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A SURVEY OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING BEHAVIOUR OF UNDERGRADUATES IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OYE EKITI

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the knowledge-sharing behaviour of undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti. This study investigated knowledge-creation practices, and strategies employed to enhance knowledge-sharing among undergraduates. A descriptive survey research design was used. The target population for this study consisted of all undergraduates who enrolled in the university during the 2023/2024 academic session. Data collection involved a structured questionnaire distributed to 230 undergraduates selected undergraduates through stratified random sampling. Experts in educational research and knowledge management reviewed the questionnaire to ensure its validity. A pilot study was also conducted with a small group of students to test the reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to determine internal consistency, aiming for a value of 0.70 or higher. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data. The results indicated that students actively engaged in knowledge sharing, with collaborative environments and peer interactions being significant motivators. Additionally, the study identified effective knowledge-creation practices, highlighting how students utilized collaborative methods and engaged in group activities to generate new knowledge. Strategies such as targeted initiatives and programs were found to be essential in promoting knowledge-sharing behaviours. In conclusion, the study underscored the importance of creating an environment that supports knowledge sharing and highlights the need for universities to implement strategies that promote collaborative learning among students.

Keywords: Knowledge sharing behaviour, knowledge creation practices, undergraduate students, Federal University Oye-Ekiti.

Introduction

The contemporary educational landscape underscores the critical importance of knowledge sharing among undergraduate students as a catalyst for fostering collaborative learning environments. In a university setting, knowledge sharing is not merely a transaction of information; it is a dynamic process that thrives on collaboration, discussion, and the free flow of ideas. This exchange occurs not only within formal learning environments such as classrooms but also in informal spaces like student study groups, research labs, and campus events. It is driven by a collective pursuit of understanding and a shared commitment to academic and intellectual advancement. Knowledge sharing catalyzes fostering a vibrant intellectual community where diverse perspectives converge. It

enhances the learning experience by providing students with exposure to a variety of viewpoints, methodologies, and areas of expertise. It goes beyond textbooks and lectures, offering a holistic understanding of a subject through peer interactions. Knowledge sharing facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together individuals with different specialities to address complex problems and contribute to the advancement of their respective fields (Luna-Reyes et al., 2019). For faculty and staff, knowledge sharing is integral to professional development. Sharing research findings, teaching strategies, and best practices fosters a culture of continuous learning and ensures that the academic community remains at the forefront of their respective disciplines.

Knowledge sharing strengthens the sense of community within a university. It creates bonds among students, faculty, and staff, fostering a supportive environment where everyone is invested in each other's success and growth. The ability to share knowledge is a crucial skill for students as they prepare for their future careers. McGunagle & Zizka, (2020). It not only enhances their communication and collaboration skills but also equips them to navigate an ever-changing professional landscape where the ability to adapt and learn continuously is paramount. Knowledge sharing in a university setting is the lifeblood of intellectual growth, collaboration, and the pursuit of excellence. Arundel et al., (2021). It forms the foundation for creating a vibrant academic community that not only imparts knowledge but actively engages in the creation and dissemination of new ideas.

Rosaline, (2020) Defined knowledge sharing as the shared practices and activities, the sharing of information and exchanges of best practices to share knowledge means to learn, understand, extend and repeat the information, the ideas, the views and the resources with each other, connected with on a specific ground. At the students' level, knowledge sharing involves talking to colleagues to get things done better, more quickly or more efficiently. At the institutional level, knowledge sharing involves capturing, organising and transferring experience-based knowledge that resides within the organisation and making it available to others not only as business strategies but also in changing employees' attitudes and behaviours to promote willingness and consistent knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing encompasses face-to-face discussion with colleagues at bars, coffee shops, and classrooms, the use of sign language, coaching, instruction in the form of teaching, listening, email exchange, e-learning platform, phone-mail system, discussion groups and interactions in the form of conversations, dialogues and chats that provide opportunities to maintain social relationships thereby enabling a wider reach for knowledge shared among colleagues.

