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Tacit Knowledge Sharing Among Lecturers: Observations from Nigeria's Premier University.

By

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Abstract

Introduction. The study examines the tacit knowledge sharing (KS) practices among lecturers in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. It explored the presence of tacit knowledge sharing culture, KS processes, factors affecting the sharing of tacit knowledge, how the University supports the sharing of tacit knowledge, and the challenges of tacit knowledge sharing.

Method. Case study research design was used. The population composed academic staff in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Data was collected from thirty-one purposively selected lecturers using an interview schedule. Responses were audio recorded, transcribed and analysed using Nvivo 12.

Results. There is a culture of sharing knowledge generally among the lecturers. They share tacit knowledge through personal interactions, discussions and especially during seminars. The identified factors that positively affect their sharing of tacit knowledge are: communication, lecturers' willingness to share tacit knowledge, existence of cordial relationship, availability of constant electricity in offices and University environment and a platform for older lecturers to mentor younger ones.

Conclusions. The study concludes that minimal sharing of tacit knowledge is practiced among lecturers in the University of Ibadan especially in informal settings through close interactions. Lecturers possess tacit knowledge that they have acquired from their experiences and they are aware of the importance of sharing such knowledge, but the absence of some necessitating factors like reward, organisation policy on tacit knowledge sharing, suitable environment and factors like competition amongst lecturers, makes sharing difficult. Provision of a fora to share tacit knowledge, presence of a reward system and enabling environment is recommended.

Keywords: Tacit Knowledge; University Lecturers; knowledge sharing

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century knowledge becomes the most important resource and vital part for organisations to sustain their competitive advantages. For this, it is required to leverage knowledge resources to develop strategic plans for economics and business (Suppiah and Sandhu, 2010). In organisations, knowledge is divided into two types: explicit and tacit knowledge (Nonaka, 1991) explicit knowledge is easily coded, transferred and shared within an organisation (Nonaka, 1994). Unlike explicit knowledge, tacit knowledge is difficult to write down, visualize or transfer from one person to another. It is connected with terms such as skills, know-how, know why, working knowledge, high level of expertise (Phelps, Heidl, and Wadhwa, 2012). About two-third of the information received at work is transformed into tacit knowledge through face-to-face interaction such as informal conversations, direct interaction, stories, mentoring, networking, internships and apprenticeships (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995, Teece, 2000). For this reason, there are two processes of sharing tacit knowledge (Bloodgood and Salisbury 2001), directly by personal contacts with other employees, and indirectly through information and communication technology (ICT). Sharing tacit knowledge, requires extensive personal contact, regular interaction and trust. Ardichvili, Page, and Wentling. (2003) confirms that tacit knowledge is embedded in organisational stories and delivered by organisational members through interactions.

The properties of tacit knowledge according to Haldin-Herrgard,(2000), McAdam, et al. (2007), Pavlicek (2009) as cited by (Haradhan, (2017) are that it resides in human minds and also in relations, it is acquired through sharing experiences, observation and imitation, it is difficult to learn: learnt through personal experience, practice, apprenticeship, observation, imitation, and reflection; it is rarely documented, highly individual, personal and hard to formalize; it is unstructured, difficult to see, codify, estimate, investigate, formalize, write down, capture and communicate accurately and it is less familiar, unconventional form of knowledge. Others are that it is rooted in action, procedures, commitment, values and emotions; it is learnt through experiences, skills, observation, intuitive feeling, mental modes, beliefs, and values; it is experience based (knowledge-in-action); it is mostly unconscious and invisible knowledge (both known and unknown to the holder); it is non-communicable in a language, it is transferred through conversation, storytelling, discussions, analogies, and demonstrations and it is subjective, know-how, practical, job specific, experience-based, context-specific, here and now, and expert's knowledge.

Ardichyili, et al. (2003) observes that three key issues may hinder tacit knowledge sharing: other peoples (feeling), the trait of tacit knowledge and participant's attitude to interactions. Several other factors that could affect the sharing of tacit knowledge in an organisation (in this case a University organisation) were highlighted by (Susan, 2016) as functional boundaries, communication, motivation and organisational culture.

To attain a knowledge-based educational system in Nigeria, tacit knowledge sharing among lecturers must not be taken lightly. Kamal et al, (2019) in his study 'Knowledge Sharing Among Academic Staff: A Case Study of Business Schools in Klang Valley, Malaysia' stated thus

“Knowledge sharing is vital in knowledge-based organisations such as universities, since the majority of the employees are knowledge workers. In an educational set up, effective knowledge sharing ensures that academics are able to realize and develop their potential to the fullest”. Educational institutions play a key role in knowledge creation. The tacit knowledge that academic staff creates or gains is embedded in their minds and constitutes the warehouse of an educational institution’s intellectual capital”.

Also, Brockmann, (2002) disclosed that “a decision considered non-rational because it lacked information might simply have been an application of tacit knowledge filling the gaps” and how the role of personal intuition can have a big relevance in organisations and this personal attitude is nothing else than something embedded in people’s mind, a personal know-how which does not necessarily rely on information and data but belongs to an individual and is the result of past experiences, ready to be used in strategic decisions. For any organisation or business to grow, knowledge (tacit and explicit) must be retained and shared because tacit knowledge in particular includes intangible products such as ideas and processes that are essential for sustainable competitive advantage. Susan, (2016) concluded that many people are not familiar with tacit knowledge sharing and worst still, they do not even understand the concept of tacit knowledge sharing. She further stated that, although tacit knowledge sharing plays a more crucial role in organisational performance than explicit knowledge, yet people pay little attention to it.

Similarly, lecturers possess deep knowledge in their content areas and also possess considerable tacit knowledge about processes used to effectively teach in their respective contexts. Little is known about how professors share tacit knowledge about teaching with mentees (Shim et al, 2007). So far, there is no known study that has examined the sharing of tacit knowledge among lecturers in a Nigerian University. Therefore, it is inevitable to carry out a study that will examine the extent to which lecturers in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria’s premier university’ practice tacit knowledge sharing and the challenges they may be facing in the process of sharing the knowledge.

In this connection, the broad objective of this study was to investigate tacit knowledge sharing practices among lecturers in the University of Ibadan. The specific objectives were to determine whether there is tacit knowledge sharing culture among the lecturers, find out their tacit knowledge sharing processes, identify the factors that affect their tacit knowledge sharing, and examine the ICT infrastructure available to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge. In addition, it sought to assess the ways through which the University of Ibadan supports or provide avenues for tacit knowledge sharing and identify the challenges associated with tacit knowledge sharing practices among the lecturers of the institution.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. Is there a tacit knowledge sharing culture among lecturers in the University of Ibadan?
2. What are the tacit knowledge sharing processes among lecturers in the University of Ibadan?
3. What are the factors that affect tacit knowledge sharing among lecturers in the University of Ibadan?
4. What are the ICT tools available to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge among the lecturers?
5. What are the ways in which the University of Ibadan supports or provide avenues for tacit knowledge sharing among the lecturers?
6. What are the ways in which the sharing of tacit knowledge can be improved among the lecturers?

