

**KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG STAFF AND STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY  
OF BENIN**

**Eva IYEMISA  
PG/MGS1714748**

**DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING  
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN  
BENIN CITY**

**JUNE, 2019**

**KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG STAFF AND STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY  
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**A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE,  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE.**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE  
AWARD OF POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA DEGREE (PGD) IN  
ACCOUNTING**

**JUNE, 2019.**

## DECLARATION

I declare that:

1. This project report is based on a study undertaken by me in the Department of Accounting, University of Benin, Benin City under the supervision of Dr. J.O. Odia.
2. This work has not been previously submitted for the award of a degree elsewhere
3. All ideas and views are products of my personal research, where the views of others have been expressed, they have been duly acknowledged.

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Eva IYEMISA

PG/MGS1714748

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research project was carried out by Eva IYEMISA with the matriculation number PG/MGS1714748 of the Department of Accounting, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Postgraduate Diploma Degree (PGD) in Accounting.

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**Dr. J.O. Odia**  
**(Project Supervisor)**

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**Prof. A.S Omoye**  
**(Project Coordinator)**

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**Date**

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**Date**

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**Prof. A.S Omoye**  
**(Head of Department)**

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**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to God almighty for his grace, wisdom, inspiration and divine provision. It is also dedicated to my mother Mrs. Beatrice Iyemisa for her contribution and encouragement throughout the course of this program.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to God for helping me throughout the course of this project and giving me the inspiration and strength needed to complete this work.

I must specially appreciate my project supervisor Dr. J.O. Odia, for your constructive critics and suggestions. And appreciate you for creating time to assist me in this project work despite your tight schedule

I want to also use this opportunity to thank everyone that made various contributions: inspirational, moral, emotional financial support towards the completion of the project.

I want to also appreciate all my course mates and friends (especially Chika Asogwa and Tanimola Oluwabunmi). I want to say a big “thank you” to all for your support, encouragement and care.

I am most grateful to my parents Joseph Iyemisa and Beatrice Iyemisa for giving me the first platform to stand on, thank you for your love, sacrifice and commitment. I also want to acknowledge my siblings Rogers, Mamie, Solomon, Jacinta and Valentina for their love and support.

Thank you all.

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## ABSTRACT

*The study examined knowledge sharing among students and among staff in the University of Benin. The objective of the study was to examine the means of knowledge sharing, factors that enhances knowledge sharing, barriers to knowledge sharing, and importance of knowledge sharing among student and among staff. The methodology adopted in the study was the survey method using simple random sampling to acquire a representative sample. The questionnaire was administered to 100 students and 100 staff of the University of Benin and analyzed using percentage and mean. The findings of the study revealed that knowledge sharing occurs among students and among staff through the social media, online discussion groups, tutorials, peer coaching, conferences, lecturing etc, the factors that enhances knowledge sharing among students and among staff are the availability of teamwork spirit, availability of reward or incentives, flexible organization structure, trust, motivation, good leadership style, collaborative working environments etc. The barriers to knowledge sharing were lack of time, lack of knowledge sharing culture, fear of providing wrong information, rigid organizational structure, inadequate technological resources, inadequate awareness on knowledge sharing etc. Improvement in performance, increment in knowledge capacity, encouragement of collaboration etc were highlights of the importance of knowledge sharing. Conclusion drawn was that Knowledge sharing improves students and staff performance in general and as a result, the performance and standard of the academic institution is improved. Therefore, it was recommended that university of Benin should bring to students and staffs awareness the importance of knowledge sharing. There should also be provision of knowledge sharing infrastructures and less emphasis should be placed on grade as it may encourage students to view knowledge as power.*

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

In recent times, there is a strong emphasis on knowledge in the world at large due to the fact that world is in the era of information age characterised by knowledge. Profit and non profit organisation must rely on knowledge for enhanced growth and survival. The importance of knowledge in general cannot be overemphasised, with this view in mind; there is an increasing interest in understanding the mechanism and process that facilitate the transfer of knowledge among people and in organisations. Knowledge is seen as the driving force for enhanced productivity, economic growth and survival, innovations etc. Knowledge goes beyond mere information, when information is combined with context and experience, with the introduction of human factor, it becomes knowledge. Knowledge is originated from intelligence of individuals and it is visible in task, systems, procedures, norms and customs which are difficult to imitate. Research Centre at Boston College (Jacobson & Prusak, 2006) shows that employees of various organizations spent less than 17% of their time searching and organizing information and more than 80% of their time eliciting, interpreting and applying it.

Knowledge management is the process of creating, sharing, using and managing the knowledge and information of an organisation. It refers to a multidisciplinary approach to achieving organisational objectives by making the best use of knowledge. Knowledge management efforts typically focus on organisational objectives such as improved performance, competitive advantage, innovation, the sharing of lessons learned, integration and continuous improvement of the organisation (Wikipedia 2019). Knowledge management is a systematic process of acquiring, organising, sustaining, sharing and renewing both tacit and explicit knowledge to ensure improved performance, increased productivity and increase in values. It can be inferred from the above that a component of knowledge management is knowledge sharing.

Knowledge sharing is a part of human daily life, it involves every activity through which knowledge is transferred or communicated among people, colleagues, subordinates, friends etc. Knowledge is not something that should be stored; it is something that should be shared, sharing knowledge in generally increases and improves existing knowledge of the parties involved. knowledge sharing is viewed as “the provision of task information and know-how to help others and to collaborate with others to solve problems, develop new ideas, or implement policies or procedures.” knowledge sharing can occur by direct interaction between individual (face-to-face), communication via online means, documents, handbooks, and expert lecturing (cummings,2004).

Internal sharing of knowledge enables organizations to utilize the organizational knowledge-based resources such as employees’ expertise for innovation, organizational learning, the development of new skills and capabilities, increased productivity, and maintaining a competitive advantage (Cabrera &Cabrera, 2005) Staffs and students in the universities are required to share their knowledge and expertise to maintain their place in this era of information age. Knowledge sharing is an activity that aims to share knowledge and expertise among academic staff and other stakeholders so as to promote evidence based practice and decision making. Knowledge sharing is an important process in institution of higher learning because it is

fundamental to developing new ideas and developing new business opportunities through socialisation and the learning process of knowledge workers.