Knowledge-sharing behaviour refers to the actions, attitudes, and practices individuals exhibit when exchanging information, insights, expertise, or experiences with others within an organizational or community context. Abdelwhab Ali et al., (2019). It constitutes a fundamental aspect of organisational dynamics and contributes significantly to collective learning, innovation, and problem-solving. At its essence, knowledge-sharing behaviour embodies a willingness to contribute to the collective knowledge pool and engage in collaborative endeavours for mutual benefit. This behaviour encompasses various dimensions, including communication, collaboration, seeking and receiving knowledge, teaching and mentoring, contributing to knowledge repositories, networking, and overcoming barriers to

sharing. Ribeiro & Nagano,(2023). Communication plays a central role in knowledge-sharing behaviour as it serves as the primary mechanism through which individuals disseminate knowledge to others within an organizational or community context. Obrenovic et al., (2020). Effective communication involves the clear and efficient transmission of information, insights, and expertise through both verbal and written means. In the context of knowledge sharing, communication takes various forms, including conversations, presentations, emails, and reports. Through conversations, individuals engage in direct dialogue with their peers, exchanging ideas, discussing concepts, and sharing their expertise on specific topics.

Statement of the Problem

In today's knowledge-driven society, effective knowledge sharing among students is crucial for academic success and personal development. However, there is a growing concern regarding the knowledge-sharing behaviour of undergraduates, particularly in Nigerian universities like the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE). Despite the increasing access to information and communication technologies, many students may still face barriers that inhibit their willingness or ability to share knowledge with peers. Preliminary observations suggest that undergraduates at FUOYE may not fully engage in knowledge-sharing practices, potentially due to factors such as lack of awareness, inadequate collaboration opportunities, or cultural influences that discourage open communication. Additionally, there is limited understanding of how these behaviours impact not only individual learning outcomes but also the overall academic environment. This study seeks to investigate the current state of knowledge-sharing behaviour among undergraduates at FUOYE to provide insights that can inform strategies to enhance knowledge-sharing among students, thereby fostering a collaborative learning culture that benefits the entire academic community.

Objective of the study

The general objective of this study is to examine the knowledge-sharing behaviour of undergraduates at Federal University Oye Ekiti. The Specific Objectives are to:

1. assess the knowledge-sharing behaviours and practices among undergraduates at FUOYE.
2. examine the knowledge creation practices employed by undergraduates and the factors that influence them at FUOYE.
3. evaluate the strategies used to enhance knowledge-sharing behaviour among undergraduates at FUOYE

Research questions

The following corresponding research questions were raised to guide the conduct of this study

1. What is the knowledge-sharing behaviour of undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE)?
2. What are the knowledge creation practices among undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti?
3. What are the strategies employed to enhance knowledge-sharing behaviour among undergraduates?

Research Method

Research Design: This study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the knowledge-sharing behaviour of undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE). This approach allowed for the collection of quantitative data from a sample of students, providing insights into their behaviours, practices, and perceptions regarding knowledge sharing.

Population and Sample Size: The target population for this study consisted of all

undergraduates enrolled at FUOYE. Based on the total student population, a sample size of 230 students was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across various faculties and levels of study.

Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling was utilized to divide the undergraduate population into strata based on factors such as department and level of study. This method ensured that each subgroup was adequately represented in the sample, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of knowledge-sharing behaviours across different demographics.

Data Collection Instruments: Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed specifically for this study. The questionnaire included: Demographic Information: gender, and department level of study. As well as questions and or survey items that addressed other research questions.

Validity and Reliability: To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, it was reviewed by experts in educational research and knowledge management. A pilot study was also conducted with a small group of students to test the reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to determine internal consistency, aiming for a value of 0.70 or higher.

Data Collection Procedure: The questionnaires were distributed to the selected sample of 230 students during a designated period. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their consent was obtained before participation. Data collection occurred in a controlled environment, ensuring that students could respond freely and confidentially.

Data Analysis: Quantitative data collected from the questionnaires were analysed using statistical software (e.g., SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data.

Ethical Considerations: Ethical approval was sought from the relevant university authorities. Participants were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. Informed consent was obtained before data collection, and participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Presentation of Results

Table 1: Socio-demographical characteristics (n = 230)

Variables	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	120	52.2
	Male	110	47.8
Department	Business Administration	60	26.1
	Computer Science	50	21.7
	Economics	40	17.4
	Accounting	40	17.4
	Others	40	17.4
Level	100 Level	60	26.1
	200 Level	70	30.4
	300 Level	50	21.7
	400 Level	50	21.7

Table 1 indicates the sample consists of 120 female students (52.2%) and 110 male students (47.8%), indicating a slightly higher representation of female students. The largest department representation is Business Administration with 60 students (26.1%), followed by Computer Science with 50 students (21.7%). Economics,

Accounting, and other unspecified departments each have 40 students (17.4%). The majority of the students are in the 200 Level with 70 students (30.4%). There are 60 students (26.1%) in the 100 Level, 50 students (21.7%) in the 300 Level, and another 50 students (21.7%) in the 400 Level. There are no students represented from the 500 Level.