The rest of this paper is organised as follows: the next section presents a review of related literature followed by the methodological details used in executing the study and the results. A discussion of the findings, conclusions and suggestions for further studies finalised the paper.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The core essence of the university is the creation, communication and transfer of knowledge at different levels and as such, can be seen, as a learning organisation or, as Brewer & Brewer (2010) asserts, as 'knowledge-based organisations' which are engaged in the practice of developing knowledge workers in several fields. In a world that is continuously changing with an ever-increasing market competition, every company or institution has to be knowledge (creation and transfer) dependent to keep up the pace. A seminal contribution has been provided by Nonaka and Takeuchi, (1997) who interpreted knowledge as something embedded in human actions, a result of the flow of information which are in the mind of the people. Tobin, (1996) understands knowledge as information plus intuition and experience. Nonaka and Takeuchi, (1995) define knowledge as justified true belief. Kanter, (1999) believes knowledge to be information with context that provides the basis for actions and decision making. Beckman (1997) notes that knowledge is information plus choice, experience, principles, limitations and learning. All the definitions considered knowledge from different perspectives. In a more recent study, knowledge is defined as a changing method which interacts among experience, skills, facts, relations, values, and thinking (Mládková, 2012)

On the other hand, tacit knowledge relates to the knowledge residing in the heads of individual that is not organized. However, a person becomes aware of his or her tacit knowledge when he/she faces a specific situation or problem. Tacit knowledge is personal and hard to formalize, and is rooted in action, procedures, commitment, values and emotions Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995). Tacit knowledge is the less familiar, unconventional form of knowledge. It is the knowledge of which, we are not conscious. Tacit knowledge is not codified and is not communicated in a language. In contrast, it is acquired by sharing experiences, observation and imitation (Gourlay 2002). Polanyi (1967) referred to tacit knowledge as something that we do unconsciously, and most of the time we are not aware of its existence such as, how to ride a bicycle. Such knowledge is difficult to write or codified, and difficult to transfer. He explained,

that individuals can know more than they can tell. In a bid to explain the concept of tacit knowledge further, Nonaka and Takeuchi in their 1995 study expanded Polanyi's theory of tacit knowledge to include cognitive and technical dimensions. The technical dimension developed over years of experience is highly subjective, personal insightful, and intuitive. The cognitive dimension consists of beliefs, perceptions, values, mental models, and emotions. These dimensions of tacit knowledge shape the way we perceive the world around us and greatly influences decision making.

Tacit knowledge is like riding a bicycle which cannot be learnt by having it explained by someone; it can only be learnt through personal experimentation. Another example of tacit knowledge is demonstrated in the case study of Matsushita Electric Industrial Company. This firm wanted to develop a bread machine but cannot replicate the dough-kneading process. The professional's baker's tacit knowledge which resides in the minds and the special movements are difficult to be articulated. Although a team of software developers worked on replicating it but they kept on failing. They finally succeeded when one of the developers volunteered to be an apprentice to an expert baker. The combination of explicit and tacit knowledge was used to finally develop a quality product (Nonaka, 1985).

A study by Mohammad et al, (2013) explained that according to Clarke (2010) the main reason that makes tacit knowledge so valuable is because, it is developed over a period of time by individuals, through experience and understanding gained from working within an environment, day to day experiences of dealing with company procedures, clients, production and customers etc., develops the tacit knowledge base of the employee. Polanyi (1996) made it clear that the boundaries between these two types of knowledge are very transient. According to Polanyi, explicit knowledge depends on tacit knowledge, "Hence, all knowledge is either tacit or rooted in tacit knowledge. A wholly explicit knowledge is unthinkable". Because tacit knowledge is always stored in peoples' brains, capturing, codifying, transferring and sharing tacit knowledge is one of the biggest challenges of knowledge management (Mládková, 2012). According to Mahmood et al, (2011) the difficulty with sharing of tacit knowledge is that, sharing is a voluntary act and sharing of quality knowledge by knowledge workers is only possible if individuals are willing to share. Organizations might design the best knowledge management systems to capture knowledge but if individuals are not motivated, the efforts would be wasted. To obtain quality knowledge sharing individual's perspective needs to be understood. The Theory of Reasoned Action helps us understand this individual behavior.

Theoretical Framework

There are antecedents to be considered which encourage or restrain knowledge sharing. Personality, attitude, work norms, vocational reinforces, organizational culture, policies and strategies are some of the impediments to knowledge sharing (Awad *et al.*, 2004). Riege (2005) lists three dozens of these barriers which need to be addressed in order to implement a knowledge management strategy. One way to understand the effect of these barriers is through the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). TRA helps to understand the cognitive process of

formation of intentions and it has been successfully used in numerous studies to understand intentions and predict behavior (Sheppard *et al.*, 1998).

According to the theory, behaviour is determined by intention which, in turn, is moved by a person's attitude towards the behaviour and the subjective norm concerning that behavior. In other words, behavioural intentions are a function of two basic determinants: (i) attitude (overall positive and negative evaluations of behavior) as well as the (ii) subjective norms (perceived social pressure from significant others). Intention is the cognitive representation of a person's readiness to perform a given behavior and is therefore considered to be the best predictor of behaviour (Ramayah et al, (2013). Following Ramayah et al's, (2013) reasoning, we examined academicians' actual knowledge sharing not through their publications which is explicit but their tacit knowledge which is mostly shared by their formal and informal interactions with staff within the university, as well as community members within a network of people.

To address this issue, a research model (Figure 1) was proposed to examine the tacit knowledge practices among lecturers in the University of Ibadan, with attention on the tacit knowledge sharing culture, processes of sharing, factors that affect tacit knowledge sharing, and organisational support for sharing tacit knowledge. The aforementioned, formed the premise for the variables; strategy for sharing tacit knowledge, organisation support which includes (reward, culture, and ICT available to aid sharing) these variables, through the TRA will be used to examine the attitude of lecturers towards sharing and the barriers encountered in sharing tacit knowledge by lecturers. Each of the variables are discussed in the next sections.

Organisational Reward

Numerous studies argued that the presence of a reward system is critical for the success of knowledge sharing in an organisation. For example, Bartol and Srivastava (2002) examined the role of monetary rewards in encouraging knowledge sharing in organisations. Bartol and Srivastava (2002) examined four mechanisms of knowledge sharing and found a positive relationship between monetary rewards and knowledge sharing. According to Christine and Ramayah (2014) one of the ways in which educational institutions can extrinsically motivate knowledge-sharing practices between academics is through the design and implementation of a viable reward system. Organisation rewards can encourage academic staff to contribute valuable knowledge made available in universities. Recent research has proven that the application of a reward system for sharing knowledge is vital in increasing knowledge-sharing practices in university settings (Purwanti, Pasaribu and Lumbantobing, 2010) Reward systems, which can either be monetary or non-monetary, are necessary to further push and encourage academics to share their knowledge (Susanty and Wood, 2011).

Organisational Culture

Organisational culture is defined by Martin (2002) as “patterns of interpretation composed of the meaning associated with various cultural manifestations, such as stories, rituals, formal and informal practices, jargon and physical arrangements”. Most knowledge is shared socially, e.g.,

face-to-face or telephone conversations (Bechina and Bommen, 2006). In an organisation with a positive social interaction culture, both management and employees socialise and interact frequently with each other, with little regard to organisational status. Organisational efforts should be focused on creating opportunities for employees to interact, whether formally or informally, to foster knowledge sharing. Creating these opportunities should aid in building trust among employees, to overcome the knowledge sharing obstacle whereby employees are not comfortable sharing their knowledge with people they do not know.