Knowledge is considered useful to the society once it is shared with others; knowledge sharing ensures that the practice and policy are based on sound evidence. For this to happen, the gaps among research, practice and policy must be bridged. Effective knowledge management strategies must emphasise the role of knowledge sharing to achieve maximum result for academic institutions particularly universities. As knowledge sharing increases knowledge, organisations culture, learning environment should be support to share knowledge to increase its usefulness because knowledge sharing ensures that knowledge is always retained in an organisation.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Knowledge sharing is an important tool for meeting the needs of institutions of higher learning especially in the time of limited available resources. Despite the obvious need of knowledge sharing in institutions of higher learning, there is little empirical research that shed light on how knowledge is shared, factors that affects knowledge sharing both positively and negatively, knowledge sharing attitude or behaviour among students and among staff. There is also relatively little evidence of the awareness of students and staffs on the importance of knowledge sharing as a tool for meeting enhanced academic and non academic performance in Nigerian universities. Therefore the study examines the extent to which students and staff are involved in knowledge sharing in the University of Benin

## **1.3 Research Questions**

In order to guide the study, the following questions were raised:

1. What are the means of knowledge sharing among staff and among students in the university?

2. What are the factors that enhance knowledge sharing among staff and among students?
3. What are the barriers to knowledge sharing among students and among staff in the university?
4. What is the attitude or behaviour of students and staff toward knowledge sharing statement?
5. What are the importance of knowledge sharing among students and staff in the university?

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify means of knowledge sharing among staff and among students in the university.
2. To ascertain the factors that positively affects knowledge sharing among students and among staff in the university
3. To ascertain the barriers to knowledge sharing among students and among staff in the university.
4. To ascertain attitude or behaviour towards knowledge sharing among staff and among students in the university.
5. To bring to light the importance of knowledge sharing among student and among staff in the university.

#### **1.6 Scope of the study**

The scope of the study is to analyse knowledge sharing among students and among staff in the University of Benin, Benin City, in the area of importance of knowledge sharing, factors that enhances knowledge sharing, means by which knowledge can be exchanged, barriers to knowledge sharing and knowledge sharing attitude and behaviour among students and among staff.

It is limited to students (undergraduates and postgraduate) and staffs (academic and non academic) of the University of Benin, Benin City.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The findings of the study will benefit the school administration and managers, the academic and non academic staff, the students, field of education and the world at large in regards to the importance of knowledge sharing in the institution of higher learning. Performance, factors affecting knowledge sharing, means of knowledge sharing will improve knowledge sharing in general.

An understanding of the factors militating against knowledge sharing among students and among staff could be reconsidered and reviewed by the members of institutions of higher learning so as to ensure that such factors are eradicated or minimised. Also, an understanding of the factors that enhances knowledge sharing among students and among staffs could bring about the improvement in knowledge sharing as these factors will be encouraged or built upon.

The findings of the study will also bring to light appropriate medium, knowledge can be shared among staff and among students of tertiary institutions.

The data to be derived from this research will assist future researchers who want to investigate further on this topic, thereby benefiting the field of education or research society and the world at large.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVEIW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter addresses conceptual and theoretical framework as regard knowledge sharing in institutions of higher learning.. It presents a review of previous studies that are related to the study in view. Variables identified on the subject matter are also critically examined. The study also takes a look at various empirical studies on knowledge sharing by various researchers in various countries

#### **2.2 The Concept of Knowledge and Knowledge Management**

In many developed countries today, competition is not based so much on cost alone, but more on the production and development of knowledge-based products and services. Knowledge is today regarded as a factor of production together with land, labour and capital. As the world moves towards a ‘knowledge-based economy’, knowledge is being considered as the main driver of the new economy. The success of economies in the future is going to be based on how companies or organizations acquire, use and leverage knowledge effectively (Bircham-Connoly, Corner & Bowden, 2005).

Knowledge could be defined as facts, information acquired through experience or education: the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. It can also be defined as a fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association. The term knowledge is more confusing

aspects of knowledge sharing. The terms information and data are often used interchangeably with the term knowledge. Therefore, to understand Knowledge Sharing concept, distinctions have to be made first between data, information, and knowledge to clear up confusion on the differences and relationships in this continuum.

Data is considered to be the combination of words, sounds and figures without some contextual details; after arranging the data into meaningful pattern it becomes Information which can provide the reader some results regarding particular things. Knowledge is perceived as meaningful information. Knowledge is an understanding, and people gains knowledge through experience, reasoning, intuition and learning. Individuals expand their knowledge when knowledge sharing occurs.

Knowledge management can be defined as the organizational “...efforts designed to (1) capture knowledge; (2) convert personal knowledge to group-available knowledge; (3) connect people to people, people to knowledge, knowledge to people and knowledge to knowledge; and (4) measure that knowledge to facilitate management of resources and help understand its evolution” (O’Leary, 2002a, p. 273). Knowledge management systems (KMS) focus on bringing together the explicit knowledge that exists in organizations, the *know-what* that can be easily documented and shared (Sambamurthy & Subramani 2005) such as basic definitional information (e.g. technical terminology), procedures for performing tasks (e.g. audit checklists), guidelines for interpretation (e.g. GAAP guidance), and previous problem resolution examples (e.g. client memos outlining solutions to issues raised)—information often referred to as “three-ring binder” knowledge (Dilnutt, 2002). Knowledge management is defined as an organisational capability for leveraging its knowledge assets in order to make the organisation more competitive (Gold et al., 2001)

### **2.3 Classification of Knowledge**

Knowledge in organization is often classified into two types:

### ➤ **Explicit Knowledge**

Nonaka (1994) defines explicit knowledge as knowledge that is formal, systematic, and can be codified into records such as databases and libraries (cited in Polyani 1997). Barth (2002) defines explicit knowledge as knowledge that can be processed by information systems, codified or recorded, archived and protected by organizations. Choi and Lee (2003) define explicit knowledge as knowledge that can be documented, created, written down, transferred verbally or through some medium of communication such as emails, telephone or information systems. Explicit knowledge (also expressive knowledge) is knowledge that can be readily articulated, codified, stored and accessed. It can be easily transmitted to others. Most form of explicit knowledge can be stored in certain media. It is often seen as complementary to tacit knowledge (Wikipedia, 2019)

### ➤ **Tacit Knowledge**

Polyani (1997) defines tacit knowledge as knowledge that is highly personal and is embedded in a person's daily work practice (cited in Nonaka, 1994). Barth (2002) defines tacit knowledge as knowledge that exists in people's mind and is quite difficult to transfer. Tacit knowledge is informal knowledge that is embedded in mental processes, is obtained through experience and work practices, and can be transferred by observing and applying it (Choi & Lee, 2003). Tacit knowledge is difficult to transfer to another person. Tacit knowledge is the knowledge that people have in their minds or in their own possession. It generally requires extensive personal contact and trust to share effectively.

## **2.4 The Concept of Knowledge Sharing**

Knowledge sharing is defined as the extent to which knowledge is being shared (Shapira, Youtie, Yogeessvaran & Jaafar, 2005). Knowledge sharing refers to the 'process of capturing knowledge or moving knowledge from a source unit to a recipient unit' (Bircham-Connolly et al. 2005). Knowledge sharing is 'a

process whereby a resource is given by one part and received by another and for sharing to occur, there must be exchange' (Sharratt & Usoro, 2003). Knowledge sharing also refers to the exchange of knowledge between at least two parties in a reciprocal process allowing reshape and sense making of the knowledge in the new context (Willem, 2003).

