university libraries. As has been revealed in recent knowledge management (KM)-related researches, effective knowledge sharing (KS) is a significant component of KM success. The importance of knowledge sharing in knowledge management can be interpreted as a blood circulating in the body.  This study therefore took a look at knowledge sharing practices and behaviors in university libraries using selected federal universities in Nigeria as case in point. The study applied a descriptive survey design method with a sampled population of 200 staffs randomly selected from five selected federal university libraries in Nigeria. It was guided by four research questions and one null hypothesis while a four-point modified Likert scale structured questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics while Pearson Product Moment correlation Coefficient (PPMC) was used to test the only null hypothesis at $P<0.05$ level of significant.  The outcome of the study did show accessibility and utilization of some communication technologies in knowledge sharing in university libraries as well as non availability of modern digital technologies for the same purpose. The study further discovered that university libraries knowledge sharing practices were encouraging as the creation; dissemination, transfer and sharing of knowledge among staff were given priority while staffs' attitude towards knowledge sharing was in the positive. In all, the result shows that there was a significant relationship between library staffs' knowledge sharing behavior and knowledge sharing practices in university libraries.  The study also found that there were factors militating against effective knowledge sharing practices in university libraries which include among other things, lack of knowledge sharing policies. In line with the findings, recommendations were made in which management of university libraries were advised to formulate policies on knowledge sharing practices so that any staff employed will embrace same

and work towards that direction as this will take care of 'not invented here syndrome', lack of trust among staff and lack of time excuses

# 1.0. Introduction

In the world we are today knowledge which is acquired through information has become one of the essential commodity for the survival of any organization including institutions like university libraries. As has been revealed in recent knowledge management (KM)-related research, effective knowledge sharing (KS) is a significant component of KM success. The importance of knowledge sharing in knowledge management can be interpreted as a blood circulating in the body. Taking it from the human angle, no matter how wise one may claim to be, he cannot claim monopoly of knowledge just as no library can claim to be self-sufficient when it comes to information resources holdings. It is on this ground that the need for cooperation and knowledge sharing among individuals and institutions like the university library arose. More credence is given to this practice in this 21$^{st}$ century with information explosion as a result of the astronomical growth in information spearheaded by the emergence of sophisticated development of information and communication technologies (ICTs) with the internet as the crown glory. This development has therefore created room for exploring knowledge management and other interfaces like knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing according to Jain (2012) is a set of processes, tools and system for the management of all types of knowledge that are critical to individuals, organizations and institutions like the university library while knowledge management (KM) is the process of creating, storing, applying and re-using organizational knowledge to enable an organization achieve its goals and objectives in terms of resources, documents and people's skills (IFLA., 2009)

Knowledge as a concept is processed information that is organized and more broadly understood and applied (Aina, 2004) and changes somebody or something either by becoming grounds for action or by making an individual or an institution capable of different or more effective action (Drucker cited in Jain, 2012). In fact, knowledge sharing is one of the core principals and fundamental of knowledge management. Suffice it to say, that it is central to all knowledge

management processes as it is only when knowledge is shared and or transferred that it can be easily applied in required contexts for productivity in organization. To this end, how well an individual, an institution, an organization and an entire society can harness, access, store and utilize available knowledge will ultimately decide their ability to generate economic growth and enhance the quality of life for all (Weiner, 2013).

The underlying reason towards the utilization of available knowledge by individuals, organizations or institutions is to improve performance (Salisbury, 2003) in the execution of their duties and responsibilities. In other words, individuals share what they have learned and transfer what they knew to those who have collective interest and who have found the knowledge useful as the general belief is that the knowledge value expounds when it is shared and applied noting that a well managed knowledge sharing can greatly enhance work-quality and decision-making skills, problem solving efficiency as well as competence that will benefit the organization as a whole (Yang, 2007; Cheng, Hu & lan, 2009). Hence, knowledge sharing among staff in organizations or institutions (like the university library) leads to increased productivity and in the case of the library will enhance effective and efficient service delivery to users and facilitates actualization of competitive advantage (popoola & Fagbola, 2014) adding that knowledge is the basic ingredient needed by organizational employees to bring about innovations which are linked to performance and growth through improvement in efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, quality of services and products. This implies that knowledge sharing fosters innovation by encouraging free flow of ideas, helps in understanding markets and customers, helps to develop products and services, builds competences, improves customer services, boost revenues, enhance employee retention rates by recognizing employees' knowledge and rewarding them for it as well as streamlining operations and reducing cost through elimination of redundant and unnecessary practices (Ezeigbo, 2013).

It is after considering the above mentioned all time benefits of knowledge sharing that the researcher felt the need to investigate the knowledge sharing behavior and practices in university libraries being the information hub of the university whose main product is information and principle function being to provide information resources to students and faculty members with a view to satisfying their information needs and by implication, mastermind the realization of the

tripartite functions of the university; which are, teaching/learning, research and extension services.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

The era we are (21$^{st}$ century), is one driven by knowledge spearheaded by information explosion in that information has become the most expensive factor of production. The global axiom is that information rules the world. Be that as it may, the ability of institutions like the university libraries' staff to share both explicit and tacit knowledge becomes imperative as the implementation of knowledge practice by any institution or organization leads to productivity growth and actualization of set goals. According to knowledge sharing literature most of the researches have been conducted in Western and East Asia countries. So considering different cultural characteristics and economical situations, which influence the type of organizational structure as well as interpersonal communication between members, more investigation is needed to be conducted in another area such as Nigeria. However, in the Nigerian context, the knowledge sharing behavior and practices of university library staffs are rarely known despite the fact that knowledge sharing among staff working in any organization is a crucial factor, a necessity and a positive force for the success and survival of the organization. Furthermore, the extent of technologies that are accessible and utilized (if any) in university libraries in Nigeria for knowledge sharing and behavior exhibited by members of staff and knowledge sharing practices of the university libraries to the best of knowledge of the researcher are unknown.

Against these backdrops, there rose the need for this study to investigate knowledge sharing practices in university libraries in Nigeria. This study so to speak is an attempt to fill the gap using selected university libraries in Nigeria.

## 1.3. Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to determine knowledge sharing behavior and practices in university libraries in Nigeria. Other objectives are:

a) To determine the extent communication technologies are accessible and utilized in knowledge sharing in university libraries;

b) To ascertain knowledge sharing behavior exhibited by staffs of university libraries;

c) To establish the knowledge sharing practices of the university libraries,

d) To identify challenges militating against effective knowledge sharing in the libraries.