Similarly, whether or not an organization is innovative and has a collaborative culture can affect the implementation of KM. (Kiku and Lori, 2009). Everyone's job in an organization with an innovation culture is to become the teacher, coach and/or mentor (Kanter, 2000). This aspect of an innovation culture can particularly help in a knowledge management (KM) implementation where the focus is on sharing knowledge. This can increase an employee's willingness to help the organization gain access to his tacit knowledge. If the employees have the mindset that by sharing their knowledge they can help others, their move from tacit knowledge (TK) to organisational knowledge (OK) will be much smoother. Also, an organisation's culture in terms of collaboration can severely affect the KM implementation from TK to OK. The whole premise of moving from TK to OK is the sharing of tacit knowledge. If an organisation has not set that as the culture, it will have difficulty in implementing this move. Communication can create, maintain and change culture (Johnson, 1993). It is important for the organisation to communicate the need and value of a collaborative culture. If not, employees may not wish to participate in the sharing of knowledge.

Information and Communication Technology

Hansen (1999) noted that ICT can have an undesirable effect in the tacit knowledge sharing process; when employees may email, rather than conducting a face-to-face meeting with a colleague. On the other hand, some studies have argued that, ICT can have a positive impact, by decreasing distance, increasing the speed of transfer and providing a means of conformity (Goh, 2005; Roth, 2003; Daft *et al.*, 1987; Albino *et al.*, 2004). Information technology can just play as enabler factor to acquire, save and exchange information, or in other words explicit knowledge, whilst the most significant type of knowledge (tacit knowledge) could be captured, stored and transmitted by using exclusive type of technology (Mohammad, Al-Qdah and Juhana Salim, 2013) supporting the notion, Al-Qudah et al, (2018) noted that, ICT tools cannot completely substitute for face-to-face contact. Tacit knowledge that has a high degree of complexity requires sophisticated channel features for its transfer. From this standpoint, virtual face-to-face communication is the richest communication medium in the ICT hierarchy.

Strategy for Sharing

Focusing on knowledge as a category of tacit and explicit, several authors, including Sanchez (1997), Hansen et al. (1999) and Connell et al. (2003), suggest two very different strategies in order to manage knowledge. The personalisation strategy, which tends to focus on tacit knowledge, addresses the storage of knowledge in human minds and its transferring through

person-to-person interface (through activities such as storytelling). The codification strategy, which focuses chiefly on explicit knowledge, allows knowledge to be carefully codified and stored in databases where it can be made easily available to use. As Connell et al. (2003) have observed, personalisation can appear to offer more than the codification view for managing intellectual capital. Hansen et al. (1999) argue along similar lines, noting that the personalisation strategy is an approach where knowledge is closely tied to the person who developed it and is shared mainly through direct person-to-person interaction, while in the codification strategy knowledge is carefully codified and stored in databases, where it can be accessed and used easily by anyone in the organisation. Personalisation and codification approaches need to be integrated so that the benefits of both tacit and explicit knowledge can be gained. Accordingly, an organisation should seek an integrated approach to knowledge management that ensure the interaction of the strategies: a symbiosis strategy. Findings from a survey conducted by Edwards et al. (2004) supports this argument. In their study, 83 per cent of respondents disagree with the statement that an organisation cannot use both collaboration (network) and codification KM strategies together.

According to Sajjad, Jonathan and Con. (2005) the above can be realised in practice by the development of an appropriate organisational culture. A successful symbiosis strategy would be based upon an organisational culture that is conducive to easy knowledge replication within the organisation but presents difficulty in imitation by competitors. Such a culture needs to be strong and pervasive within the organisation, but at the same time, idiosyncratic and unique to the organization.

METHODOLOGY

Case study research design was adopted and academic staff in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria was the population. Thirty-one lecturers were purposively selected and interviewed using interview schedule. The sample comprised 20 male and 11 female respondents holding various academic ranks from Assistant Lecturer, to Lecturer 1, Lecturer 2, Associate Professor and Professors and they had varying years of experience with the highest been 11 years. The instrument of data collection was administered in a duration of about thirty days and an average time of 21 minutes to each respondent.

This study is primarily conducted qualitatively using structured face-to-face interviews using a predetermined list of open-ended questions and each research subject was asked exactly the same questions in exactly the same order (Ritesh 2013). The interview questions were structured to answer questions that relate to the respondent's participation in the modes of sharing tacit knowledge and the factors that affect the tacit knowledge sharing process. These questions were derived and adjusted from previous studies of Abdullah, (2015), Mikhail, (2013), Fredrik, (2013), Barbara (2013) and Shim, (2007). The questions were adjusted to be consistent with the current study.

The trustworthiness of data was established using two procedures: member checks, and peer review (Shim et al, 2007) Member checks were conducted by sending a copy of the transcribed

audio interview back to the respondents and asking them for their opinion concerning the accuracy of the data. In addition, as the findings emerged, a professor of information science reviewed the interpretation of data. Collected data were transcribed and categorized into themes. According to Braun and Clark, (2006) thematic analysis was suitable for qualitative research and effective for analyzing and identifying patterns (themes) with data. Nvivo 12 was used in analyzing the data for easy identification/presentation of themes and relationship across the entire data set.

The interviews took place at the location of choice of the respondents, some in the office corridors, at car parks and others in their offices. The narratives of the interviews were recorded using mobile phone recorder application. Before the commencement of each interview, the researchers introduced the study to each of them and presented the informed consent form to the participants to read through and append their signature and emails if they agreed to participate in the study having gained insights into its objectives, scope and the nature of data to be collected from them as documented in the informed consent form. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed using a hands free device for listening to the interview and an Hp laptop for typing the questions and responses.


The data collection exercise was not free from challenges. Some of the major challenges encountered were that, most of the lecturers that were approached gave various excuses not to take part in the interview, some were not comfortable with having their views and opinions on a recording device, and others gave appointments which they knew they would not honor. However, these challenges were overcome through persistence and resilience of the researchers by proper follow up of participants and the use of a referral from their colleagues and close friends.

FINDINGS

The findings from the study are presented in line with the research questions in this section.

Research Question One: Is there a tacit knowledge sharing culture among lecturers in the University of Ibadan?

Two questions were used in establishing if there is a culture of sharing tacit knowledge among the lecturers. In response to the first question, “*do you consider sharing knowledge a routine for all lecturers?*” Several participants spoke to the notion that sharing knowledge is a routine for lecturers, and a few indicated the alternative. While coding with Nvivo, two major themes were created under the node “do you consider sharing knowledge a routine for all lecturers?” as shown in Figure 2.



KS a routine	31	31
YES, it is a routine	27	27
No, it is not a routine	4	4

Figure 2: Two major sub-nodes of responses under the node “KS a routine”

As seen in Figure 2 screenshot, 27 participants are of the notion that knowledge sharing is a routine for lecturers. Excerpts from the transcript that supported these themes include a respondent's description of sharing knowledge as a natural thing when lecturers discuss along corridors or at meetings.