Knowledge sharing in its broadest sense, refer to the communication of all types of knowledge, which includes explicit knowledge or information, the 'know-how' and 'know-who' which are the types of knowledge that can be documented and captured as information and tacit knowledge in the form of skill and competencies. Knowledge sharing can be considered an important process in organizations, because it is fundamental to generating new ideas and developing new business opportunities through socialization and the learning process of knowledge workers. In today's business world, knowledge sharing is said to be power because of the benefit to the sharers (giver and receiver) and the organization (chahal & savita, n.d.) Knowledge sharing is embedded within the knowledge-processing scope where knowledge is generated and put to use (Shapira, et al., 2005).

Any knowledge sharing process consists of two parts – donating and collecting. Knowledge donating can be defined as 'communicating to others what one's personal one's intellectual capital', whereas knowledge collecting is defined as 'consulting colleagues in order to get them share their intellectual capital (Van den Hoff & de Ridder, 2004). Peoria and Illinois (2003) in their research paper "Knowledge Sharing" suggested that a corporate university's knowledge sharing mission was to provide efficient, reliable, and easy access to improving performance.

## **2.5 Medium of Knowledge Sharing in Universities**

Meenakshi and Sundari (2003) in their research on knowledge sharing in schools in Singapore found that knowledge sharing by teachers occurs through casual meetings, online communications, peer coaching and interactive workshops (cited in Chaudhry, 2005, p. 3).

A research conducted in Singapore by Chang (2003) found that Knowledge sharing takes place on an 'Informal basis' through face to face communication and collaborative workgroups (cited in Chaudhry, 2005, p.3). In the same view Oketunji (2001) opined that the functions of ICT has been to provide a way for academic staff and students to have better access to each other and as a tool to facilitate research. He went further to say that the internet is the world's most efficient means of Communication when compared to other sources. Olalude (2007) also reported that the internet is a powerful and efficient tool for sharing; searching, retrieving and disseminating information among students

Nwalo and Oguniyi (2012) maintained that resource sharing as an instrument for research and communication has opened up numerous possibilities for sharing information at local and global levels and access to Information on latest research findings with the coming of Information and Communication Technology, it has made knowledge sharing easier among the academic staff. This was supported by Owolabi and Attama (2007) that internet resource is an invaluable tool for Knowledge Sharing because it allows for collaborative research among academic staff.

The following are the medium of knowledge sharing among students and among staffs:

- Online discussion forum
- Seminar and defence
- Interactive workshop
- Casual meetings
- Discussion groups

- Tutorial
- Peer coaching
- Personal interactions
- Internet/ social media
- Conferences
- Lectures /teaching

## **2.6 Factors That Affects Knowledge Sharing**

The factors that affect Knowledge sharing are numerous; these factors can be divided into factors that enhance knowledge sharing, and barriers to knowledge sharing (factors that militate against knowledge sharing).

A study done in Singapore found that Knowledge sharing is influenced by cultural factors, motivation to share knowledge, management support, trust, teamwork spirit, and the degree to which knowledge is considered as a source of power (Neo, 2002 cited in Chaudhry,2005, p 3). The success of knowledge sharing may also be influenced by the need to have a reward mechanism, good leadership, trust, and corporate culture that promotes Knowledge sharing (Lee, 2004).

Sharrat and Uoro (2003) found that Knowledge sharing is influenced by the organizational structure (centralized and decentralized), technical infrastructure, trust, motivation and sense of community. Flexible organizations usually are better prepared to implement knowledge sharing strategies as compared to more bureaucratic organizational structures.

Willem (2003) in her doctorate dissertation found that knowledge sharing is highly influenced by trust, opportunistic behaviour and politicking. Some employees also see knowledge sharing as a threat to future

career advancement. This view, which is known as ‘kiasu mentality’, was found to be inherent in a study done by Chua (2002) in Singapore (cited in Chaudhry, 2005, p. 3).

Pauline and Mason (2002) in an empirical research on barriers of knowledge management (KM) in New Zealand found that barriers are mainly internal to the organization. Organizational culture, leadership and management practices and lack of awareness and vision about knowledge management were the main barriers inhibiting knowledge management implementation.

Colomar and Sarnoff (n.d.) in a case study at Burson Marsteller, a professional services firm, found the “knowledge is power” mentality among the staff a major hurdle hindering effective knowledge sharing. Staffs were found to resist sharing insights and ideas due to lack of time and fear of losing value within the organization.

Yang and Wan (2004) showed that people partially shared knowledge with others because they feared their colleagues would be promoted faster. It seems that people hoard their knowledge in fear that their performance rewards will be taken by others. The existence of performance rewards in the workplace might form a competitive environment that could impede knowledge sharing. However, organizations cannot ignore the positive impacts of performance rewards on employee motivation. In order to balance motivating employees and encouraging knowledge sharing, it is important to find out which performance rewards could enhance knowledge sharing, or at least, have less negative impacts on knowledge sharing (Juan & Seonghee n.d).

Culture is also a major obstacle to knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing fails in organizations because firms tend to change their organization’s culture to fit knowledge sharing strategies and practices (Riege 2005). Organizations should come up with knowledge sharing strategies that fit the existing

organization's culture. Knowledge sharing is also viewed separately as a different activity and not part of the organization's objectives (McDermott & O'Dell, 2001).

At the firm level, Riege (2005) identifies the following barriers to knowledge sharing:

- Firms are reluctant to promote knowledge sharing due to lack of economic viability
- Firms, especially smaller organizations, do not have adequate infrastructure or resources to enhance the promotion of knowledge sharing.
- The physical environment of some firms is not conducive to engage and promote Knowledge Sharing activities
- Existing IT systems are not good enough and sometimes there exists mismatches between the organizational needs and what is provided

At the individual level, Riege (2005) noted that barriers to Knowledge sharing include lack of communication skills and social networks, differences in culture, lack of time and lack of trust.

The factors that enhances knowledge sharing at the individual and firm level in general includes Flexible or decentralised organisation structure, Motivation, Management support towards knowledge sharing, Teamwork spirit, Use of good reward mechanism, Corporate organisation structure that promote knowledge sharing, Availability of knowledge sharing infrastructure or forums, Trust, Collaborative working environment, Shared vision, leadership.

The barriers of knowledge sharing at the individual and firm level includes Lack of trust, inadequate communication skills, centralised or rigid organisation structure, 'knowledge is power' mentality, Inadequate awareness or vision about knowledge management, unfavourable management culture toward

knowledge sharing, lack of time, lack of technological resources, restricted communication flow and lack of cross departmental interaction, Lack of collaboration.

