

**EFFECT OF KNOWLEDGE HOARDING ON ORGANIZATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT
IN NIMBE ADEDIPE LIBRARY, FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE,
ABEOKUTA**

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Abstract

This paper focused on the effect of knowledge hoarding on organizational achievement in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey method. The study population consisted of all 74 personnel in the Library. Questionnaire was sent to the staff through online platform from which 27 of them responded. Findings showed that knowledge hoarding practices exist among the personnel of the Library. Major factors that led to knowledge hoarding include: lack of motivation for knowledge sharing and industrial disharmony and conflicts. Also, major impacts of knowledge hoarding on the Library is that it can lead to lack of creativity among employees which can negatively affect achieving the goals of the Library; it can also bring down the organization completely. The study recommends among others, that the library personnel should be motivated through various forms of rewards to share knowledge that are instrumental to realizing the aims and objectives of the Library; Library management should provide enabling environment, policy and platform to facilitate knowledge sharing among the Library personnel.

Keywords: knowledge hoarding, knowledge sharing, organizational achievements, Nimbe Adedipe Library

Introduction

University libraries are one of the most essential components of university education system. They provide access to information, services and facilities for the University community. University libraries acquire, organize and distribute information that are necessary for teaching, learning and research. In order to achieve this, they formulate goals which are in line with the overall goal of the university. To achieve these goals, resources are expended. One of such resources are knowledge that are crucial to the success of the library.

Knowledge management is one of the most important aspects of modern systems. The information and knowledge that is carefully collected and preserved by individuals or groups in an organization can be central to the success of any enterprise no matter how big or small. Knowledge is a powerful tool in the economy; especially as it can make a significant difference

in business success, office environment and individual careers. Knowledge is also an asset for any organization to achieve its goals.

Furthermore, knowledge needs to be shared for it to be useful. Knowledge hoarding refers to the practice of hiding information or knowledge from other people so as to give one an advantage over the rest of the group. Hoarding knowledge among employees can be inimical to the progress of the organization and career development of the employees. Therefore, this study sets out to assess the effect of knowledge hoarding on library achievement.

Statement of the problem

It is expected that employees share knowledge that are considered useful and valuable to the growth and development of organizations. Such knowledge are shared through various knowledge sharing tools. However, it has been observed that personnel hoard knowledge for various reasons (Peng, 2013; Imran, Ilyas, Aslam and Rehman, 2016). Hoarding useful knowledge among library employees will not only reduce the flow of knowledge, but also weaken organizational performance. Knowledge hoarding may further lead to waste of financial resources and time as organizations may have to engage outsiders for knowledge that could be sought within. It is against this backdrop that this study was set out to assess the effect of knowledge hoarding on organizational achievements in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.

Research Questions

1. What types of knowledge hoarding practices exist among employees in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta?
2. What are the factors that lead to knowledge hoarding among employees of Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.
3. What are the effects of knowledge hoarding on organizational achievements in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta.

Literature Review

It is a general belief that knowledge is a veritable tool for organizations to drive development. Hence, sharing of useful knowledge among employees of an organization is inevitable to engender the desired organizational achievement (Valamis Group, 2022).

Knowledge sharing is a major aspect of knowledge management (Bilginoğlu, 2018) and it is a deliberate process of exchanging information that are significant to job performance and achieving organizational growth (Hendricks, 2021). Knowledge sharing is a fundamental aspect of knowledge management processes in any organizations and it is crucial to generating new ideas and developing new business opportunities (Lin, 2007; Aslam et. al., 2018). According to Rusly, Yih-Tong Sun, and Corner (2014), knowledge sharing is a process that involves interactions at various levels among organization employees. Such cross interactions are needed to facilitate sharing of useful knowledge as they are critical to organizational success (Victorino, 2020).

The opposite of knowledge sharing is knowledge hoarding. Knowledge hoarding can simply be described as withholding of knowledge, especially when there has not been request by any specific individual. It is a form of concealment of unrequested knowledge in contrast to knowledge hiding which suggests that such knowledge was requested for but not given (Connelly, Zweig, Webster, and Trougakos, *et al.*, 2012). Knowledge hoarding involves keeping of knowledge that are critical to organizational achievement by employees, especially when such knowledge are yet to be requested for. Bilginoğlu (2018) noted that hoarded knowledge at times may become useless as they may not be shared at a later date.