Analysis of research questions

Research question one: what is the knowledge-sharing behaviour of undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE)

Table 2: Knowledge sharing behaviour of undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE)

Statement/survey items	Strongly Agree F(%)	Agree F(%)	Disagree F(%)	Strongly Disagree F(%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
I believe that knowledge sharing is essential for team and organizational success.	90(39.1)	110(47.8)	20(8.7)	10(4.3)	3.43	0.87
I collaborate with others to share knowledge and co-create new ideas and solutions	80(34.8)	100(43.5)	40(17.4)	10(4.3)	3.30	0.92
I actively seek opportunities to learn from others and share my knowledge	80(34.8)	100(43.5)	40(17.4)	10(4.3)	3.26	0.92
I willingly share my knowledge and expertise with others.	70(30.4)	100(43.5)	50(21.7)	10(4.3)	3.21	0.95
I recognize and reward knowledge-sharing and collaboration with others.	70(30.4)	90(39.1)	50(21.7)	20(8.7)	3.17	0.93
I document and organize my knowledge and experiences to share with others.	60(26.1)	90(39.1)	60(26.1)	20(8.7)	3.04	0.93
I use knowledge management tools and systems to store and retrieve knowledge.	60(26.1)	80(34.8)	70(30.4)	20(8.7)	3.00	0.95

Table 2 shows the results that the undergraduate students at the Federal University Oye Ekiti (FUOYE) exhibit moderately positive knowledge-sharing behaviour. The mean of 3.43 is the highest among the items, indicating that the students strongly agree that knowledge sharing is essential for success. A mean of 3.30 suggests that the students frequently collaborate with others to share knowledge and co-create new ideas and solutions. Students generally agree with this statement, suggesting they are proactive in seeking learning opportunities and sharing their knowledge (mean of 3.26). A mean of 3.21 suggests that the students are generally willing to share their knowledge and expertise with their peers. The mean of 3.17 indicates that the students generally recognize and reward knowledge sharing and collaboration among their peers. The lowest among the items indicates that the students have a relatively lower tendency to document and organize their knowledge for sharing purposes (mean of 3.04). The mean of 3.00 suggests that the students have a moderate level of utilization of knowledge management tools and systems to store and retrieve knowledge. Implications: The students exhibit a generally positive attitude and behaviour towards knowledge sharing, which is a crucial aspect for enhancing the learning and academic success of the university community. However, there is room for improvement in certain areas, such as the documentation and organization of knowledge, as well as the utilization of knowledge management tools and systems. Implementing strategies to encourage and support the students in these areas could

further enhance the overall knowledge-sharing culture and collaborative learning environment at the university. Providing training and resources on effective knowledge management practices, as well as recognizing and rewarding knowledge-sharing behaviours, could be beneficial in this regard.

Research objective two: What are the knowledge creation practices among undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti?

Table 3: Knowledge creation practices among undergraduates at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE)

Statement/survey items	Strongly Agree F(%)	Agree F(%)	Disagree F(%)	Strongly Disagree F(%)		Std. Dev.
I primarily organize my academic knowledge at FUOYE through structured note-taking and formal documentation.	52(22.6)	103(44.8)	55(23.9)	20(8.7)	3.81	0.91
When preparing for exams or assignments, creating detailed outlines or summaries is the most effective method for organizing my knowledge.	60(26.1)	115(50.0)	40(17.4)	15(6.5)	3.96	0.85
I regularly reflect on my experiences and learning to identify new knowledge and insights.	47(20.4)	112(48.7)	55(23.9)	16(7.0)	3.82	0.87
I experiment and try new approaches to develop new knowledge and skills.	42(18.3)	101(43.9)	67(29.1)	20(8.7)	3.72	0.91
I recognize and reward knowledge creation and sharing with others.	38(16.5)	93(40.4)	76(33.0)	23(10.0)	3.63	0.92
I am willing to take risks and challenge assumptions to create new knowledge.	45(19.6)	92(40.0)	72(31.3)	21(9.1)	3.70	0.92
; I observe my peers using the formal organization of knowledge more frequently at FUOYE.	54(23.5)	113(49.1)	50(21.7)	13(5.7)	3.90	0.85