## **2.7 Importance of Knowledge Sharing**

Knowledge is seen as an important input in most organizations since it allows the development and creation of competitive advantage. Organizations that can exploit the use of knowledge effectively can remain competitive. Effective knowledge management strategies can enhance efficiency, productivity and ultimately achieve long-term corporate goals.

Effective knowledge transfer and exchange efforts treat knowledge as a means to improve practice and situations by having positive impacts, rather than as an end in itself (Williams Group, 2003).

According to Cummings (2003), knowledge sharing has its roots embedded in the technology transfer and innovation literature. Proper implementation of knowledge sharing can lead to effective innovation, manufacturing processes, organizational designs and quality products (Nelson, 1993 cited in Cummings, 2003, p.3). This clearly shows that effective knowledge sharing practices can enhance the development of new products, as well as new quality processes.

Peoria and Illinois (2003) in their research paper “Knowledge Sharing” suggested that a corporate university’s knowledge sharing mission was to provide efficient, reliable, and easy access to improving performance. Knowledge sharing is also the most important ingredient of innovation (Bhirud et al, 2005).

Igun (2005) maintained that academic staff cannot do without Knowledge Sharing particularly in this era of the information superhighway. According to Owolabi, Bamigboye, Agboola and Lawal (2011) and Cheng and Lau (2005), resource sharing is acknowledged as a means of academic empowerment and development.

Yang (2007) in his research paper “The Impact of Knowledge Sharing on Organizational Learning and Effectiveness” suggested that the sharing process involves more than just collecting data and information, generally, the value of knowledge expanded when it is shared.

Knowledge is a source of lasting competitive advantage (Winter, 1987) and the foundation for the existence of the firm (Grant, 1996). It is utilized by members of the firm, who not only use their own knowledge, but also search and transfer from social and asocial sources, such as other people and artifacts.

Available data from previous research shows that the transfer (or exchange) of knowledge between members has important consequences for a plethora of organizational processes and outcomes, such as the spread of best practices (Szulanski, 1996), organizational learning (e.g., Reagans et al., 2005) and innovation (e.g., Hargadon & Sutton, 1997; Obstfeld, 2005)

Given that the overall goal of knowledge transfer and exchange is to reduce the gap between knowledge and practice, the following are some desirable impact of knowledge transfer:

### **Increased capacity to use knowledge**

In an international study, the World Bank (2005) explains capacity as the ability to use knowledge to make sound decisions and effectively solve problems.

Improving capacity for knowledge uptake requires creating a greater appreciation for knowledge and the contributions that it can make if put into practice (Hennink & Stephenson, 2005). Effective knowledge sharing increases this capacity among students and among staff and in turn improves the performance of education institution. It is about empowering participants to apply the gained knowledge to real-life situations and problems in their own local contexts. Thus knowledge transfer and exchange activities that focus on the application of knowledge (rather than merely the provision of knowledge) can lead to an increase in the capacity of users to interpret and apply what they have learned.

### **Integrating evidence into decision-making**

In many knowledge transfer and exchange efforts, a desirable impact is to influence decision-making processes and make it evidence-based. The knowledge that is produced and exchanged should help users make well informed decisions about the various policies, programs, and projects in which they are involved. This impact is, in fact, a logical consequence of knowledge transfer and exchange. If the information is about the facts that are surrounding issues on which decisions are being made, it should provide various options and perspectives and reveal potential solutions or challenges (Pyra, 2003).

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration is a means and an end to knowledge development, transfer and exchange. Knowledge transfer and exchange happens in the context of relationships (Norman & Huerta 2006). A collaborative environment also embraces the continuity of knowledge exchange among those involved and results in stronger links among groups necessary for better organisation performance.

## 2.8 Knowledge sharing Strategies

The commonly used strategies of knowledge sharing are:

- **Communities of Practice** – this refers to ‘groups of people who do some sort of work together (online or in person) to help each other by sharing tips, ideas and best practices’ (Knowledge sharing in UNFPA, 2003 and Faul & Kemly,2004).
- **Knowledge Networks** – this refers to ‘a more formal and structured team-based collaboration that focuses on domains of knowledge that are critical to the organization (Knowledge sharing in UNFPA, 2003).
- **Retrospect** – this refers to ‘an in-depth discussion that happens after completion of an event, project or an activity, to basically capture lessons learnt during the entire activity’ (Faul and Kemly, 2004). At the end of the session, a documented review of the project process is created. The main idea behind this meeting is to share feedback with decision-makers, improve support from the team, and ultimately enhance team building.
- **Storytelling** – this refers to a storytelling session whereby the person who attends an event or training session is given the opportunity to disseminate the information/knowledge gained to others within the organization (Faul & Kemly, 2004).
- **Other strategies** used are built-in human resources practices that encourage knowledge sharing within the organization (Knowledge sharing in UNFPA, 2003) such as:
  - Rotation policies among staff
  - Training and learning opportunities
  - Mentoring
  - Having policies that recognize and reward individuals as well as teams that share knowledge within the organization

## 2.9 Theoretical framework

A review of the literature revealed that there is no well-defined knowledge sharing theories. Most of the views on knowledge sharing are embedded in knowledge management theories (Sharrat & Usoro, 2003). Apart from the lack of solid theories, there is also a dearth of empirical evidence (Willem, 2003). Most of the writings or research on knowledge is rooted in various disciplines under different names such as:

### **Organisational Theory or Knowledge Base View**

According to organizational theory knowledge is a ‘vital source of competitive advantage’ and when it is integrated effectively, it can create or add value to organizations in the long run. This View is known as the knowledge based view (Perrin, Videl & McGill, 2004).

### **Communication Theory**

Communication theory, on the other hand, argues that for learning to occur in organizations, knowledge must be communicated and shared effectively. According to this theory, knowledge is transferred through communications from the source to the recipient (Shannon and Weaver, 1949 cited in Cummings 2003, p 6).

### **Voluntary, Informal and Knowledge Sharing (VIKS)**

According to VIKS “knowledge sharing occurs without proper planning and it normally occurs on one’s own will without any prior preparation.” VIKS view is an attempt to develop a knowledge sharing theory and views knowledge sharing more as a social interaction activity (Lee, Foo, Chaudhry & Hawandeh, 2004).