The impact of knowledge hoarding on organizational achievement was noticed by Mesner Andolšek and Andolšek (2011) to which they observed that it has prompted various scholars to study and analyse how the flow of knowledge was regulated. Also, knowledge is seen as the main source of competitive advantage for libraries which has prompted more libraries to invest in knowledge management activities (Stewart, 2000). While Bilginoğlu (2018) argued that knowledge hoarding may protect an employee from being replaced, it may however serves as a threat to the growth and productivity of such organization as it deprives others from learning from such knowledge.

Every organization strives to achieve their aims and objectives. As a corollary to this, they expend different resources to achieving this. Organizational achievement in this 21st Century are affected by factors such as globalization, digital revolution and competitiveness of

which knowledge sharing cannot be separated from (Aljawarneh, Sokiyna, Obeidat, Alomari, Alradaideh and Alomari, 2020). To achieve organizational goals, library personnel are expected to share knowledge that can assist to achieve these goals. Hence, the need for library management to fosters activities that encourage knowledge sharing among library employees.

However, there are many reasons why personnel may hoard useful knowledge from their colleagues. Although, Ryan and Shinnick (2011) observe that employees, irrespective of their level, have natural tendencies to hoard that are considered valuable, Peng (2013) however attributed one of such reasons to the need by superiors to maintain their power over the subordinates, hence intentionally withhold knowledge that can empower the latter. Also, a fear to lose reward, status quo, power, authority, recognition, influence, and psychological ownership are the major factors that can lead to knowledge hoarding (Ilyas, Aslam & Rehman, 2016). Victorino (2020) corroborates this by observing that fear of being replaced, and personal reward for teamwork are part of reasons employees usually hoard useful knowledge.

To curb knowledge hoarding activities in organizations, Hawamdeh et al., (2010) suggest that organizations should have a policy that makes knowledge to be treated as an organizational asset that cannot be hoarded by a single employee. However, this may be difficult to achieve with tacit knowledge which are difficult to explain. Also, Ryan and Shinnick (2011) suggest rewards for knowledge sharing practices among employees as a way of encouraging them to share useful knowledge. Furthermore, Dalkir (2005) suggests that management should create an organization culture that promote knowledge sharing among employees, while Merrill (2012) stressed that management should identify barriers that impede knowledge sharing among the employees and deal with each barrier accordingly.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research technique. The population of the study consisted of all the staff working in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, numbering 74. Questionnaire was sent to the staff through online platform from which 27 of

them responded. The 27 staff cut across all the sections of the Library. Collected data were analysed using frequency count and percentage.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to demographic variables

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	14	51.9
Female	13	48.1
TOTAL	27	100
Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-30	1	3.7
31-40	8	29.6
41-50	11	40.7
51 above	7	25.9
TOTAL	27	100
Years of working experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5	4	14.8
6-10	11	40.7
11-15	6	22.2
16-20	3	11.1
21 above	3	11.1
TOTAL	27	100

Table 1 shows that 51.9% of the respondents are male while the remaining 48.1% are female. Also, majority of 40.7% of the respondents were between the age bracket of 41-50, followed by ages 31-40 (29.6%) and 51 years and above (25.9%).

To identify types of knowledge hoarding practices that exist among employees in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, respondents were presented with 8 items from which they were to respond to based on their level of agreement with the statements.

Table 2: Types of knowledge hoarding practices in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (n=27)

SN	Types of knowledge hoarding practice	Agree		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%
1.	I find it difficult to collaborate with my colleagues.	-	-	27	100.0
2.	It is good to withhold information about management decisions from my colleagues.	3	11.1	24	88.9
3.	I delay sharing of useful information until I benefit from it	1	3.7	26	96.3
4.	I keep information about research grants or sponsorship to myself	1	3.7	26	96.3
5.	Are you willing to share work related information with your colleagues even in time of conflict?	23	85.2	4	14.8
6.	I watch my organization paying outsiders for information or to do what I can do because im not willing to share such knowledge or skills	2	7.4	25	92.6
7.	It is good to keep information about conference sponsorship to myself	2	7.4	25	92.6
8.	It is good to keep information about journal publishing to myself	2	7.4	25	92.6

Table 2 shows different types of knowledge hoarding practices that exist in the Library.