"I think it's a natural thing, because we discuss. Whether in the corridor, at meetings when we examine students, so there are multiple avenues and then of course we go to conferences and seminars, so we're always sharing knowledge actually and then of course you know we normally write and publish what we have researched about" (Male/Professor/Political Science)

Even as the above participant describes the sharing of knowledge which includes tacit and explicit, there are mentions of knowledge sharing modes that imply that tacit knowledge is shared. Modes like seminars, conferences, informal discussions are recognized media of sharing tacit knowledge. A participant in the department of Psychology used the phrase "necessity" when answering the question.

"Yes, it's a basic necessity" (Female/Assistant lecturer/Psychology)

But there were two instances that revealed the possibility of keeping knowledge to oneself because the participants considered tacit knowledge too valuable to share routinely or to just any colleague. Another instance suggested that only formal knowledge is shared. The two interview excerpts illustrate this;

"No, it's not a routine because from the way you described the tacit knowledge it looks like the power of somebody else, so that is what you have, it becomes an edge over other people so, you, use it in a certain way - here its knowledge you seek after knowledge, so most of the time we don't share it with colleagues, sometimes we share with students we're training and from the way you described it, it comes from experience maybe you're observing another person that don't know this and your able to explain it to him, so you don't give it to people very easily; I think that there's some kind of selfishness about it". (Male/Professor/Chemistry)

"All lecturers are not sharing it. Because we are talking about mentoring. Some are not doing proper mentoring. So, if it is formal knowledge alone many are doing formal; they write their papers and all but not so many of them are doing tacit knowledge" (Male/Senior lecturer/Civil Engineering)

In analysing the question, "Are lecturers cooperative and helpful when asked for some information or advice?" three themes were recognized from the transcripts and categorized in Nvivo as shown in Figure 3.

obj. 1. TKS Culture	0	0
Cooperative when asked for	31	31
they don't cooperate	2	2
yes, but not everybody	13	13
Yes, they are cooperative	14	14

Figure 3: Three major nodes of responses under the node “Are lecturers cooperative and helpful when asked for some information or advice?”

As seen in Figure 3, 14 participants were of the opinion that lecturers are cooperative when asked for information and advice, 13 said yes they are cooperative but were not certain it cuts across all departments and levels, and just 2 participants are of the opinion that lecturers are not cooperative. Some responses are presented below

“Highly cooperative from my own perspective, me as a lecturer when they ask me for any advice or anything, I’m highly cooperative.”(Female/Associate Professor/Chemistry)

“Well, it depends on the lecturer, some are, some do not cooperate, so I think I’ve worked with both groups of lecturers; I have some lecturers that, when I ask them something they tell me immediately, they tell me the information that I need if they have it whereas I’ve also worked with some lecturers who hoard information, so it’s a factor of the individual” (Female/Lecturer 1/ARCIS)

A participant in the department of Political Science however stated that some lecturers see their colleagues as competitors and as such, will not share information or advice.

“Because of the nature of our work some lecturers see it as competition so they don't want to share their knowledge with their colleagues. When they get critical information, they don't want to share it, when they get information about what can lead to publication, what can lead to getting fellowships and all, some people will keep it. There are others who share but generally speaking, I think a lot more people want to keep it to their chest” (Male/Lecturer 1/Political Science)

The results show that there is a tacit knowledge sharing culture among lecturers in the University of Ibadan. However, sharing of tacit knowledge depends on the lecturers as

individuals and it is dependent on the relationship a lecturer has with the person to share knowledge with and competition which exists among lecturers especially those in the same department.

Research Question Two: What are the tacit knowledge sharing processes among lecturers in the University of Ibadan?

When participants were asked, *“Which knowledge/experiences do you consider being most valuable for your professional life?”* most of the knowledge and experiences described were tacit in nature. Even though some participants were not familiar with the term, yet, what they described as their most valuable knowledge/experiences in their professional life was knowledge that is not found in codified format and may be difficult to share in publications. There was a follow up question to probe the processes in sharing the knowledge/experiences described while answering the first question. Before looking at the process of sharing, a few quotes from respondent tacit knowledge experiences are stated below;

“Okay, one of it is how to rise through the ladder, the requirements, what to do in fulfilling some of the requirements for climbing through the ladder, we have senior colleagues we can run to and sometimes even while discussing you see them putting you through, so its most valuable” (Male/Assistant Lecturer/Centre for Education & Media Resources)

Tacit knowledge is difficult to articulate especially when one does not fully understand the meaning of the word. However, participants were able to articulate the tacit knowledge they possess when they were probed. A participant mentioned that he valued most, the way he groomed his doctoral students and another, the way he teaches and carry students along. Some responses are presented below:

“It’s the way of grooming my PhD students, that’s the one that is valuable, its reflected in the work you’re doing now and the work you’re publishing, so not every PhD student, some may be in a hurry and not want to learn, so you don’t disturb them but for those that want to learn you go an extra mile and pass the knowledge you have gotten from experience, gotten from reading, gotten from trial and error. Somebody that I was working with those days made me repeat the work about 8 times but each time I was reproducing the same thing; so if I ask a student to produce the value and he reproduces it once, I won’t ask the student to do it again, because I’ve done it 8 times unless I want to test if he has patience” (Male/Professor/Chemistry)

“My professional knowledge, I’m a medical doctor and I teach medical students so from my wealth of experience I pass the knowledge down, then I gain more knowledge from my senior colleagues” (Female/Lecturer 1/ Anatomy)

Now, there is an awareness of the individual tacit knowledge present in the participants, but the

research question is still unanswered. A participant gave a crystal-clear narration of the experience he considers valuable, stating that,

“The most valuable ones are some experiences that you can hardly encounter in the books for example; there is one of our lecturers who described along the line how to conduct soil survey and some other things. These things are not in the books but by interacting with him I was able to get some of these experiences and I've applied it and it has worked” (Male/Senior Lecturer /Agronomy)

Another participant explained the experiences gained from senior colleagues, referred to as “wisdom” cannot be bought anywhere. He also mentioned that he sits in, while a senior lecturer is teaching and that to him, is a valuable experience/knowledge. Teaching can be compared to dancing; you can only learn by doing and watching someone do it and then practicing. There is no formal knowledge of how to dance, just like in teaching because, like the beat can change at any time, so can the situation change in a class at any given time. Teaching is more of a skill that is acquired on the job. The participant is quoted as saying:

“Well, some of these lecturers even share their personal experiences as in family life with us, like one was sharing with me about his children - his children not behaving the way they're expected to and what he did. I mean that kind of experience you can't buy it from anywhere! And it was really, really a very good one for me at least to gain some wisdom. I follow my prof to his classes you know, I just want to hear him, the way he will explain answers to some of those questions,” (Male/Lecturer 2/Agriculture & Environmental Engineering)

Another participant corroborates teaching skill as her most valuable experience, she mentioned that it was gathered over a duration of over 5 years and that makes her happy.

“I don't focus on what I'm teaching them but I dwell more on the techniques for teaching them because I'm more interested in not just pouring out the knowledge I'd want them to understand it, as my own teacher or mentor who taught me in one of my courses , he's not in the country, I appreciate the way he taught me not just what he taught me, but the method he used in teaching me and I think I learnt a lot from him and that has helped me, so from my own experience as a lecturer in this past 5 years, what I feel good about is thinking of the techniques, whenever I want to prepare for any class, I look at my outline and I ask myself how do I present this lecture in such a way that my students will understand and retain whatever I'm teaching them.” (Female/Lecturer 1/ARCIS)

Narrowed down to the research question, two other questions were asked to find out the processes of sharing tacit knowledge which are; “Do you share these knowledge and experiences with colleagues? If yes, in what way and in what context?” and, “How do you share knowledge of what you do with your colleagues? Can you give me an example?” this is shown in Figure 4.