## **Codification and Personalisation Perspective**

This approach focuses on how knowledge is being shared and managed in organizations. This view is part of the theory that states that organizations and knowledge can be analysed according to two approaches:

- **The Codification Approach:** According to the codification approach, knowledge can be codified, stored, retrieved, reconstructed and assimilated by those who receive it (Hansen, Nohria & Tierney, 1999). It is also viewed as knowledge that can be collected, stored, and retrieved (Alavi, 1997 and Davenport & Prusak 1998, cited in Heo & Yoo, 2002, p.3). According to Heo and Yoo (2002), knowledge in organizations can be codified to be managed effectively.
- **Personalisation Approach:** The personalization approach looks at knowledge as something that is interactive and is embedded in work practices and relationships (Hansen et al., 1999)

## **Other Approaches to Knowledge Sharing**

Cheng, Ho and Lau (2009) identified two approaches to knowledge sharing among academic staff which is;

- Close network model which is person to person knowledge sharing
- Open network sharing that is sharing through an open repository.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives an overview of the methods, procedures, modalities and sequential steps the researcher intends to adopt in the research work to ensure that the result of investigations are dependable, accurate and valid. It represents a careful description of research design, population and sample, instrumentation, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The design of the study “knowledge sharing among students and among staffs in the University of Benin” is the survey research design (descriptive) in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analysing data from only a few people considered being representation of the entire group of interest. The interest of the descriptive survey research is to describe a certain variable in relation to a certain population of the study.

#### **3.3 Population of the Study**

The population of the study is the totality of the object or elements being studied and to which conclusion or generalisation of the result will apply (Agbonifoh & Yomere 2002). The population of the study comprises students and staffs of the University of Benin.

### **3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique**

In order to obtain a true representative sample for the study, a total of 200 numbers of students and staffs was drawn for the study. Sample was selected using simple random sampling in order to obtain a true representative sample.

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

The main instrument for data collection is the structured written questionnaire titled “Knowledge Sharing among students and among staffs in Nigerian universities, which was structured separately for both students and staff respondents.

It has two sections, section A which contain demographic information of respondents and section B which contains the questions designed to ascertain respondents views on knowledge sharing among students and staffs in the university which has items relating to the research questions raised with a four scale rating of Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) responses with a point value of 4,3,2,1 respectively.

### **3.6 Validity of the Instrument**

The instrument for the study was structured and validated by the supervisor of the study. This is to ensure that the instrument (questionnaire) is capable of measuring that which it was designed to measure. The corrections and suggestions that were made were incorporated in the study.

### **3.7 Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaire was administered fully by the researcher manually to the respondents. Explanation was provided by the researcher for questions regarding the questionnaire items. All questionnaire administered was collected by the researcher.

### **3.8 Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected from respondents regarding the research questions was collated, tabulated and analysed using descriptive statistics technique based on the frequency count. The simple percentage was used in analysing the demographic data and data relating to the research questions raised (section B), the simple mean was used in ranking the items relating to the research question.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introductions

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data gotten through the administration of the questionnaire and discussion of findings. It is organized into two sections as follows:

- Presentation and Analysis of Data
- Discussions of Finding

#### 4.2 Presentation and Analysis of Data

**Table 4.2.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

	Students		Staff	
Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage

Male	41	41%	59	59%
Female	59	59%	41	41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.2.1 above indicates that 41% and 59% of respondents of students and staff respectively were female and 59% and 41% of students and staff respectively were male.

**Table 4.2.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age**

Age	Student		Staff	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25	84	84%	-	-
25-30	10	10%	-	-
31-40	6	6%	-	-
Below 30	-		19	19%
31-35	-		35	35%
36-40	-		24	24%
41-50	-		13	13%
Above 50	-		7	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.2.2 indicates that 84% of respondents (students) were below 25 years, 10% of total respondents (students) range between 25- 30 years and 6% ranges between 31-40 years. The table above also

indicates that 19% of respondents (staff) were below 30 years, 35% of respondents (staff) ranges between 31-35 years, 24% of respondents(staff) ranges between 36-40 years, 13% of total respondents of staff ranges between 41-50 years and 7% of respondents of staffs were above 50 years.

**Table 4.2.3: Distribution of Respondents Population by faculty**

Faculty	Students		Staff	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Management science	42	42%	34	34%
Other faculty	58	58%	65	65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>99%</b>

Table 4.2.3 indicates that 42% of students respondents were from faculty of management science and 58% of student respondents were from other faculty. The table also shows that 34% of staff respondents were from management science and 66% of staff respondents were from other faculty.

**Table 4.2.4: Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status**

	Students	Staff
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<b>Marital status</b>	<b>frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Single	90	92%	34	34%
Married	8	8%	65	65%
Separated	-	-	-	--
Divorced	-	-	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4.2.4 indicates that 92% and 8% of students respondents were single and married respectively no students who responded was divorced or separated. It also indicates that 34%, 65% and 1% of total respondents of staff were single, married and divorced respectively.

**Table 4.2.5: Distribution of Respondents by Level or Qualification**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Student level</b>		<b>Staff qualification</b>	
	<b>frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
100	11	11%	-	-
200	47	47%	-	-
300	16	16%	-	-
400	16	16%	-	-
500	1	1%	-	-
600	1	1%	-	-
PGD	2	2%	2	2%
Bachelor degree	-	-	42	42%
Masters	3	3%	15	15%
PhD	3	3%	26	26%

Others	-	-	11	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>96%</b>

Table 4.2.5 indicates that 11% of students respondents were in 100 level, 47% of students respondents were in 200 level, 16% were in 300 level, 16% were in 400 level, 1% were in 500 level, 1% were in 600 level, 3% were in masters level and 3% were in PhD (doctorate) level.

The table above also shows that 2% of staff respondents were having post graduate diploma (PGD) as their qualification, 42% were having bachelor’s degree as their qualification, 15% were having master degree as their qualification, 28% respondents of staff were having PhD (doctorate) degree as their qualification and 13% were having other qualification apart from the above mentioned qualification.

**Research Question One:** How is knowledge shared among students and among staff in the university?

**Table 4.2.6A: Percentage and Mean Respondents of Students, Ranking of the Medium of Knowledge sharing among students**

S/ N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Online discussion groups or forum	37 %	56%	5%	0%	100%	3.32	4 <sup>th</sup>
2	Interactive workshops	30 %	63%	4%	2%	99%	3.22	5 <sup>th</sup>
3	Casual meetings	24 %	61%	9%	1%	95%	3.14	7 <sup>th</sup>
4	Peer coaching	40 %	55%	4%	1%	100%	3.34	3 <sup>rd</sup>
5	Seminar and defenses	19 %	74%	6%	0%	99%	3.13	8 <sup>th</sup>

6	Social media	26 %	67%	6%	0%	99%	3.20	6 <sup>th</sup>
7	Committee	9%	47%	36%	8%	100%	2.57	9 <sup>th</sup>
8	Conferences	20 %	70%	8%	2%	100%	3.80	1 <sup>st</sup>
9	Tutorials	56 %	43%	1%	0%	100%	3.55	2 <sup>nd</sup>

Table 4.2.6A indicates that respondents agreed to items number 1 to 9 each having a mean above 2.50. From the table above, it shows that the medium of knowledge sharing among students are online discussion groups or forum, interactive workshops, casual meetings, seminar and defense, social media, tutorials and conferences, committee ranks the least which indicates that students may not consider it as a major medium of knowledge sharing amongst students while conferences ranks as the highest as a medium of knowledge sharing among student.