## 1.4. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

a) To what extent are communication technologies accessible and utilized by the university libraries in knowledge sharing?

b) What are the knowledge sharing behaviors exhibited by staffs of the university libraries?

c) What are the knowledge practices of the university libraries?

d) Are there challenges militating against effective knowledge sharing in the university libraries?

## 1.5. Hypothesis

The study was further guided by one formulated and tested hypothesis.

H01: There is no statistical significant (P<0.05) relationship between knowledge sharing behavior of the library staffs and knowledge sharing practices in the university libraries

## 2.0. Literature Review

## 2.1. Conceptual Framework

## 2.1.1. Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing is defined as exchange, transfer and dissemination of knowledge between and among individuals, teams, departments and organizations. Sharing knowledge involves formulating a problem and suggesting potential solutions, supplying justifications or stimulating events to reflect on something. Knowledge sharing is a learning activity such as observation, listening and asking questions, sharing ideas, suggesting potential solutions and adopting patterns of behavior. These activities can be used as a way of capturing, organizing, re-using and transferring experience based knowledge that resides within an organization in order to make that knowledge available to others. (IGI-Global Dictionary, n.d)

Park and Im (2003) defined knowledge sharing as "the process of transferring knowledge from a person to another in organization. It is a process to accumulate shared knowledge among members". Bock and Kim (2002) stated it can be defined also as a kind of social interaction

among people. Knowledge, unlike information is locked in the human mind and part of human identity. Frappaolo (2006) claimed that knowledge sharing is about how people share and use what they know.  In addition, Tasmin and Woods (2007) asserted that knowledge sharing is a social system that supports collaboration and integration which is normally facilitated by technology.

Dalkir (2005) also supported the defined notion that knowledge sharing is to be associated with appropriate mix of technological channels for optimizing knowledge exchanges. Creating and exchanging knowledge are intangible activities that can neither be supervised nor imposed. They happen only when people cooperate voluntarily. This exchange of knowledge can lead to the creation of new knowledge, which can be an important source of competitive advantage.

According to perspectives, situations, needs, and circumstances, different definitions of KS are presented.  While Levitt and March (1988), believe that knowledge sharing is a process meant to obtain experience from others, so it can also be named "knowledge transfer", which will also augment the organizational learning,  Szulanski, Cappete, and Jensen (2004) believe that knowledge sharing is differed from knowledge exchange and knowledge transfer.  They argue that knowledge transfer involves not only the sharing of knowledge by the knowledge source but also the acquisition and application of knowledge by the recipient. Knowledge transfer describes the knowledge movement between different units, divisions, or organizations while, knowledge sharing typically has been used to identify the knowledge movement between individuals. According to Pulakos, Dorsey, and Borman (2003), knowledge sharing refers to preparation of task information and know-how to collaborate with others to help them and solve their problems, implement policies, or develop new ideas. Ryu, Ho, and Han (2003), suggest that knowledge sharing is the behavior when a member diffuses her/his acquired knowledge to others within an organization. Ho, Hsu, and Oh (2009), argue that the reason for the difficulty in presenting a standard definition of knowledge sharing is due to KS consists of many elements. The three key elements tabbed from them are: objects, which refer to the kind of shared knowledge, the way of sharing which includes; face to face, conference, knowledge network, and organizational learning, and level of sharing: involving individuals, teams, or organizations.

## 2.2. Theoretical Framework

There are some theories and models, which that throw more light in establishment and reinforcement of knowledge sharing behaviour as a specific component of the knowledge management cycle among organizational members. These basic theories include; Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), Theory of Planned Behaviour (TBP), System Exchange Theory (SET), and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

## 2.2.1. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a social psychology model, which focuses on the elements that determine the intention behavior reasons (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Studies have shown that TRA theory is successful model in forecasting intention to knowledge sharing behavior. Based on TRA "Fig, 1", an individual performance of a specific behavior is defined by her or his behavioral tendency to fulfill the behavior, and behavioral intention is determined by the individual's attitude and subjective norms.
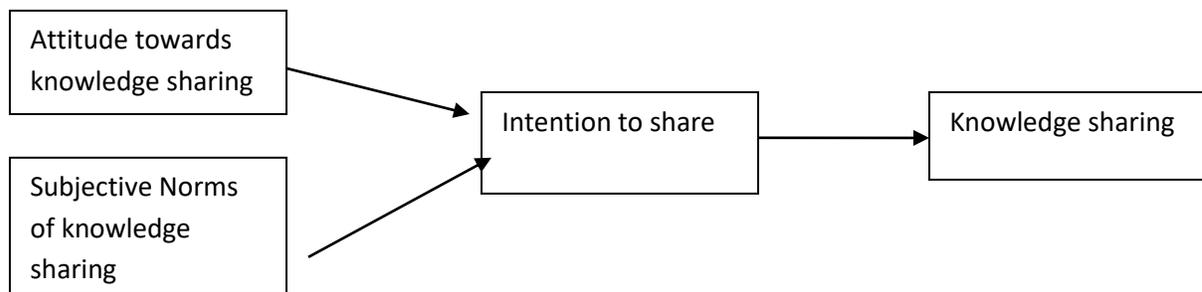


Fig 1. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) Adopted from Ajzen &Fishbein (1980)

Some studies have been carried out using TRA to explore the role of different variables in KS. For instance, Bock and Kim (2002) conducted a study based on TRA and SET (social exchange theory). The results reported that *expected* associations and contributions have significant positive impact on individual's attitude toward KS, while expected rewards, which is believed as an important incentive factor for KS by some scholars, are not in a positive relation to the attitude toward KS.  In 2005, Bock and Kim published a paper based on TRA in which they asserted that attitude toward KS and subjective norms as well as organizational climate have positive effect on KS behaviour. In addition,  the noted that *anticipated reciprocal relationships* influence attitude, while *sense of self-worth* and *organizational climate* influence subjective norms, whereas anticipated *extrinsic rewards* are in negative relation to individual's KS attitude

In another study by Joseph and Jacob (2011) the above outcomes were confirmed. The results indicated that *social-psychological* and organizational *climate* factors have positive effect on KS intention, whereas *anticipated extrinsic rewards* have negative effect on individual's KS attitude.

## 2.2.2. Theory of Planned Behavior

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been shown to be practical in social behavior predicting in many functional areas. TPB is an expanded version of the reasoned action theory (TRA) (Ajzen 1991). The difference between TRA and TPB is the added factor:"*perceived behavioral control*" (PBC). According to TPB behavioral intention together with PBC are used to predict the outcomes of behavior "Fig, 2". Both PBC and intention contribute to the behavioral prediction, but in some cases one of them maybe more significant than another one and actually just one predictor is necessary [Ajzen, 1991).