Table 3 reveals the students generally exhibit a positive attitude towards knowledge creation, with the majority agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statements. The highest mean of 3.96, this item indicates that the students strongly believe that creating detailed outlines or summaries is the most effective method for organizing their knowledge when preparing for exams or assignments. The students strongly agree that they observe their peers using the formal organization of knowledge more frequently at FUOYE with a mean of 3.90. The mean of 3.82 suggests that the students frequently engage in reflective practices to identify new knowledge and insights from their experiences and learning. Students generally agree with this statement, suggesting a strong tendency towards formal organization of knowledge through structured note-taking and documentation (mean of 3.81). The mean of 3.72 indicates that the students moderately agree that they experiment and try new approaches to

develop new knowledge and skills. Generally, students are willing to take risks and challenge assumptions to create new knowledge with a mean of 3.70. The lowest mean of 3.63, suggesting that the students have a relatively lower tendency to recognize and reward knowledge creation and sharing among their peers. Implications: The students at FUOYE exhibit a strong preference for formal organization of knowledge, particularly through structured note-taking and the creation of detailed outlines or summaries. The students also engage in reflective practices and are willing to experiment with new approaches to develop new knowledge and skills. However, the relatively lower mean for recognizing and rewarding knowledge creation and sharing with others suggests an area for improvement in terms of fostering a more collaborative and supportive knowledge-sharing culture. Developing strategies to encourage and recognize knowledge creation and sharing among the students could further enhance the overall knowledge management and innovation capabilities within the university. The observed prevalence of formal organization of knowledge among the students' peers suggests that this approach is widely accepted and practised within the university community.

Research question three: What are the strategies employed to enhance knowledge-sharing behaviour among undergraduates?

Table 4: the strategies employed to enhance knowledge-sharing behaviour among undergraduate

Statement	Strongly Agree F(%)	Agree F(%)	Disagree F(%)	Strongly Disagree F(%)	Mean	Std. Dev
FUOYE could implement more initiatives or programs to further encourage and facilitate knowledge sharing among undergraduate students.	58(25.22)	126(54.78)	30(13.04)	16(6.96)	3.98	0.83
An emphasis on collaboration and teamwork within FUOYE fosters a culture of knowledge sharing among undergraduate students.	52(22.61)	133(57.83)	30(13.04)	15(6.52)	3.96	0.80
Open communication channels at FUOYE encourage undergraduate students to share knowledge with their peers.	48(20.87)	128(55.65)	36(15.65)	18(7.83)	3.90	0.83
Peer influence plays a significant role in shaping undergraduate students' knowledge-sharing behaviour at FUOYE.	44(19.13)	130(56.52)	38(16.52)	18(7.83)	3.87	0.83
The physical environment and facilities provided by FUOYE influence the frequency and effectiveness of knowledge sharing among undergraduate students.	46(20.00)	122(53.04)	40(17.39)	22(9.57)	3.83	0.87
Supportive faculty and staff play a crucial role in encouraging knowledge sharing among undergraduate students at FUOYE.	42(18.26)	124(53.91)	44(19.13)	20(8.70)	3.82	0.84

Statement	Strongly Agree F(%)	Agree F(%)	Disagree F(%)	Strongly Disagree F(%)	Mean	Std. Dev
The recognition of knowledge-sharing efforts by the university motivates undergraduate students to engage in knowledge-sharing activities.	40(17.39)	118(51.30)	48(20.87)	24(10.43)	3.75	0.88