**Table 4.2.6B: Percentage and Mean Respondents of staff, Ranking of the Medium of Knowledge sharing among Staffs in University of Benin**

S/ N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Online discussion groups or forum	27%	53%	13%	7%	100%	3.00	4 <sup>th</sup>
2	Interactive workshops	38%	50%	6%	4%	98%	2.25	8 <sup>th</sup>
3	Casual meetings	19%	61%	17%	3%	100%	2.96	6 <sup>th</sup>
4	Peer coaching	16%	55%	19%	6%	98%	2.87	7 <sup>th</sup>
5	Seminar and defenses	42%	47%	8%	1%	98%	3.33	2 <sup>nd</sup>
6	Social media	37%	43%	17%	2%	99%	3.16	3 <sup>rd</sup>

7	Committee	22%	55%	19%	3%	99%	2.97	5 <sup>th</sup>
8	Conferences	50%	38%	9%	3%	100%	3.35	1 <sup>st</sup>
9	Lecture/teaching	48%	41%	9%	2%	100%	3.35	1 <sup>st</sup>

Table 4.2.6B above indicates that respondents agreed to items number 1 to 9 each having a mean above 2.50. From the table above, it shows that the medium of knowledge sharing among staff are online discussion groups or forum, interactive workshops, casual meetings, peer coaching, seminar and defense, social media, committee conferences and lecture or teaching. From the table above interactive workshop ranks the least as a medium of knowledge transfer among staffs while conferences and lecture or teaching ranks the highest (3.35) medium of knowledge sharing among staff

**Research Question Two:** What are the factors that enhance knowledge sharing among students and among staff in the university?

**Table 4.2.7A: Percentage and Mean Responses of Students Ranking of the Factors that Enhances Knowledge Sharing among Students**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Availability of teamwork spirit	36%	59%	5%	0%	100%	3.31	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	For reward	22%	60%	17%	1%	100%	3.03	6 <sup>th</sup>
3	To gain respect of other student	22%	65%	13%	6%	100%	3.09	4 <sup>th</sup>
4	To impress the teacher	18%	55%	23%	4%	100%	2.81	8 <sup>th</sup>
5	To develop relationship with other students	25%	66%	8%	1%	100%	3.15	3 <sup>rd</sup>
6	self-satisfaction	22%	72%	6%	0%	100%	3.16	2 <sup>nd</sup>

7	To have a feeling of self-belonging	18%	73%	5%	4%	100%	3.05	5 <sup>th</sup>
8	Out of altruism to help others	17%	64%	18%	1%	100%	2.97	7 <sup>th</sup>

Table 4.2.7A shows that respondents agreed to the statement on item number 1 to 8 each having a mean above 2.50 with item number 1 (availability of teamwork spirit) ranking as highest factor that enhances transfer of knowledge among students and item number 8 (out of altruism to help others) ranks the least. From the table above, it shows that the factors that enhance knowledge sharing among students are availability of teamwork spirit, for reward, to gain respect, to impress the teacher, amongst others.

**Table 4.2.7B: Percentage and Mean Responses of Staff Ranking of Factors that Enhance Knowledge Sharing among Staff**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Availability of teamwork spirit	45%	48%	4%	3%	100%	3.35	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Availability of knowledge sharing facilities	40%	46%	9%	3%	98%	3.26	3 <sup>rd</sup>
3	Motivation	39%	47%	9%	5%	100%	3.20	5 <sup>th</sup>
4	Flexible organization structure	32%	46%	13%	8%	99%	3.03	8 <sup>th</sup>
5	Management support toward knowledge sharing	38%	47%	10%	4%	99%	3.20	5 <sup>th</sup>
6	Organization culture	30%	51%	14%	3%	98%	3.10	7 <sup>th</sup>
7	Trust	34%	37%	23%	4%	98%	3.03	8 <sup>th</sup>

8	Collaborative working environment	40%	53%	2%	4%	99%	3.30	2 <sup>nd</sup>
9	A shared vision	34%	45%	14%	4%	97%	3.12	6 <sup>th</sup>
10	Good leadership	43%	41%	11%	5%	100%	3.22	4 <sup>th</sup>

From table 4.2.7B above, respondents agreed to the statement on item number 1 to 10 each having a mean above 2.50 with item number 1 (availability of teamwork spirit) ranking as highest factor that enhances transfer of knowledge among staffs and item number 7 (trust) ranks the least. From the table 7b above, the factors that enhance knowledge sharing among staff are availability of teamwork spirit, motivation, collaborative working environment, flexible organization structure, a shared vision etc.

**Research Question 3:** What are the barriers to knowledge sharing among students and among staffs in the university?

**Table 4.2.8A: Percentage and Mean Responses of Students Ranking of Barriers to Knowledge Sharing among Students**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Lack of time	45%	50%	5%	0%	100%	3.40	2 <sup>nd</sup>
2	Lack of knowledge sharing culture in school	32%	65%	3%	0%	100%	3.29	4 <sup>th</sup>
3	Lack of in-depth relationship	33%	57%	10%	0%	100%	3.23	6 <sup>th</sup>

4	Fear of providing wrong information	42 %	50%	8%	0%	100%	3.34	3 <sup>rd</sup>
5	Lack of initiatives to voluntarily share information	23 %	67%	10 %	0%	100%	3.13	9 <sup>th</sup>
6	Students only share with those who share with them	27 %	67%	5%	1%	100%	3.20	7 <sup>th</sup>
7	fear of being portrayed as show- off	33 %	60%	6%	1%	100%	3.25	5 <sup>th</sup>
8	Fear that other students may outperform me in studies	21 %	64%	10 %	5%	100%	3.01	12 <sup>th</sup>
9	Fear that a clash of opinion may spoil relationship	15 %	76%	7%	2%	100%	3.04	10 <sup>th</sup>
10	Lack of appreciation for knowledge sharing	18 %	70%	9%	3%	100%	3.03	11 <sup>th</sup>
11	Do not know what to share	31 %	57%	7%	4%	99%	3.16	8 <sup>th</sup>
12	Limited opportunity for face –to –face interactions with other students	13 %	67%	14 %	5%	99%	3.89	1 <sup>st</sup>

Table 4.2.8A indicates that respondents agreed to item no 1 to 12 each having a mean above 2.50 with item 12 ranking the highest and item 8 ranking the least. From the table above, it shows that the barriers to knowledge sharing among students are fear of providing wrong information, lack of time, lack of in-depth relationship, fear that other students may outperforming them in their studies, limited knowledge on what to share etc.