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┌──────────────────┐
│ Attitude towards │
│ knowledge sharing│──────┐
└──────────────────┘      │
                          ▼
┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────┐
│ Subjective Norms │  │ Intention to share│─────▶│ Knowledge sharing│
│ of Knowledge     │─▶│                   │      │                  │
│ sharing          │  └──────────────────┘      └──────────────────┘
└──────────────────┘      ▲                              ▲
┌──────────────────┐      │                              │
│ Perceived        │──────┘                              │
│ behavioral control│─────────────────────────────────────┘
│ of knowledge     │
│ sharing          │
└──────────────────┘
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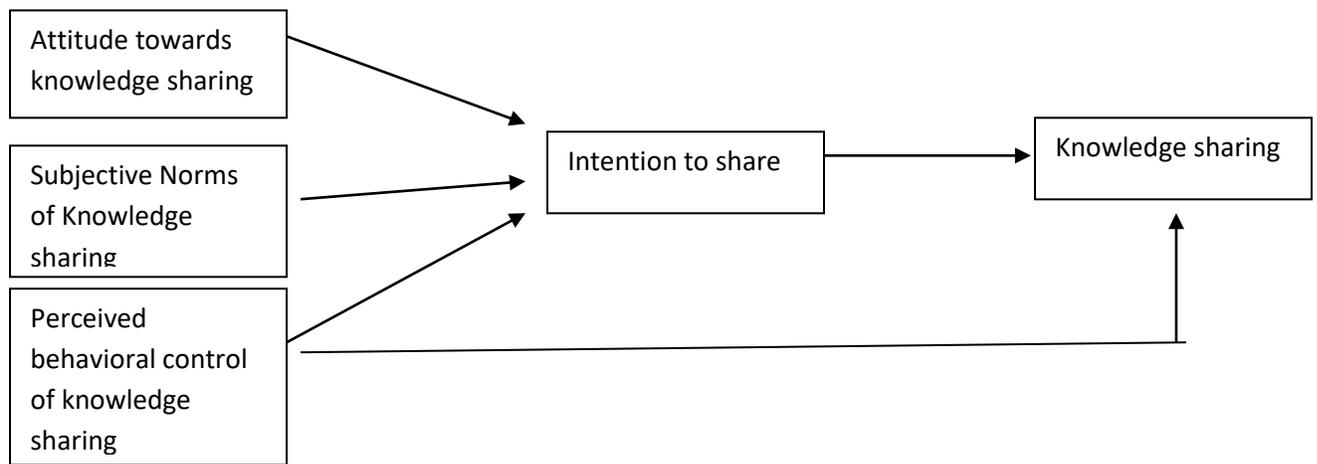
Figure 2: Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) Adopted from Ajzen (1991)

Lin and Lee (2004) published a paper in which they described factors that influence encouragement of KS intention and behaviour by senior managers. The results showed that the research model (TPB) fitted the data well, and the encouraging intention of senior managers was the main determinants of enterprise KS behaviour. In addition, senior managers' "subjective norms" and "attitudes" and "perceived behavioral control" were found to have positive effect to encourage (Lin, & Lee, 2004). In another study Jeon, Kim &. Koh (2011), found that, while both intrinsic factors such as "enjoyment in helping" and "need for affiliation" and extrinsic motivational factors such as "image" and "reciprocity" have positive effect on attitude toward

KS; intrinsic motivational factors were more influential. Additionally, type of communities of practice (CoP) and facility conditions influence KS behaviour.

### 2.2.3. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

There have been numerous models applied to study the usage behaviour of information technologies. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989), which was adopted from TRA is the most frequently applied model of technology user acceptance. TAM identifies that two specific components; perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use determine the individual behavioral intention toward the use of technology.

For example, Noor (2005) conducted a study in which TAM was used as conceptual model. The results produced evidence that "*perceived sharing*" and "*perception of trust*" resulted in positive intention to sharing behaviour. Additionally, the results yield evidence that "*perceived risk*" has a negative effect on intention to "*sharing behaviour*". The findings also was consistent with other TAM constructs, "*perceived usefulness*", "*ease of use,* and "*intentional behaviour*" [Noor. et al, 2005). . In another research Hsu and Lin (2008) studied the effect of social factors on blog usage behaviour based on TAM. The results indicated that "*ease of use*" and "*enjoyment*" as well as "*altruism"* and "*reputation*" positively influence the attitude toward blogging. In addition, "*community identification*' as social factor and "*attitude toward blogging"* were positively related to a "*blog participant's intention*" to continue the blog use behaviour..

## 2.2.4. Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is one of the most important conceptual models for understanding organizational behavior. Although various approaches of social exchange are being involved as set of interactions which produce obligations, these interactions within SET are often looked as interdependent actions and depend on another person's action (Emerson, 1976).. In this regard, several studies have been done based on SET to explore the relationship between individual's communication and knowledge sharing behavior. A case in point is Wu and Lin (2006) in a study about knowledge sharing in virtual communities based on SET found that three factors have indirect effect on knowledge sharing which include; "*mutual communication, understanding, and trust"* while, factors like, "*mutual influence, commitment, and conflict*" have

direct effect on knowledge sharing. In another research conducted by Hall and Walff (2008) to find out motivational knowledge sharing factors in *online environment, it was* reported that the extent to which information may be exchanged in an online environment depends on the degree to which actors are integrated with other actors. So, this means that anyone who wish to develop online information sharing should pay more attention and help to build trust-based relationship between employees

Many studies have investigated the effect the individual's factors on knowledge sharing. The personal characteristics of employees may influence the extent to which they share knowledge for different purposes [Wang, & Noe, 2010).  Based on social exchange theory (SET), and theory of reasoned action (TRA), Bock and Kim (2002) found that "*expected associations*" and "*contribution*" are the major determinants of the individuals' attitude toward knowledge sharing while, "*expected rewards*" as the most important motivator factor for knowledge sharing are not related to attitude toward knowledge sharing.  Lin (2007), in a survey of 172 employees from 50 large organizations in Taiwan found that motivational factors such as "*enjoyment in helping others*", "*knowledge self-efficacy*" were significantly associated with employees knowledge sharing attitude and knowledge sharing behaviour.

Most of KM researches affirm the importance of organizational configuration for the success of KM initiatives especially cultural dimensions that affect knowledge sharing. For example, Suppiah, and Sandhu (2011) found that tacit knowledge sharing behavior is influenced positively by "*clan culture*", but "*market"*, and *"hierarchy culture types*" are negatively contribute to tacit knowledge sharing behavior. In another survey by Lin (2007), based on TRA, she found that "*reciprocal benefits*" as an organizational factor was positively in relation with knowledge sharing intention while, she did not find any significant association between "*expected organizational rewards*" and knowledge sharing attitude and intention.