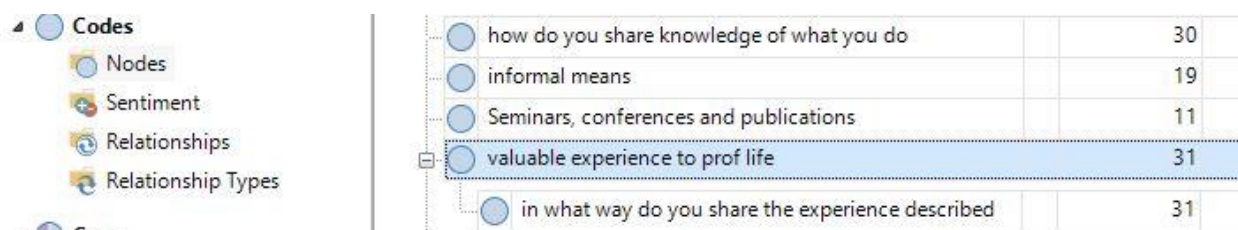


Figure 4: Interface of the nodes representing the two questions

Although there were a few who said they do not share their valuable experiences because it might be misinterpreted as trying to impose their methods on colleagues or for fear that it will be used to gain an edge over them. Excerpts from the transcript and Nvivo word frequency query of the two sub nodes that represent the interview questions that provided answer to research question 2, show that participants share tacit knowledge through the following processes: discussions, informal meetings and gatherings, close interaction with colleagues who double as friends, seminars, conferences, and social gatherings.

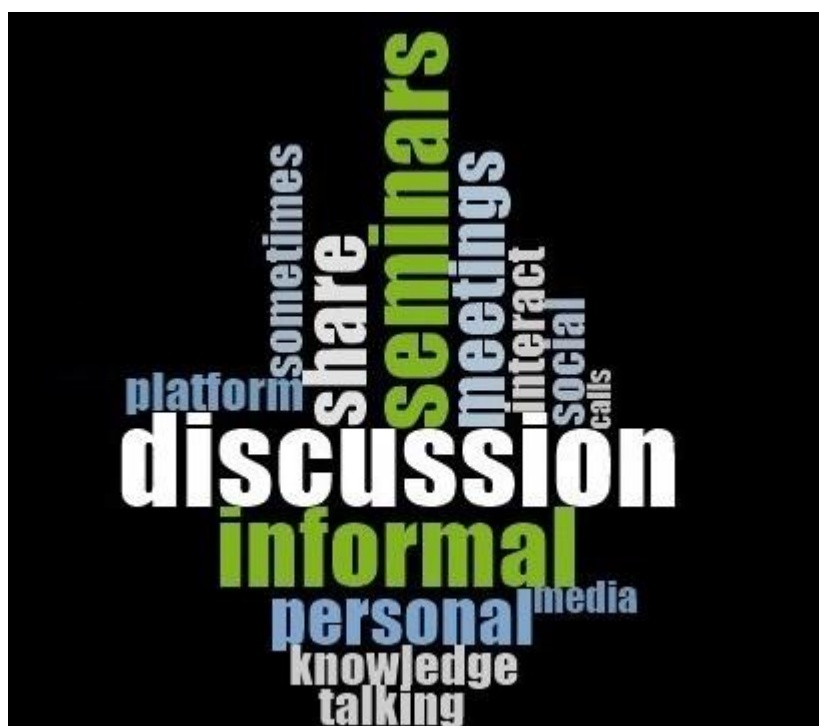


Figure 5: Word frequency cloud of participant's tacit knowledge sharing processes

Figure 5, shows that “discussion” is the most frequent theme in the answers provided by respondents, this is an indication that the major process for sharing tacit knowledge among lecturers is when they engage in discussions, not just discussion but personal discussions that are informal and social in nature. Hence the presence of “personal”, “social” and “informal” in the word cloud. Other processes include Seminars, social gatherings and meetings which can also be seen in the word cloud.

Some excerpts from the transcript are presented below:

“Yeah, we share knowledge even in meetings or at some other times. What we do especially some of the areas where things that are very difficult to understand which for example there is nobody that will teach you how to do some negotiations it's not something that you will do in the books those are some of the things we share when we gather informally and we discuss” (Male/Senior Lecturer /Agronomy)

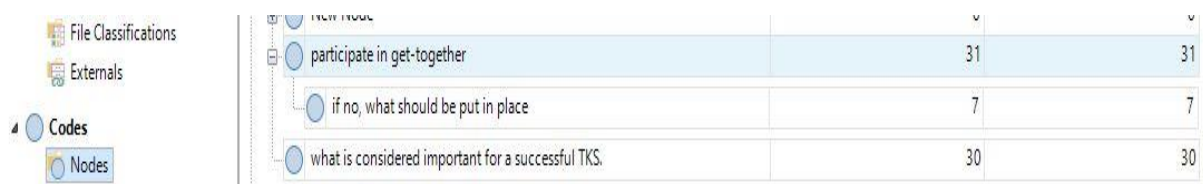
A participant from the Department of Wood Products Engineering, mentioned that storytelling is the key method that has sustained the sharing of tacit knowledge in technology. He stated as follows:

“This one is very rampant in technology because most of the technological developments that we have in the old age, were usually done by that tacit knowledge because most of the relevant evidences to prove are not available, but we have stories to tell, so we’re still using it.” (Male/Senior Lecturer/Wood & Products Engineering)

Storytelling and mentoring are part of the notable ways of sharing tacit knowledge, but in all the interviews it was only mentioned by a few participants hence, it is not a major means of sharing tacit knowledge among the lecturers. Results from the analysis and supported quotes show that, the major process of sharing tacit knowledge among lecturers in the University of Ibadan is via discussions in forms of personal interactions, informal meetings and seminars.

Research Question three: What are the factors that affect tacit knowledge sharing among lecturers in the University of Ibadan?

Participants were asked two questions to determine the factors that affect their tacit knowledge sharing. The questions are: *“What do you consider important for a successful tacit knowledge sharing?”* and *“Do you participate in some kind of get-together to share tacit knowledge with your colleagues?”* the latter had a follow up question thus; *“If, No, what should be put in place to make this possible?”* Figure 6 shows the interface of the two questions and follow up question coded as nodes in Nvivo.



Node	Frequency	Percentage
participate in get-together	31	31
if no, what should be put in place	7	7
what is considered important for a successful TKS.	30	30

Figure 6: Interface of the two questions respondents answered under research question 3

From Figure 6, it can be seen that seven participants who do not take part in get together to share tacit knowledge explained what should be put in place to make it possible for them to take part in such an activity, and also 30 participants explained what is considered important for a successful tacit knowledge sharing.