**TABLE 4.2.8B: Percentage and Mean Responses of Staff Ranking of Barriers to Knowledge Sharing among Staff**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Rigid organization structure	40%	43%	10%	5%	98%	3.30	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2	Knowledge is power mentality	26%	53%	18%	2%	99%	3.04	12 <sup>th</sup>

3	Inadequate communication skills	36%	48%	12%	1%	97%	3.23	6 <sup>th</sup>
4	Lack of trust	34%	45%	20%	0%	99%	3.14	9 <sup>th</sup>
5	Inadequate awareness on knowledge sharing	32%	46%	16%	5%	99%	3.06	11 <sup>th</sup>
6	Lack of reward and incentives	42%	42%	10%	4%	98%	3.25	5 <sup>th</sup>
7	Fear	36%	46%	13%	4%	99%	3.15	8 <sup>th</sup>
8	Lack of collaboration among staffs	45%	46%	5%	2%	98%	3.37	1 <sup>st</sup>
9	Lack of transparent reward and recognition	48%	40%	10%	1%	99%	3.36	2 <sup>nd</sup>
10	Restricted communication flow and lack of cross department interaction	41%	43%	13%	1%	98%	3.27	4 <sup>th</sup>
11	Lack of familiarity with IT system	40%	34%	19%	6%	99%	3.09	10 <sup>th</sup>
12	Lack of technological resources	41%	40%	12%	4%	97%	3.22	7 <sup>th</sup>

Table 4.2.8B indicates that respondents agreed to item no 1 to 12 each having a mean above 2.50 with item 8(lack of collaboration among staffs) ranking the highest and item 2(“knowledge is power” mentality) ranking the least. From the table above, it shows that the barriers to knowledge sharing among staffs are fear of providing wrong information, lack of trust, lack of reward and incentives, restricted communication flow and lack of cross department interaction, inadequate communication skills, lack of familiarity with IT systems, fear etc

**Research question 4:** What are students and staff attitudes or behavior towards knowledge sharing?

**Table 4.2.9A: percentage and Mean Responses of Students Ranking of Attitude to Knowledge Sharing**

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Knowledge sharing is useful for learning new knowledge	48%	51%	0%	0%	99%	3.48	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Knowledge sharing will help me learn more efficiently	44%	54%	1%	0%	99%	3.43	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	It encourages collaboration	30%	67%	2%	0%	99%	3.28	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	It integrate evidence into decision making	21%	71%	5%	2%	99%	3.12	6 <sup>th</sup>
5	Brings about innovation	23%	70%	6%	0%	99%	3.17	4 <sup>th</sup>
6	Too much emphasis on grades discourages students from knowledge	11%	57%	29%	2%	99%	2.78	7 <sup>th</sup>

	sharing							
7	Knowledge sharing is useful for enhancing my learning performance	21%	74%	4%	0%	99%	3.17	4 <sup>th</sup>
8	Proper awareness and motivation helps to develop positive sharing attitude	21%	74%	3%	1%	99%	3.16	5 <sup>th</sup>
9	Belief of 'knowledge is power' mentality discourages knowledge sharing	20%	43%	29%	7%	99%	2.77	8 <sup>th</sup>

Table 4.2.9A above indicates that respondents agreed to item 1 to 9 each having a mean above 2.50, with item 1 ranking the highest and item 9 ranks the least. This shows that students attitudes towards knowledge sharing are that some students may view knowledge as power, some students believes knowledge sharing enhances academic performance, some students view knowledge sharing as being useful to acquiring new knowledge, knowledge brings about innovation amongst others.

**Table 4.2.9B: Percentage and Mean Responses of Staff Ranking Of Knowledge Sharing Behavior among Staffs**

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	I discussion teaching experiences and methods with colleagues	36%	50%	13%	0%	99%	3.23	2 <sup>nd</sup>
2	I love to share research outcome and feedback with colleague	27%	51%	18%	2%	98%	3.05	6 <sup>th</sup>
3	I share the latest information/technique with colleagues	29%	50%	17%	2%	98%	3.08	5 <sup>th</sup>
4	I share my opinion about the school and educational policies with colleagues	28%	52%	16%	2%	98%	3.08	5 <sup>th</sup>
5	I discuss student counseling approach with colleagues	22%	58%	16%	1%	98%	3.04	7 <sup>th</sup>

6	I share my administrative experiences with colleagues	27%	55%	14%	2%	97%	3.09	4 <sup>th</sup>
7	I share my experience in counseling students	29%	56%	13%	0%	98%	3.16	3 <sup>rd</sup>
8	I share lecturing experience with colleagues	38%	47%	12%	1%	98%	3.25	1 <sup>st</sup>
9	I share published outlets and articles with colleagues	36%	45%	14%	3%	98%	3.16	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Table 4.2.9B above indicates that respondents agreed to item 1 to 9 each having a mean above 2.50, with item 8 ranking the highest ( average mean value of 3.25) and item 5 (3.04) ranks the least. This shows that staffs are positively disposed to share their experience in terms of teaching, counseling, administrative etc with other staff

**Research Question 4:** What is the importance of knowledge sharing among students and among staffs in the university?

**Table 4.2.10A: Percentage and Average Mean Responses of Students Ranking of Importance of Knowledge Sharing among Students**

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean	Rank
1	Improves my performance and that of others	35%	62%	1%	0%	98%	3.35	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Increases my knowledge capacity	48%	50%	0%	0%	98%	3.49	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	It encourages collaboration	25%	73%	0%	0%	98%	3.26	4 <sup>th</sup>
4	Integrate evidence into decision-making process	15%	80%	3%	0%	98%	3.26	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Bring about innovation	19%	76%	3%	0%	98%	3.12	9 <sup>th</sup>

6	Help others to solve problems	20%	75%	3%	0%	98%	3.16	7 <sup>th</sup>
7	Create new business opportunities	16%	66%	15%	1%	98%	3.17	6 <sup>th</sup>
8	Improves work processes	21%	71%	5%	1%	98%	2.99	11 <sup>th</sup>
9	Increase productivity	26%	72%	6%	0%	98%	3.14	8 <sup>th</sup>
10	Help university to achieve its objectives	22%	69%	6%	1%	98%	3.14	8 <sup>th</sup>
11	Results in personal happiness and fulfillment	17%	75%	6%	0%	98%	3.11	10 <sup>th</sup>
12	Bring praises and acknowledgement from colleagues	24%	70%	3%	1%	98%	3.19	5 <sup>th</sup>
13	Help me to know more and master the subjects	43%	52%	1%	2%	98%	3.39	3 <sup>rd</sup>
14	Help me to get assistance from colleagues in the future	13%	57%	23%	5%	98%	2.79	12 <sup>th</sup>
15	Expansion of interpersonal relationship	21%	75%	2%	0%	98%	3.19	5 <sup>th</sup>

Table 4.2.10A indicates that respondents agreed to item 1 to item no 15 each having a mean above 2.50 with item 1 ranking the highest and item 14 rank the least. From the table above the importance of knowledge sharing among students is increase in productivity, improvement in performance, increases in students knowledge capability, encourages innovation and brings about expansion of interpersonal relationship, helps in solving problems amongst others as indicated in the table above.