## 2.3. Empirical Framework

Chaudhry (2005) reported that several studies have been conducted to review knowledge management strategies and knowledge sharing practices in the local organizations.  Referring to Bock and Kim (2002) stated that Davenport (1997) argues sharing knowledge is often unnatural.

He said that people will not share their knowledge as they think their knowledge is valuable and important. But, Samieh and Wahba (2007) agreed that the knowledge sharing practice are motivated and executed mainly at the individual levels. Even in the absence of strong organizational norms of knowledge sharing, employees may tend to share knowledge according to their personal benefits and cost. At the end, knowledge sharing practices can help organizations becomes more profitable and undefeated.

Chong (2003) found that knowledge sharing was taking place on informal basis through face-to-face communication and collaborative workgroups. His study reveals that knowledge is supported in this environmental by a culture that encourages sharing of knowledge, learning from failures, and developing people's skills. Rastogi (2000) emphasized that organisational culture required favorable social environment such as trust, shared values, and goodwill to facilitate knowledge sharing. This signifies the importance of trust in knowledge culture and knowledge sharing. Lim, Tang and Yang (2004) agreed through face-to-face context, people that have knowledge sharing attitudes were getting more evident rather than electronic medium. Employees were found to be more willing to share knowledge with increased rewards.

*"Embedding knowledge into everyday work process is time consuming and expensive"*

Snowden (2002) stated it's impossible to measure whether someone is sharing their knowledge or not in organizations, but it is possible to measure if they comply with a process. Therefore, employees are not susceptible to directive control in respect of intangible assets such as knowledge. Norris et al. (2003) supported that knowledge becomes tangible as digitized content, as context that can be digitally shared and through direct and indirect interactions. Knowledge can be created by asking a question and watching responses provoke through conversations, responses, and interactions among network participants.

On the advantages of embedding knowledge sharing practices in organizations, Kim, Lee and Olson (2006) stated that embedding knowledge sharing practice can be regarded as a public good because people who do not pay or contribute to the organization or community also can share knowledge. Multiple people also can access and shared knowledge at the same time. Knowledge sharing practices can make people in organization innovative and creative to created things. Meetings, discussion and forum are the best platform to share the knowledge and idea among

groups. The people in the groups can easily exchange and share knowledge to make their tasks work. It is generally understood that knowledge sharing is an antecedent to many more knowledge management activities. Tasmin and Woods (2008) evinced that knowledge sharing through knowledge management effort has been empirically shown to positively and strongly influence higher innovation activities among manufacturing firms in Malaysia. According to Tasmin and Woods (2008), the predictive constructs of knowledge management enabling practices were able to explain 99% of its variance and innovation activities were 52% of its variance. Most importantly, the influence strength of KM on innovation was at a magnitude of 0.74. These facts show the significance and importance of knowledge sharing towards innovative activities.

When knowledge sharing among people or employees in organization becomes stronger, it shows that knowledge also becomes more powerful in organization. Individual or person who shares their tacit knowledge through conversation becomes more innovative and creative in their work. Norris *et al.* (2003) agreed that much of this tacit knowledge exists and is communicated through conversations in community of practices or networks of practices. Such "know how", "know who", "know where" knowledge promises to be more important. As it is aptly said by an industry captain of Hewlett-Packard; "If HP knew what HP knows, we would be three times more profitable." ~ Lew Platt, former CEO of HP

While Kuo and Young (2008) posit that for knowledge sharing practices, attitude has been shown to be a critical factor because one's knowledge about how to solve organizational problems could influence one's trade value. Chowdhury (2004) reported, in a case study at Petronas, the importance of the expertise sharing attitude with peers and people in workplaces. People also may consider sharing their knowledge in an organization if they believe this will be personally important and valuable for them.

Looking at the advantage from the culture change point of view, Takeuchi and Nonaka (2004) asserted, in his Knowledge Management milestone book, that "both IBM and Canon have successfully undergone a transformation and have proven themselves capable of changing as fast as the environment around them…" In those firms environment, effective knowledge sharing deals with cultural change of the people, process transformation, and technological management

systems. According to Skyrme (2008), involvement from people or individual in organization could be some of the best knowledge sharing cultures is where everybody believes their knowledge is respected, valued and used to inform decision. Knowledge sharing practice could make people and individual become valuable noting that in some organizations, sharing is caring and natural

It is important to state that individuals may decide to share or not to share their knowledge for some reasons (Wang, & Zhou, 2007).. Previous studies have shown that employees may share knowledge since they have pleasure helping others or not share knowledge because they think their knowledge is not important for others (Kankanhalli, Tan, & Wei, 2005).  People may decide to share knowledge as a useful way to develop their relationships with colleagues. Personal characteristics may also affect the extent to which the employees share knowledge for various purposes (Wang, & Zhou, 2007). From the power perspective, an important obstacle for knowledge sharing is that sometimes knowledge can be considered as resource of superiority and power (Chan Kim, & Mauborgne, 1998).  Hence, to promote KS the employee's motivation namely, employee's inherent tendency and willingness to share their knowledge, is essential to success [Bock. & Kim, 2005).

Knowledge sharing is relatively easy to achieve and sustain when networks have strong connections and direct ties between their members (Chang, 2010). To explore the effectiveness of social contexts on knowledge sharing behavior some studies have conducted. For example, in a study Lin, Hung, and Chen (2009), investigated the relationships between "contextual factors", "personal perception" of knowledge of knowledge sharing, knowledge sharing behavior, and "community loyalty". The result showed that trust has a significant effect on "perceived relative advantage", "knowledge sharing self-efficacy", and "perceived compatibility", which in turn have positively influence on knowledge sharing behavior. Chang and Chuang (2010), suggest that when members trust each other and have intensive interaction, they will be  more willing to share reliable knowledge.
Yang (2008) investigated how individual attitudes to learning, sharing and storing influence organizational knowledge sharing, using workers in international tourist hotels in Taiwan. The results show that two significant factors, individual attitudes to learning and sharing,

significantly impact on organizational knowledge sharing. While in Israel, Aharony (2011) sought the understanding of the factors that support or constrain the individual sharing knowledge in organizations. Specifically, he explored whether personality (self-efficacy and self-esteem) and situational (cognitive appraisal: threat versus challenge) characteristics influence participants knowledge sharing in the organization. Likewise, Seba, Rowley and Lambert (2012) carried a study on the factors affecting knowledge sharing in Dubai Police Force the hypotheses regarding the influence of leadership; trust, organizational structure, time and information technology on attitude of knowledge sharing were upheld while it was discovered that rewards did not influence attitude to knowledge sharing.