A participant pointed out the negative effect the University of Ibadan's mode of scoring publications during promotion has on the collaboration to work and on sharing tacit knowledge. He further stated that the points awarded to a lecturer who involves in a collaborative publication and promotion criteria create a kind of competition among lecturers. He stated as follows:

"But with colleagues the interest is not there, because of what goes into promotion. Plus, any publication that comes out as a result of working so hard, if it involves so many people, you don't get many points; so, the thing is that if I have that tacit knowledge, I'll use it to share with my doctoral students"
(Male/Professor/Chemistry)

A female participant, while laying emphasis on mentoring, brought in the gender and the age factors. She went on to say that as a Psychologist, it is important to look at these two factors: She stated thus:

"Specific emphasis on mentoring, it is key to look at the gender diadem, In terms of would it be easier for people to want to share information to an opposite sex or would they prefer to share it to similar sex, so gender factor as a psychologist is key and also age difference matters; you might feel more at peace with communicating with someone who is your age bracket compared to your superior, the differences of such account for the level of tacit knowledge that is shared among colleagues." (Female/Assistant Lecturer/Psychology)

Other responses by participants are stated below:

"Relationship - As it has been described is what makes the world go around. Even some of which those you consider as non-tacit knowledge that's being shared. You can share knowledge with someone and the person might not embrace it. Why is this, because of lack of relationship" (Male/Assistant Lecturer/Centre for Education & Media Resources)

"Electricity! If you have a software that will be useful for me, you can't share it to me without electricity and a research facility, software and then literature resource materials very important. You can tell me that o there's something please go and check so so journal, if I don't have access to the journal, I can't check it and impart the knowledge." (Female/Lecturer 1/Chemistry)

The results show that the factors that affect the sharing of tacit knowledge among the lecturers are communication, willingness to share, cordial relationship, constant electricity and a suitable

environment. Other factors are: social interaction, mentoring, availability of platform for sharing, organising retreats among lecturers, and how publications are scored for promotion.

Research Question four: What are the Information and Communication Technology tools available to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge among the lecturers?

In order to find out the Information and Communication Technology tools available to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge among lecturers, participants were asked the question, “*Do you have a platform, where you share information of work issues? Can you describe how it functions?*” Before answering the question, participants were made to understand work issues that are tacit in nature. Figure 7 shows the dominant themes in the responses.



Figure 7: Nvivo word cloud output for research question four

In the word cloud presented “meetings”, “conferences”, “seminar”, “fellowships”, “discussed” can be seen as the major themes because they are the tacit knowledge sharing “forum” that are currently available to lecturers in the University of Ibadan, during these forums lecturers are able to raise “comments” and also discuss work “issues”. Some of the platforms mentioned involve the use of Information and Communication Technology tools like Public Address Systems for seminars and conferences, sending notifications for meetings via emails and text messages on phones which are ICT devices and also involve infrastructures like conference halls and seminar rooms. Some responses from participants are provided below:

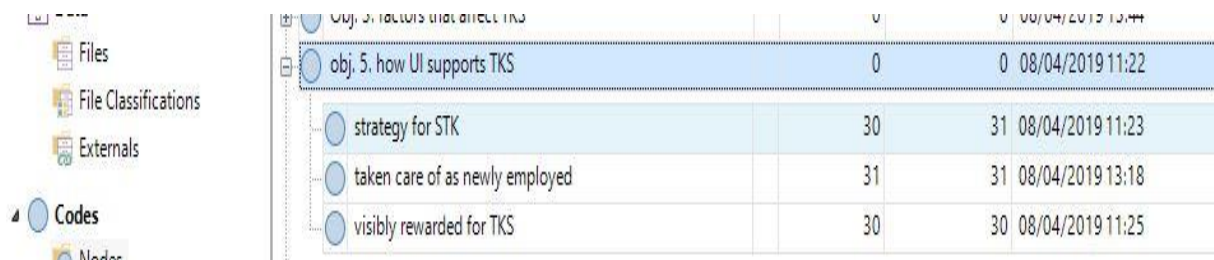
“When we are just discussing that’s just the forum, there’s no formal forum. In the faculty of the social sciences, they have coffee room where lecturers at certain times they go and discuss” (Male/Senior Lecturer/Civil Engineering)

“Work issues, well except seminar, conferences, occasionally staff meetings, I don’t remember anyone now” (Male/Professor/Archeology & Anthropology)

The results of the analysis show that the Information and Communication Technology tools available to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge among the lecturers are; Public Address Systems for seminars and conferences and mobile phones for communication.

Research Question Five: What are the ways in which the University of Ibadan supports or provide avenues for tacit knowledge sharing among the lecturers?

The well-known ways from the literature that a university can support the sharing of tacit knowledge formed the premise of the three questions that the participants responded to in this section. The participants were asked three questions: *Is there a strategy for sharing tacit knowledge? How were you taken care of as a newly employed, did anyone tell you how you are supposed to work at the institution? And are lecturers visibly reward for tacit knowledge sharing?* All three questions were analysed independently using Nvivo, and the results are shown below.



Node Name	Count	Date/Time
obj. 5. how UI supports TKS	0	08/04/2019 11:22
strategy for STK	30	08/04/2019 11:23
taken care of as newly employed	31	08/04/2019 13:18
visibly rewarded for TKS	30	08/04/2019 11:25

Figure 8: Interface for the three sub nodes of research question five

The interface shows that there is a major node which is the research question itself, and three sub nodes which are the questions that the researcher asked the respondents. The numbers 30, 31 and 30 are the number of responses coded under each node respectively. The analysis of each node is presented below on Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Nvivo word frequency query result for strategy for sharing tacit knowledge

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
Defined	7	3	5.56	defined, determined, specified
Informal	8	2	4.44	Informal
Interaction	11	2	4.44	interaction, interactions
Relationship	12	2	4.44	relationship, relationships
Workshops	9	2	4.44	Workshops
Particular	10	2	3.33	particular, specified
Academics	9	1	2.22	Academics
Among	5	1	2.22	Among
Asking	6	1	2.22	Asking
Aware	5	1	2.22	Aware
Basically	9	1	2.22	Basically

Done	4	1	2.22	Done
Early	5	1	2.22	Early
Every	5	1	2.22	Every
Just	4	1	2.22	Just
Kind	4	1	2.22	Kind
Lecturers	9	1	2.22	Lecturers

In running the word frequency query, the words were grouped in stemmed words and synonyms for easy classification, which means that “defined” which is ranked highest with the highest weighted percentage has been grouped with “determined” and “specified” listed under similar words in the Table 1 as its synonyms. From the Table 1 it is clear that there is no “defined” strategy for sharing tacit knowledge among lecturers and also there is no “particular” strategy for sharing tacit knowledge, although it is shared in “workshops” and during “informal” “interactions”. A few responses are quoted below;

“It’s not specified it’s not determined; we use any appropriate methodology and approach, it’s not specified.” (Male/Senior Lecturer/Wood Products Engineering)

“I really don’t know and I don’t think there’s any structured strategy for sharing tacit knowledge” (Female/Lecturer 2/ARCIS)

A professor from the Department of Political Science, while trying to discern the question, managed to explain the lack of consciousness of tacit knowledge and went further to give a very enlightening illustration of how important tacit knowledge can be. He stated this:

“Well I don’t know if even there is a consciousness of the idea of tacit knowledge... Ermm....I think it’s more or less a byproduct of our interaction because we really don’t have an agenda that looks at tacit knowledge. What I know is that because we’re perpetually engaged either at meetings, formal and informal, we sort of share tacit knowledge” (Male/Professor/Political Science)

Responses from the second question, “how were you taken care of as a newly employed, did anyone tell you how you are supposed to work at the institution?” was also analysed using Nvivo and the result is presented below in Table 2.