Table 4 gives an account of how FUOYE can develop a more comprehensive strategy to enhance knowledge-sharing behaviour among its undergraduate students. This can lead to improved learning outcomes, increased collaboration, and a stronger culture of knowledge exchange within the university. FUOYE could implement more initiatives or programs to further encourage and facilitate knowledge sharing among undergraduate students (Mean = 3.98). An emphasis on collaboration and teamwork within FUOYE fosters a culture of knowledge sharing among undergraduate students (Mean = 3.96). Open communication channels at FUOYE encourage undergraduate students to share knowledge with their peers (Mean = 3.90). Peer influence plays a significant role in shaping undergraduate students' knowledge-sharing behaviour at FUOYE (Mean = 3.87). The physical environment and facilities provided by FUOYE influence the frequency and effectiveness of knowledge sharing among undergraduate students (Mean = 3.83). Supportive faculty and staff play a crucial role in encouraging knowledge sharing among undergraduate students at FUOYE (Mean = 3.82). The recognition of knowledge-sharing efforts by the university motivates undergraduate students to engage in knowledge-sharing activities (Mean = 3.75). Implication: Promoting a collaborative and team-oriented environment is the most important factor in encouraging knowledge sharing among the students. This can be achieved through group projects, team-based learning activities, and fostering a culture of cooperation and mutual support. The university should invest in developing and implementing more targeted initiatives and programs to actively promote and facilitate knowledge sharing among the students. This could include workshops, seminars, mentorship programs, and knowledge-sharing platforms. Ensuring open and effective communication channels, both formal and informal, is crucial for encouraging knowledge sharing among the students. This can include facilitating discussions, providing feedback mechanisms, and creating platforms for exchanging ideas and experiences. Leveraging peer influence and creating a positive peer-to-peer learning environment can be an effective strategy to enhance knowledge sharing among students. This can involve encouraging group-based learning, peer mentoring, and fostering a sense of community. Ensuring a conducive physical environment, such as well-equipped learning spaces, collaborative workspaces, and access to necessary resources, can positively impact the frequency and effectiveness of knowledge sharing among the students. Providing support and encouragement from faculty and staff is an important factor in fostering a knowledge-sharing culture among the students. This can involve training faculty and staff on effective mentoring and facilitation techniques, as well as recognizing and rewarding their efforts in promoting knowledge sharing. Implementing a system of recognition and rewards for students who actively engage in

knowledge sharing can serve as a motivating factor and further encourage such behaviours. This can include awards, scholarships, or other forms of acknowledgement.

Discussion of Findings

The results and findings of this study provide valuable insights into the factors influencing knowledge-sharing behaviour among undergraduate students at FUOYE, these findings are consistent with the existing literature on knowledge-sharing in educational settings (Opeke, & Opele, 2014). Scholars have emphasized the importance of a collaborative and team-oriented environment and the implementation of targeted initiatives and programs (Onifade, Opele & Adelowo, 2015)in fostering knowledge sharing among students. The role of open communication channels, peer influence and the physical environment have also been well documented in the literature. Additionally, the influence of supportive faculty and staff and the recognition of knowledge-sharing efforts have been identified as crucial factors in promoting knowledge-sharing behaviours among students (Yousif et al., 2019). These factors interact and influence the knowledge-sharing behaviour of undergraduate students in various ways. For instance, a strong emphasis on collaboration and teamwork can foster a culture of knowledge sharing (Zheng et al., 2016), where students are more inclined to share their knowledge and learn from their peers (Sabitu, 2021). Similarly, the implementation of targeted initiatives and programs can provide the necessary platforms and incentives for students to engage in knowledge-sharing activities (Adewole & Opele, 2019). Open communication channels, such as formal and informal discussions, can facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences among students, leading to a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. Peer influence can also play a significant role in shaping the knowledge-sharing behaviour of students, as they may be more inclined to share their knowledge if they see their peers actively engaged in such activities (Opele, 2015). The physical environment and facilities provided by the university can impact the frequency and effectiveness of knowledge sharing, as students may be more motivated to collaborate and share their knowledge in well-equipped and conducive learning spaces (Iyanda & Opele, 2015). The support and encouragement from faculty and staff can also positively influence students' willingness to engage in knowledge sharing, as they may feel valued and appreciated for their contributions (Ismaili, 2020). The recognition of knowledge-sharing efforts by the university can serve as a motivating factor, encouraging students to actively participate in knowledge exchange activities.

Conclusion

This study provided comprehensive insights into knowledge-sharing behaviour, knowledge-creation practices, and strategies to enhance knowledge-sharing among undergraduate students at the Federal University Oye-Ekiti. The findings revealed that a collaborative and supportive environment significantly influences students' willingness to share knowledge and engage in knowledge creation. The research highlighted the importance of open communication channels, peer influence, and the role of faculty and staff in fostering a culture of knowledge sharing. Additionally, the physical learning environment emerged as a critical factor, suggesting that well-equipped and conducive spaces can enhance collaborative efforts among students. Given these insights, FUOYE and similar institutions need to implement targeted initiatives and programs that promote collaboration and knowledge

exchange. By recognizing and reinforcing students' contributions to knowledge sharing, universities can cultivate a dynamic learning atmosphere that not only enhances academic success but also prepares students for collaborative work in their future careers. Overall, this study underscores the necessity of creating a supportive ecosystem that encourages knowledge sharing and highlights the potential benefits of such practices for both individual students and the broader academic community.

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