In Nigeria, Ugwu, Eze and Idoko (2012) carried out a study on the attitude of librarians towards knowledge sharing in the University of Nigeria libraries and discovered that there were significant positive relationship between personality traits of self-esteem and self-efficacy and attitudes towards knowledge sharing among the librarians. On the other hand, Okonedo and Popoola (2012), investigated the effects of self-concept, knowledge sharing and the utilization on research productivity of librarians in public universities in South-west, Nigeria. The result shows that there were relative effects of self-concept and knowledge utilization on research productivity of librarians in public universities. The outcome further revealed that the joint effect of self-concept, knowledge sharing and knowledge utilization on research productivity was significant. While Awodoyin, Osisanwo, Adetoro and Adeyemo (2016) studied knowledge sharing behaviors of workers and found that various tools are used for knowledge sharing which enhance innovation, efficiency, effectiveness and emotional relief.

On technologies and tools for sharing knowledge, Jain (2012) listed them to include; digital technologies, social media platforms such as Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, whatsapp, instagram among others. Others are the internet, intranets and extranets, emails, discussion/chat rooms, expert-led discussions, web seminars, online meetings, virtual classroom sessions, videoconferencing and sharing resources through consortium. Parirokh, Daneshgar and Fattahi (2008) had earlier suggested numerous activities and strategies that can encourage knowledge sharing among organizational workers to include; research projects; training programs, online

newsletters, teaching methods, knowledge sharing policies strategies, leadership and dedication of time, group discussions, publication of manuals for staff and documentation of experiences.

## 3.0. Methodology

## 3.1. Research design

The study adopted a descriptive research survey which is a type of research design that aims to obtain information and systematically describe a phenomenon, situation, or population. More specifically, it helps answer the *what*, *when*, *where*, and *how* questions regarding the research problem, rather than the *why* (Voxco, 2021).

## 3.2. Population Sample

The sample population of this study was 200 staff randomly selected from five federal university libraries in Nigeria which include: Alex Ekwueme Federal University Library, Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Federal University of Technology Library, Minna, Niger State, University of Abuja Library, Abuja, University of Lagos Library, Akoka, Lagos and University of Nigeria, Nsukka Library. The sample distribution is 20 from each university library. Through the simple random sampling techniques, each staff was given equal opportunity of being selected.

## 3.3. Instrument for data collection

The principle instrument used in collecting data for this study was a four point Likert scale structured 20-item questionnaire. The instrument had four sections. Section A; Demographic data; Section B: Extent of accessibility and utilization communication technologies in knowledge sharing, Section C: Knowledge sharing behaviors of staff and Section D: Knowledge sharing practices in the university libraries. With the help of two librarians respectively from the sampled university libraries, the instrument was administered individually with adequate instructions to the respondents.

## 3.4. Method for data analysis

The data collected was statistically analyzed using weighted mean and benchmark mean of 2.50 statements with weighted mean of 2.50 and above were accepted while those below the benchmark were rejected. The mean was calculated as: 4+3+2+1 divide by 4=2.50. While Pearson Product Moment correlation Coefficient (PPMC) was used to test the only null hypothesis at $P<0.05$ level of significant

## 4.0. Presentation and Analysis of Data

Apart from the demographic data, other data collected are presented in line with research objectives guided by the research questions and the one formulated null hypothesis.
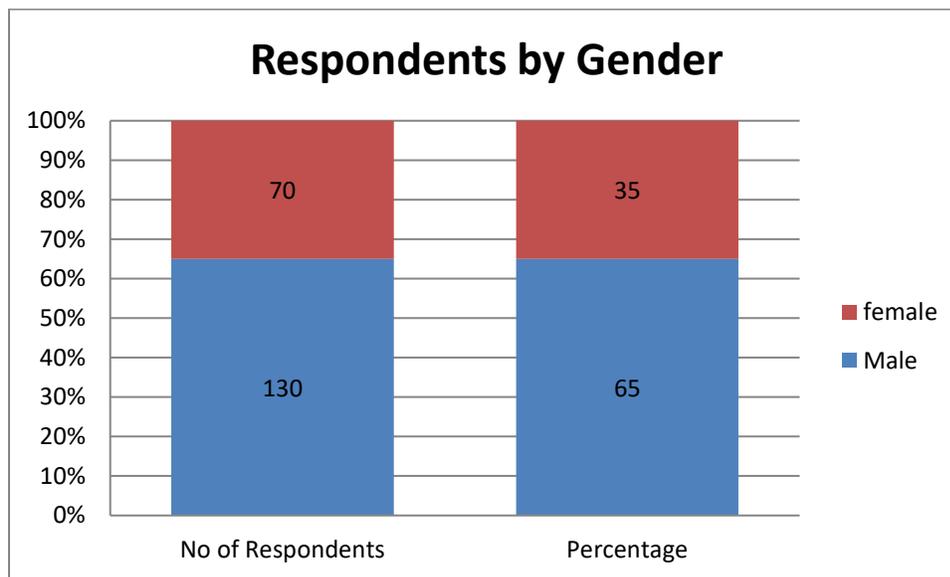


Figure 3: Respondents by gender

The data as displayed in figure 3 above shows that of the 200 respondents, 130 representing 65% were female while the remaining 35% or 65 respondents were male.
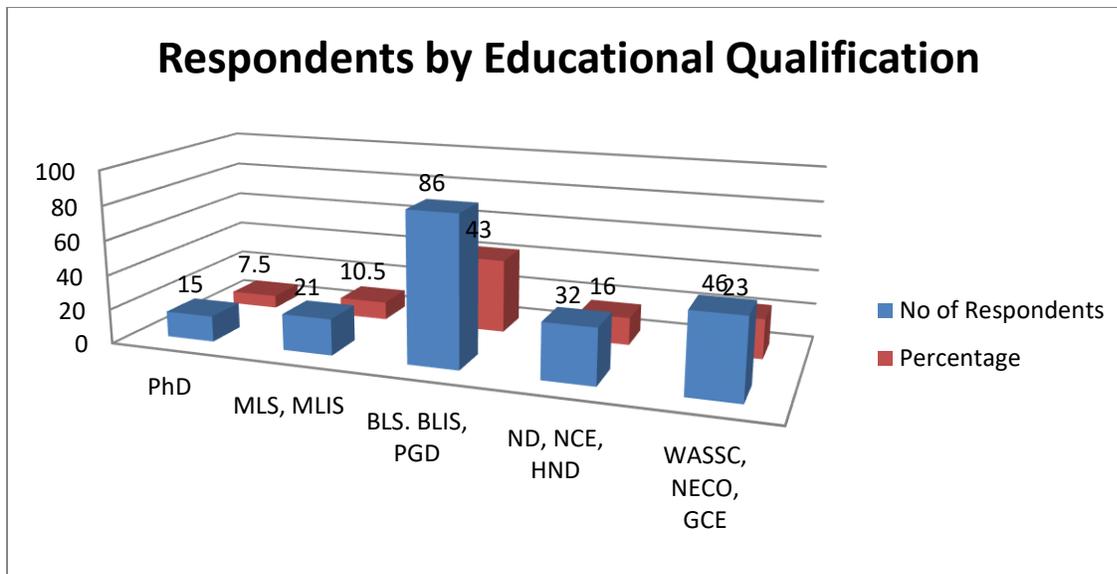
Figure 4: Respondents by Educational qualifications