Table 2: Word frequency query result for the question “how were you taken care of as a newly employed, did anyone tell you how you are supposed to work at the institution?”

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
Directions	10	8	5.71	center, conducts, directions, heads, organised, trained, training
Department	10	6	3.93	department, departments, quite, started
Newly	5	4	2.86	Newly
Orientation	11	4	2.86	Orientation
Program	7	4	2.86	Program
Employed	8	3	2.14	Employed
Mentors	7	3	2.14	mentoring, mentors
Terribly	8	3	2.14	Terribly
Afterwards	10	2	1.43	afterwards, later
Assist	6	2	1.43	assist, helpful
Basics	6	2	1.43	basics, introductory
Colleagues	10	2	1.43	Colleagues
Employees	9	2	1.43	Employees
Follow	6	2	1.43	follow, watch
Gathering	9	2	1.43	gathering, meeting
Lecturers	9	2	1.43	Lecturers
Nobody	6	2	1.43	Nobody
Profession	10	2	1.43	Profession
Really	6	2	1.43	Really
Showed	6	2	1.43	showed, usher

The Table 2 shows that the University of Ibadan supports the sharing of tacit knowledge by giving “directions” to “newly” “employed”, this is done by “organising ” “training” programs, “orientation” programs, and “mentoring”, although it started newly in some “departments”. The words in quote have all been ranked by Nvivo as the major themes. Some excerpts from the interview transcript are quoted below:

“The University of Ibadan started a program not too long ago I learnt. when we were employed the center for teaching in excellence organized a program for us newly employed staff and I think it was quite exposing, very rewarding too cause, most of the things our seniors only learnt on the job we were told what to do upfront on exam papers, how to identify journals that UI would not accept such information, how to handle students, relationships, how to handle course contents and the likes and I must appreciate the university for that.”
(Male/Lecturer 2/Institute for Peace & Strategic Studies)

“Yes, there was specific forum for that, there was an induction ceremony to usher you into the basics of the profession and I had mentors who put me through the necessary conducts of a lecturer” (Female/Assistant Lecturer/Psychology)

The third and final interview question under research question five was meant to find out if the University of Ibadan visibly rewards lecturers for tacit knowledge sharing as a way of supporting the sharing of tacit knowledge. The question goes thus; “are lecturers visibly rewarded for tacit knowledge sharing?” the analysis by Nvivo is shown below.

Following the analysis of all three ways in which an academic institution can support the sharing of tacit knowledge, it can be noted that the University of Ibadan is supporting tacit knowledge sharing among lecturers by having orientation programs to mentor new employees, by having workshops where older lecturers give directions to the new ones, and also by organising conferences and seminars for the newly employed.

Research Question six: What are the ways in which the sharing of tacit knowledge can be improved?

In order to determine the ways in which the sharing of tacit knowledge can be improved among lecturers, participants were told to recommend improvements to the sharing of their work-related knowledge with other relevant colleagues. Figure 9 shows how Nvivo was used to analyze the responses.



Figure 9: Nvivo word cloud for ways in which the sharing of tacit knowledge can be improved?

From Figure 9, “forum”, “improve” and “facilities” are seen to be more dominant along with other words like “interaction”, “gathering”, “research” “experiences” and “department”. This means that the major challenge lecturers’ encounter in sharing tacit knowledge is the absence of a “forum” where lecturers can come together from time to time for the purpose of sharing tacit knowledge and also a forum where awareness is created about sharing tacit knowledge. Other ways of improvement include; lack of “university” policy on tacit knowledge, inadequate “facilities”, no strong mentorship structure at the “departmental” level, environment does not support non formal ways of “interaction” between lecturers and also less free time for “seminars” where “research” “experiences” is shared. Most participants agreed that these areas should be “improved” on in order to lift the challenge in sharing tacit knowledge.

Nvivo was also used to show the exact context in which the dominant term forum was used with the help of an Nvivo word tree in Figure 10

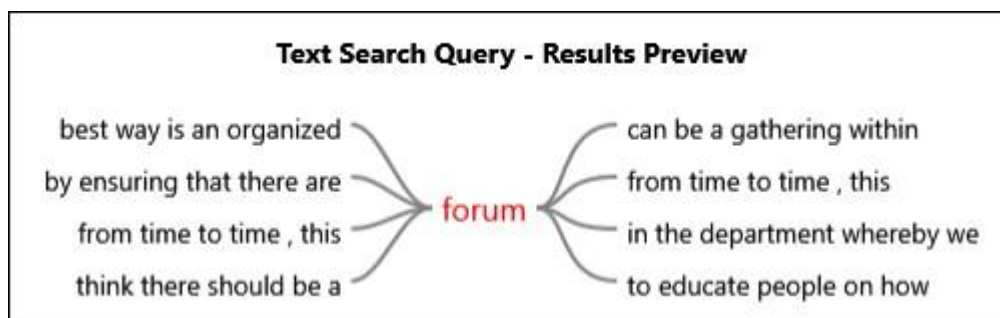


Figure 10: A word tree showing how participants used the term “forum” when providing answers

From Figure 10, it is seen that participants see the need to have a “forum from time to time” where tacit knowledge can be shared, a forum to educate people on how to execute the sharing of tacit knowledge and more. This shows that the absence of such forums is a big challenge towards the sharing of tacit knowledge among lecturers in the University of Ibadan.

Some responses are quoted below;

“Like in this university where I work if they come up with a policy that they’ll not be splitting all these points, so I’ll recommend that if they relax that area of splitting points for promotion, in other developed countries 10 people can write a paper but here if 10 people are doing a particular work, the work that will take years to develop and come out with good result and then you finish, you don’t get anything good towards your promotion, so if they can work on that aspect”(Male/Professor/Chemistry)

“I think there should be a forum in the department whereby we will come together to share our individual experiences amongst us but I don't think we have that in my department” (Male/Lecturer 2/Forest Production and Products)

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings revealed that there is a culture of knowledge sharing among lecturers in the University of Ibadan. An organisational culture is important because it plays a considerable role in promoting tacit knowledge sharing. Wang & Ahmed (2003) submitted that promoting culture of sharing, cooperation, trust and learning in organisation plays a considerable role in facilitating knowledge creation and transfer. Findings also revealed that more of the knowledge shared among the lecturers are in explicit form and very little of tacit knowledge because there is no conscious effort by lecturers to share tacit knowledge and also because many of them find it difficult to articulate their tacit knowledge, a characteristic which is not uncommon because difficulty in articulation is one of the properties of tacit knowledge listed by Haradhan (2017). For that reason, lecturers share the more familiar and easily codified explicit knowledge. This is in line with the assertion of Dixon, (2000) who stated that “Many organisations are not concentrating their effort on how knowledge, particularly tacit knowledge that exist in the organisation can be transferred”. From the findings, another reason why the sharing of tacit knowledge is dependent on the lecturer is because some lecturers see their tacit knowledge as a competitive edge over their colleagues, which corroborates the finding of Simons & Sveiby (2002) that one of the biggest obstacles to share tacit knowledge can be an organisations internal culture. They however mentioned that there also exists problems of individuals hoarding knowledge for their own best and competitiveness. Another explanation for the bias towards explicit knowledge sharing is that lecturers face challenges in practicing the sharing of tacit knowledge, including absence of cordial relationship, competition, selfishness and functional boundary, which are in line with the study of Goffin and Koners, (2011) that, to share tacit knowledge, one requires extensive personal contact, regular interaction and trust. It is sometimes captured when the knowledge holder joins a network or a community practice.