Such knowledge hoarding practices that exist include withholding information about management decisions (11.1%), and non-willing to share work related information (85.2%). Also, some 7.4% respondents agreed that they watched the Library paying outsiders for knowledge or skills that they possessed as they were not willing to share such knowledge or skills. Also, some 7.4% respondents claimed they kept information about conference sponsorship, and information about journal publishing, respectively. This is similar to Demirkasımođlu (2016) discovery that different types of knowledge hoarding practices (such as claiming not to be knowledgeable about a topic, offering other information rather than what was asked for) exist among academia in Turkish Universities, although not prevalent

Table 3: Factors that lead to knowledge hoarding among employees of Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (n= 27)

S/N	Factors that lead to knowledge hoarding	Agree		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%
1	Lack of motivation for sharing of knowledge	21	77.7	6	22.3

2	Industrial disharmony or conflicts	22	81.5	5	18.5
3	Lack of feedback on knowledge sharing among colleagues	22	81.5	5	18.5
4	My supervisor fails to communicate my achievement to management for reward	14	51.8	13	48.2
5	Absence of proper platforms for effective knowledge sharing	19	70.4	8	29.6
6	Age-related personal ego e.g elder to younger ones	18	66.7	9	33.3
7	Status related ego e.g Senior to junior colleagues	20	74.1	7	25.9
8	Discontent with the employer	16	59.3	11	40.7
9	Unnecessary competition and rivalry among employees	23	85.2	4	14.8
10	Fear of open or public criticism	19	70.4	8	29.6
11	Lack of organizational or management support for knowledge sharing	21	77.8	6	22.2
12	Lack of trust among employees	22	81.5	5	18.5
13	Fear of others taking credit for your initiative	19	70.4	8	29.6
14	Fear of being advised wrongly	18	66.7	9	33.3

Table 3 shows different factors that lead to knowledge hoarding among personnel in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. 77.7% of the respondents agreed that lack of motivation for sharing of knowledge and industrial disharmony/ conflicts in the workplace are part of reasons why employees hoard useful knowledge. Also, some 81.5% equally agreed that lack of feedback on knowledge sharing among colleagues; and absence of proper platforms for effective knowledge sharing (70.4%) were major factors. In addition, some 74.1% also claimed that status related ego was also a major factor why employees keep useful knowledge. Similarly, some 70.4% others agreed that fear of other colleagues to take credit for their initiatives may lead them to hoard useful information.

This finding is in line with Kilduff et al. (2010) and Peng (2013) who attributed these factors to strong feelings of psychological ownership towards knowledge among employees. Also, this new finding is in line with Ryan and Shinnick (2011) that it is natural for employees to hoard

knowledge and also Demirkasımođlu (2016) that personality traits of employees is a major factor that determines if they hoard useful knowledge or not.

Table 4: Effect of knowledge hoarding on performance of Nimbe Adedipe Library (n=27)

S/N	Effect of knowledge hoarding	Agree		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%
1	Knowledge hoarding can lead to lack of creativity among employees	27	100	-	-
2	It can inhibit the realization of the overall organizational goals and objectives	26	96.3	1	3.7
3	It can leads to knowledge drain	26	96.3	1	-
4	It can affect individual or group job performance	26	96.3	1	3.7
5	It can lead to loss of financial resources	23	85.2	4	11.1
6	It can lead to career stagnation	26	96.3	1	-
7	It affects free flow of work	26	96.3	1	3.7
8	It can lead to industrial disharmony	26	96.3	1	3.7
9	Lack of knowledge sharing among employees can bring the organization down	25	92.6	2	7.4

Table 4 reveals various impacts of knowledge hoarding on work performance of employees in of Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. The Table reveals that all respondents (100%) agreed that knowledge hoarding can lead to lack of creativity among employees; while 92.6% believed that it can bring the organization down. Similarly, 96.3% claimed that it can inhibit the realization of the overall organizational goals and objectives; and also leads to knowledge drain, affects free flow of work and leads to industrial disharmony, respectively. This finding is similar to Connelly (2012) and Mutage and Dewah (2021) that knowledge hoarding can inhibit library services delivery and attainment of the overall library objectives.

Conclusion

This study has established that knowledge hoarding practice exist among personnel in Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta. Also, the study

discovered that there are various factors that lead to knowledge hoarding among the staff. Furthermore it examined the impact of knowledge hoarding on the organizational achievement. Hence, a thorough examination of the relationship between knowledge hoarding and organizational achievement suggests that through its adverse effect on the progress of library service delivery, knowledge hoarding indirectly reduces organizational achievement, and can as well leads to the collapse of the organization.

Recommendations

1. The staff should be motivated by the library management on knowledge sharing activities through reward, compensation and promotion.
2. Library management should formulate policies to make it possible for staff to share knowledge and also create enabling environment and platforms for knowledge sharing practices.
3. Library management should put in place a system to reduce knowledge hoarding and do a lot of advocacy to remove this complex barrier to progress.
4. Unnecessary rivalry among employees should be discouraged as it is inimical to knowledge sharing.
5. Also, the library management needs to create and sustain an organizational culture that promotes knowledge sharing among the library staff.

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