Figure 4 shows the respondents based on their educational qualifications. Respondents with bachelors' degrees in either Library Science or Library and Information Science and PGD were the highest in number followed by those with WASSC, NECO and GCE who represent 23% of the respondents. The least percentage of 7.5 or 15 respondents were those with PhD.
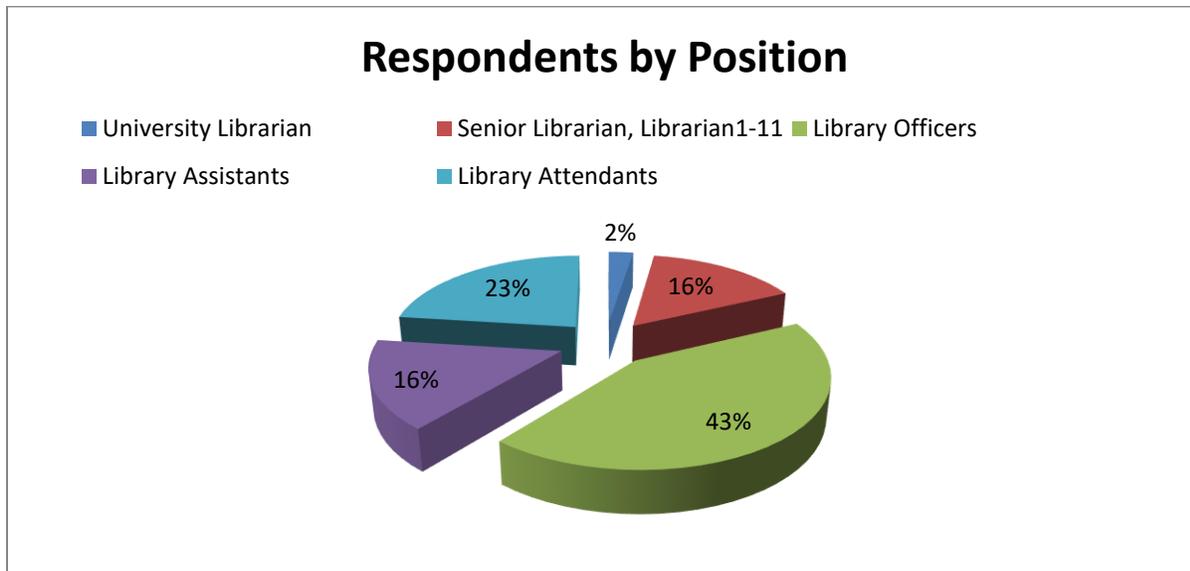


Figure 5: Respondents by Position

The demographic data on staff position as shown in figure 5 above, revealed that university librarians represent 2% of the respondents, senior librarians and librarians 1-11, 16% or 32 respondents, library officers, 43% representing 96 respondents, library assistants, 16% or 32 respondents and library attendant, 23% or 26 respondents.

Table 1: Respondents by years of Experience

| Staff Years of Experience | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Below 5 years | 21 | 10.5 |
| 6-10 | 96 | 48 |
| 11-15 | 48 | 23 |
| 16-20 | 12 | 6 |
| 21 and above | 23 | 11.5 |
| Total | 200 | 100 |

Table 1 reveals the respondents' years of working experience. Respondents that have worked for 5 years and below, were 21 in number or 10.5%, 6-10 years, 96 respondents or 48%, 11-15 years, 23% or 48 respondents, 16-20 years, 12 representing 6% of the entire respondents while those that have worked for 21 years and above were 23 representing 11.5% of the respondents. It is pertinent to state that the essence of collecting the demographic data was to ensure that the right caliber of staff provided the needed data for the sake of reliability.

Table2: Extent of accessibility and utilization of communication technologies in knowledge sharing in University Libraries

| Items | NAU | | PAU | | AU | | HAU | | Mean | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | | |
| Computer systems (desktops & laptops), smartphones, ipad, tablets etc | 10 | 5 | 16 | 8 | 60 | 30 | 114 | 57 | 3.4 | Accepted |
| Internet and intranet services | 10 | 5 | 16 | 8 | 60 | 30 | 114 | 57 | 3.4 | Accepted |
| Facebook user groups and facebook Messenger for discussion | 47 | 23.5 | 31 | 15.5 | 65 | 32.5 | 57 | 28.5 | 2.9 | Accepted |
| Scanners, digital cameras and fax machines | 17 | 8.5 | 24 | 12 | 58 | 29 | 101 | 50.5 | 3.3 | Accepted |
| Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, web blogs for exchanging ideas | 45 | 22.5 | 68 | 34 | 66 | 33 | 21 | 10.5 | 1.9 | Rejected |
| Instagram, Youtube, snapshot for sharing photos and videos in the library | 58 | 29 | 120 | 60 | 35 | 17.5 | 27 | 13.5 | 1.6 | Rejected |
| Videoconferencing | 160 | 80 | - | - | 40 | 20 | - | - | 1.5 | Rejected |
| Whatsapp and other social media platforms for sharing ideas, interaction and | | | | | | | | | | |

| collaborations | 13 | 6.5 | 11 | 5.5 | 67 | 33.5 | 109 | 54.5 | 3.4 | Accepted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

The data in table 2 above did show that the most accessible and utilized technologies in university libraries for knowledge sharing were computer systems, smartphones and their likes as well as the internet and the intranet with 174 (87%) of the 200 respondents indicating either 'Accessible and Utilized' or 'Highly Accessible and Utilized. They were followed by whatsapp and other social media platforms that were used for sharing of ideas, interaction and collaborations with 67 (33.5%) respondents indicating to their accessibility and utilization and another 109 or affirming that they were highly accessible and utilized. Other technologies in use were, scanners, digital cameras and fax machines with 159 respondents representing indicated either of the accessibility and utilization or highly accessibility and utilization, Facebook user groups and facebook Messenger for discussion with a positive respondent of 122 or 61%, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, web blogs, 43.5% representing 87 respondents indicated their accessibility and utilization in the university libraries and videoconferencing with only 40 respondents or 20 % affirmed to it accessibility and utilization while the other 80% or 160 respondents indicated it non-accessibility and utilization in the university libraries.