These findings resonate those from previous studies in Malaysia, Singapore and UK, which have highlighted that a knowledge sharing culture exists in tertiary educational institutions, however, challenges such as motivation, lack of reward mechanisms, knowledge hoarding, dearth of open-mindedness and inadequate support and encouragement from leaders exist (Wah et al., 2007; Cheng et al., 2009; Fullwood et al., 2013; Goh and Sandhu, 2013)

There are two processes of sharing tacit knowledge, according to Bloodgood and Salisbury (2001): directly through personal contacts with other employees, and indirectly through information and communication technology (ICT). Findings concerning the processes of tacit knowledge sharing are in line with the processes highlighted by Bloodgood and Salisbury (2001) in that lecturers in the University of Ibadan share tacit knowledge through personal discussions, informal meetings, social gatherings, and seminars which are in line with the direct and indirect methods of sharing tacit knowledge. The use of ICT gadgets in the presentation of

seminars is an indirect method of sharing tacit knowledge. Also, Nonaka et al, (1998) noted that tacit knowledge sharing is made possible through joint activities such as being together and spending time and living in the same environment. The findings are in line with the position of Nonaka et al (1998) because social gatherings among lecturers and close interaction are some of the processes of sharing tacit knowledge. Foos, Schum and Rothenberg (2006) also stated that knowledge transfer among subsidiaries, particularly when knowledge is tacit, requires personal (face to face) interaction.

On the factors influencing tacit knowledge sharing among the lecturers, findings showed that if the culture of scoring collaborative work in terms of points for promotion is looked into, it will encourage more people to work together and share tacit knowledge in the University of Ibadan. A participant explained that if two or more lecturers team up, share tacit knowledge to write a publication, the points for each member of the team is very minute, which discourages lecturers from engaging in such sharing and collaboration; thus supporting the notion that knowledge-sharing will only happen if rewards exceed cost (Constant, Kiesler and Sproull, 1994). Findings also showed that there is no close relationship amongst lecturers in separate departments which conforms to departmental functional boundary that was mentioned by Susan, (2016) that the factors that have been found to affect the sharing of tacit knowledge in the institutions are close functional boundaries, communication, motivation and organisational culture. The findings also align with that of Al-Qdah, AbuAli, Salim, and Khalil, (2011) that to share tacit knowledge, one requires extensive personal contacts, regular interaction and trust. It is sometimes captured when the knowledge holder joins a network or a community of practice.

The other identified factors that affect tacit knowledge sharing among the lecturers are; willingness to share, cordial relationship, constant electricity and availability of a platform for sharing. Others are social interaction and mentoring, which is in line with Clarke, (2010) position, that apprenticeship system is the place where the novice gains tacit knowledge from the hands on experience passed on by the apprentice's master. Goman, (2002) with relation to social interaction stated that in an organisation with a positive social interaction culture, both management and employees socialise and interact frequently with each other, with little regard to organisational status, he further noted that organisational efforts should be focused on creating opportunities for employees to interact, whether formally or informally, to foster tacit knowledge sharing. A suitable environment was also identified as a factor that affects tacit knowledge sharing which can be related to the findings of Ritesh, (2013) who emphasized that providing a favorable workplace environment is an important factor for the transfer of tacit knowledge.

Responses of participants relating to ICT tools available to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge showed that the ICT tools available are the Public Address Systems for seminars and conferences and phones for communication among lecturers. This is in line with Stajic (2009) who stated that ICT refers to any type of information and communication device, such as personal computers, tablets, smart phones, and audio and video transmission devices, as well as a range of software applications and services that run on such devices. However, the ICT tools at the disposal of the lecturers are not enough to facilitate the sharing of tacit knowledge.

A study by Al-Qudah et al, (2018) that looked into ICT-Mediated Tacit Knowledge Transferability corroborates this notion, noting that more complex ICT tools that involve virtual face to face interaction is necessary. According to Al-Qudah et al, (2018) ICT tools cannot completely substitute for face-to-face contact, tacit knowledge that has a high degree of complexity requires sophisticated channel features for its transfer. From this standpoint, virtual face-to-face communication is the richest communication medium in the ICT hierarchy. On the other hand, email and voicemail are less effective channels for TK transfer, while synchronous groupware is an intermediate communication medium.

In addition findings showed that the University of Ibadan supports tacit knowledge sharing among lecturers by organising orientation programmes to mentor new employees, workshops where older lecturers give directions to new lecturers, and conferences and seminars for newly employed. The essence of a University support in the sharing of tacit knowledge cannot be overemphasized. Davenport et al, (1999) elaborates on the importance of institutional support for tacit knowledge sharing stating that there needs to be support systems in place for every organisation where the acquired knowledge and skills of employees can be structured, stored, reprocessed and transferred to make use of it in critical decision making and strategic planning issues making knowledge a useful developmental tool and expectations for sharing tacit knowledge should be clearly stated by management. The ways in which the University of Ibadan provides support for tacit knowledge sharing is in line with the findings of a study by Majewska, (2014) who listed employees and management meetings, where current problems and ways of solving them are discussed, different types of mentoring and coaching and pursuit of training a successor as the methods and practices an organisation needs to support tacit knowledge sharing.

The barriers that make the transfer of tacit knowledge difficult were identified to include lack of *'Forum to share ideas, inadequate internet facilities, poor electricity, lack of time and inadequate forum for interaction'* to name a few. Findings showed that lecturers lack forums that enable close communication with peers, junior and senior colleagues as well as forums that create awareness of how to execute the sharing of tacit knowledge. Participants also mentioned that there is simply not enough time to engage in informal discussions because of the excessive routine duties of lecturers, while others decried the inadequacy of internet and electricity. These challenges are well aligned with the findings of Ritesh, (2017) that a fine line between the economics of academics' day-to-day operations and sharing of knowledge can only be achieved if some sort of time-release is provided, and that humans and social factors should be considered and adequately addressed for tacit knowledge transfer to take place successfully. In the study by Ritesh, (2017) communication was also found to be a major barrier in the sharing of tacit knowledge. Ritesh (2013) concluded that, time seemed to be one of the deterrents towards tacit knowledge transfer and universities need to address this issue by providing staff time or a reduction in their regular teaching loads.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The practice of tacit knowledge sharing is engaged in by lecturers in the University of Ibadan minimally even though it may be an unconscious act, and it is mostly in informal means via close interaction. Lecturers possess tacit knowledge that they have acquired from their experiences and they are aware of the importance of sharing such knowledge, but the absence of some necessitating factors like organizational reward, strategy for sharing, adequate ICT, etc affects their disposition and intention to share.

The study reported in this paper is not without limitations. A major limitation of the study is the small sample selected to participate in the study making it difficult to generalize the findings. Another is that the study is purely qualitative in design and execution. Future studies can select a larger sample and use a mixed method for data collection. In addition, an area for further studies could be to check the role of gender in the sharing of tacit knowledge among lecturers and how much of tacit knowledge is converted and shared in codified format via social media platforms.

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