Table 3: Knowledge Sharing Behavior of the Library Staff

| Items | SDA | | D | | A | | SA | | Mean | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | | |
| I share acquired new knowledge relating to the job with fellow staff | 21 | 10.5 | 15 | 7.5 | 99 | 49.5 | 65 | 32.5 | 3.1 | Accepted |
| Fellow staff share new knowledge acquired about the job with me. | 17 | 8.5 | 14 | 7 | 124 | 62 | 45 | 22.5 | 3.2 | Accepted |
| Knowledge sharing among staff is considered normal in the library | 8 | 4 | 10 | 5 | 94 | 47 | 78 | 39 | 3.3 | Accepted |
| I do share information, ideas and skills with colleagues once demanded | 5 | 2.5 | 9 | 4.5 | 103 | 51.5 | 83 | 41.5 | 3.4 | Accepted |
| Other staffs of the library willingly share information, skills and ideas with me on request. | 5 | 2.5 | 13 | 6.5 | 95 | 47.5 | 87 | 43.5 | 3.4 | Accepted |
| I derive joy in sharing ideas and best practices with | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| fellow staff as to enhance productivity & performance | 3 | 1.5 | 7 | 3.5 | 104 | 52 | 86 | 43 | 3.4 | Accepted |

Table 3 data content revealed staff knowledge sharing behavior in the university libraries. The data showed that staffs of university libraries share new knowledge among themselves as indicated in items 1 and 2 with positive response from 164 or 82% and 169 or 84.5% respectively. Knowledge sharing among staff is considered normal in the library-172 or 86%, information, ideas and skills are shared with colleagues once demanded-183(%), staffs of the library willingly share information, skills and ideas with one another on request-182 (%) and the staff joyfully share ideas and best practices with fellow staff as to enhancing productivity and performance- 190(95%)

Table 4: Knowledge Sharing Practices in University Libraries

| Items | SD | | D | | A | | SA | | Mean | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | | |
| The creation, dissemination, transfer and sharing of knowledge among staff is given priority in the library | 12 | 6 | 28 | 14 | 74 | 37 | 66 | 33 | 2.9 | Accepted |
| Mechanism for creation and sharing of knowledge such as; brainstorming, story-telling and informal discussion forums are used by staff in the library | 13 | 6.5 | 26 | 13 | 77 | 38.5 | 84 | 42 | 3.1 | Accepted |
| The university library organizes meetings and interactive sessions for staff to discuss issues related to their works | - | - | - | - | 78 | 39 | 122 | 61 | 3.5 | Accepted |
| The working methods, operations and successful ideas of staff are documented in the university library and made easily accessible to staff that may need them | 76 | 38 | 82 | 41 | 18 | 9 | 24 | 12 | 1.5 | Rejected |
| ICT tools and other knowledge sharing technologies are provided | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| for staff in the library | 21 | 10.5 | 13 | 6.5 | 87 | 43.5 | 79 | 49.5 | 3.3 | Accepted |
| The leadership style in the library is so conducive that it encourages staff to share knowledge, new ideas and skills | 10 | 5 | 49 | 24.5 | 71 | 35.5 | 70 | 35 | 3.0 | Accepted |

Knowledge sharing practices in university libraries as revealed by the data collected and displayed in table 5 above include; The priority given to creation, dissemination, transfer and sharing of knowledge among staff with 140 respondents or 70% agreed or strongly agreed, Mechanism for creation and sharing of knowledge such as; brainstorming, story-telling and informal discussion forums are used by staff in the library – 161 or 80.5% affirmative, the university library organizes meetings and interactive sessions for staff to discuss issues related to their works- 200 representing 100% either agreed or strongly agreed, 166 or 88% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that ICT tools and other knowledge sharing technologies are provided for staff in the library while 141 or 70.5% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the leadership style in the library is so conducive that it encourages staff to share knowledge, new ideas and skills. On the other hand, 158 or 79% strongly disagreed or disagreed that The working methods, operations and successful ideas of staff are documented in the university library and made easily accessible to staff that may need them

Table 6: factors militating against effective knowledge sharing in university libraries

| Items | SA | | A | | DA | | SDA | | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| Not invented here syndrome | 32 | 16 | 111 | 55.5 | 27 | 13.5 | 20 | 10 | Accepted |
| Not realizing how useful particular knowledge is to others | 17 | 8.5 | 123 | 61.5 | 29 | 14.5 | 31 | 15.5 | Accepted |
| Lack of trust | 45 | 22.5 | 147 | 73.5 | 5 | 2.5 | 3 | 1.5 | Accepted |
| Lack of time | 12 | 6 | 88 | 44 | 57 | 28.5 | 43 | 21.5 | Accepted |
| Secret Information and knowledge | 8 | 4 | 17 | 8.5 | 75 | 37.5 | 100 | 50 | Rejected |
| Lack of knowledge sharing policies | 45 | 22.5 | 120 | 60 | 17 | 8.5 | 18 | 9 | accepted |

The data in table 6 highlighted the factors militating against effective knowledge sharing in university libraries. Of all the six items listed only one was vehemently rejected as a challenge and that was, 'Secret Information and knowledge' with 175 respondents representing 87.5%

either strongly disagreed or disagreed. 143 (71.5%) respondents agreed that 'Not invented here syndrome' was a problem, 140 or 70% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that staff not realizing how useful particular knowledge is to others was a major challenge, Other challenges agreed to by majority of the respondents were: lack of trust-192 (96%) respondents, lack of time-100(50%), and lack of knowledge sharing policies-165 respondents or 82.5%

Table 7: Summary of PPMC between KSBS and KSPUL

| Variables | Mean | Std Dev | N | R | p | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Knowledge sharing behavior of staff | 19.7412 | 3.84061 | 200 | | | |
| Knowledge sharing practice in university libraries | 19.1110 | 3.92799 | 200 | 0.951** | 0.000 | Sig |

**correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

As revealed in the summarized Pearson Product moment Correlation (PPMC) coefficient between knowledge sharing behavior of staff (KSBS) and knowledge sharing practices in university libraries (KSPUL) in table 7, the value of 0.951** indicates a very strong positive correlation between knowledge sharing behavior of staff and knowledge sharing practices in university libraries. More so, since the p-value 0.000 is less than 0.05 (significance level) is an indication that there is a statistical significance correlation between KSBS and KSPUls. It was on this ground that the null hypothesis: 'There is no statistical significant (P<0.05) relationship between knowledge sharing behavior of the library staffs and knowledge sharing practices in the university libraries' was rejected and the alternative upheld.

## 5.0. Discussion of Results

The result of this study depicts that various knowledge sharing communication technologies such as; computer systems, smartphones and the internet and the intranet, whatsapp and other social media platforms scanners, digital cameras and fax machines and Facebook user groups and facebook Messenger are accessible and utilized by university libraries in Nigeria.

On the other hand, the result also shows that most university libraries in Nigeria were not utilizing modern communication technologies such; Instagram, Youtube, snapshot, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, web blogs for exchanging ideas and videoconferencing accessibility and utilization is only in one federal university library (University of Lagos library) while other

university libraries studied indicated its non-accessibility (see table 2) This finding is contrary to suggested technologies that can enhance knowledge sharing behavior of staff and promote knowledge sharing practices in organizations as Jain (2012) listed them to include; digital technologies, social media platforms such as Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, whatsapp, instagram among others. Others are the internet, intranets and extranets, emails, discussion/chat rooms, expert-led discussions, web seminars, online meetings, virtual classroom sessions, videoconferencing and sharing resources through consortium.

The study further revealed that university libraries staffs have positive attitude towards knowledge sharing as they realize the fact that such behavior leads to growth and enhances productivity (see table 3). This outcome is a confirmation of the assertion that in some organizations, sharing is caring and natural (Skyrme, 2008) and that personal characteristics of employees may influence the extent to which they share knowledge for different purposes [30]. This outcome is also in line with that of Tella and Adu (2014) and Osisanwo, Adetoro and Adeyemo who in their separate studies discovered that knowledge sharing enhances innovation, efficiency, effectiveness and brings about emotional relief

The study also found that university libraries knowledge sharing practices were encouraging as the creation, dissemination, transfer and sharing of knowledge among staff is given priority in the libraries regardless of the fact that working methods, operations and successful ideas of staff are not documented in the university library and made easily accessible to staffs that may need them. This result corroborate the finding of Bhirud, Rodriguez and Deani (2005) in their study discovered that organizations' create environment suitable for knowledge effective knowledge sharing practices.

Furtherance,, the study identified factors militating against effective knowledge sharing in university libraries to include, 'Not invented here syndrome' (This is to say that some staff of the libraries exhibit pride in not having to seek advice from others and in waiting to discover new ways for themselves), 'Not realizing how useful particular knowledge is to others', 'Lack of trust' (If people share some of their experience, (will they used it out of context, or misuse it and then blame each other or pass it off as their own without giving any acknowledgement or

recognition to them as source.), 'Lack of knowledge sharing policies/ and 'Lack of time' just as revealed by Skyrme (2008) that lack of time is the major reason given by employees in many organizations on the ground that there is pressure on productivity on deadlines and it is a general rule that the more knowledgeable they are, the more people waiting to collar for the next task). These identified problems did not fall short of the ones enumerated by Muhamad & Rosmaini (2010).as well as that of Seba, Rowley and Lambert (2012) who carried a study on factors affecting knowledge sharing in Dubai Police Force and discovered the influence of leadership, trust, organizational structure, time and information technology on attitude of knowledge sharing were all militating against the practice.

Generally, the outcome of this study shows that there was a significant relationship between library staffs' knowledge sharing behavior and knowledge sharing practices in university libraries. The result of this study is indeed an affirmation of the assertion of Takeuchi and Nonaka (2004) in their Knowledge Management milestone book, that "both IBM and Canon have successfully undergone a transformation and have proven themselves capable of changing as fast as the environment around them…" In those firms environment they noted, effective knowledge sharing deals with cultural change of the people, process transformation, and technological management systems.

## 5.1. Conclusion and Recommendations

Going by the findings of this study, the obvious is that knowledge sharing practices in organization, establishment and institution is very important and of immense benefits as to be implemented to the latter. Suffice it to say that full implementation of knowledge sharing practices in university libraries will. Help in many ways more so in the areas of information updating, innovations, creations and others. Therefore, by understanding the concepts and advantages could facilitate knowledge sharing and help librarians and other staffs of university libraries to support knowledge sharing practices. Since there is a significant relationship between knowledge sharing behaviors of staff and knowledge sharing practices in university libraries, the feasibility of successful knowledge sharing practices in university libraries can only be realized if the staffs are carried along. It is in view of this that the following recommendations are made:

❖ university libraries should train through workshops, seminars, conferences and other in-house organized training their staffs on the new transformation of information handling skills as to turn into knowledge management capabilities

❖ As the driving access to knowledge and the hub on which every academic activity in the university revolve, university libraries need to lay solid foundation towards the overall development of the university system through the inculcation effective knowledge sharing practices awareness on every staff highlighting on the importance towards the realization the library vision and mission.

❖ It was identified that lack of knowledge sharing policies in university libraries is a major problem militating against effective knowledge sharing practice. It is therefore a wake-up call for management of university libraries to formulate policies towards this direction so that any staff employed will embrace same and work towards that direction as this will take care of 'not invented here syndrome', lack of trust among staff and lack of time excuses.

❖ As a follow up to the above, all university libraries should create and be connected to Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, instagram and whatsapp groups where issues relating to office work will be discussed professionally with every concerned staff mandated to air his or her opinion or views. This should be embedded in the library formulated policy for knowledge sharing.

❖ On a final note, university libraries management should come up with activities and strategies that can encourage and promote knowledge sharing among staffs working in university libraries such as; research projects, training programs, online newsletters, teaching methods, knowledge sharing policies strategies, leadership and dedication of time, group discussions, publication of manuals for staff and documentation of experiences among others. Government and management of university libraries should have libraries equipped with modern knowledge sharing digital technologies to facilitate use of internet, intranets and extranets, emails, discussion/chat rooms, expert-led discussions, web seminars, online meetings, virtual classroom sessions, videoconferencing and sharing resources through consortium. These technologies they should know do not operate in vacuum therefore the need to ensure regular power supply

for an uninterrupted connectivity and services and provision of fund to enable for staffs' data subscriptions and wifi services.

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