**Table 4.2.10B: Percentage and Mean Responses of Staff Ranking of Importance of Knowledge Sharing among Staff**

<b>s/n</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1	Improves my performance and that of others	56%	42%	1%	0%	99%	3.56	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Increases my knowledge capacity	54%	41%	4%	0%	99%	3.51	2 <sup>nd</sup>
3	It encourages collaboration	43%	50%	5%	1%	99%	3.36	8 <sup>th</sup>
4	Integrate evidence into decision-making process	32%	53%	12%	2%	99%	3.16	11 <sup>th</sup>
5	Bring about innovation	52%	39%	7%	1%	99%	3.43	6 <sup>th</sup>
6	Help others to solve problems	51%	46%	2%	0%	99%	3.49	3 <sup>rd</sup>
7	Create new business opportunities	32%	53%	11%	3%	99%	3.15	12 <sup>th</sup>
8	Improves work processes	49%	45%	5%	0%	99%	3.44	5 <sup>th</sup>

9	Increase productivity	54%	39%	4%	2%	99%	3.47	4 <sup>th</sup>
10	Help university to achieve its objectives	49%	43%	6%	1%	99%	3.41	7 <sup>th</sup>
11	Results in personal happiness and fulfillment	46%	46%	10%	3%	99%	3.24	10 <sup>th</sup>
12	Bring praises and acknowledgement from colleagues	33%	45%	17%	2%	99%	3.10	13 <sup>th</sup>
13	Help me to know more and master the subjects	42%	51%	6%	0%	99%	3.36	8 <sup>th</sup>
14	Help me to get assistance from colleagues in the future	32%	54%	8%	1%	98%	3.16	11 <sup>th</sup>
15	Expansion of interpersonal relationship	41%	47%	8%	4%	97%	3.32	9 <sup>th</sup>

Table 4.2.10B indicates that respondents agreed to item 1 to item no 15 each having a mean above 2.50 with item 1 ranking the highest and item no 12 rank the least. From the table above the importance of knowledge sharing among staffs is improvement in performance, increase in productivity, knowledge sharing brings about expansion of interpersonal relationship, it increases knowledge capability, encourages innovation, helps in solving problems etc

### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

In the course of the study, a number of findings were discovered.

The investigation regarding question one in table 4.2.6A and 4.2.6B has shown that knowledge among students and among staff in the University of Benin occurs through the social media, seminar and defense, online discussion forum, tutorials, conferences, peer coaching casual meetings and interactive workshops. It should be noted that committee does not generally constitute a major medium of knowledge sharing

evidenced by its low average mean. Conferences are one major means of knowledge sharing among staff and among students. Considering the current state of the world where there is much emphasis on the use of computer and internet, online discussion group and the social media is being considered as one of the major medium of knowledge sharing among students in the university. This is in line with Oketunji (2001) who opined that the function of ICT has been to provide a way for staff and students to have better access to each other and as a tool to facilitate research and Attama (2007) who opined that internet is an invaluable tool for knowledge sharing among students.

The factors that enhance knowledge sharing among students and among staffs in the University of Benin are the availability of teamwork spirit, for reward, to gain respect of colleagues, out of altruism to help other, for self satisfaction, collaborative working environment, flexible organization structure, good leadership style, availability of knowledge sharing facilities etc. This is in line with the opinion of Neo (2002) who opined that knowledge sharing is influenced by cultural factors, motivation to share knowledge, management support, trust, teamwork spirit and the degree to which knowledge is considered as power. Also Lee (2004) opined that the success of knowledge sharing may also be influenced by the need to have a reward mechanism, good leadership, trust, corporate culture that promote knowledge sharing. Institutions of higher learning should bring to student's awareness the important of knowledge sharing and the academic environment should be organized in such a way so as to enhance and promote knowledge sharing taking the above mentioned factors in consideration..

The findings as indicated by table 4.2.8 also revealed that the barriers to knowledge sharing are lack of time, lack of knowledge sharing culture, lack of in-depth relationship, fear of providing wrong information, fear of being portrayed as showoff, knowledge is power mentality, lack of, limited face to face interactions, lack of reward and incentives, restricted communication flow and lack of cross department interactions, inadequate communication skills etc. collaboration among staffs in the University is importance if

knowledge sharing is to be encouraged. Reige (2005) opined that culture is one of the major barriers to knowledge sharing because firms tend to change their organization culture to fit knowledge sharing strategies and practice. Also the way knowledge is viewed may affect knowledge sharing, Mcdermott and O'Dell (2001) opined that when knowledge sharing is viewed as a separate activity and not part of organizations objectives, and it may constitute a major barrier to knowledge sharing. At the individual level, Reige (2005) noted that barrier to knowledge sharing includes lack of communication skills and social networks, differences in culture, lack of time and lack of trust. All these barriers of knowledge sharing should be addressed by academic institutions and possible solution should be provided as the success of academic institutions depends on the level to which knowledge is communicated and shared effectively both among students and among staff and also between students and staffs.

The findings as indicated by table 4.2.9A shows that student's attitude towards knowledge sharing affects knowledge sharing positively or negatively. When knowledge sharing is viewed by students as useful in learning new knowledge, enhancing performance, they may be obliged to share knowledge but when they view knowledge as not contributing to them or view it as power they may not be obliged to share knowledge, this situation can be exacerbated by an over emphasis on grades by the academic institution and a high level of competition among students in the university.

The findings as indicated in Table 4.2.10A and 4.2.10B also revealed that the importance of knowledge sharing to students and staffs in the University of Benin are improvement in performance, increment in knowledge capacity, aid in problem solving, aid in attainment of university objectives, bring about acknowledgement and praise from colleagues, aid in mastering of subject matters amongst others. This is in line with the view of Bhirud et al (2005) who stated that knowledge sharing is the most important ingredient of innovated, Awolabi, Bamigboye, Agboola And Lawal (2011) who opined that resource sharing

is a means of academic empowerment and Yang (2007) who opined that the value of knowledge is expanded when it is shared

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIOIN AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

The study focused on medium of knowledge sharing factors that affects knowledge (positive and negative/barriers) sharing, knowledge sharing attitude or behavior and importance of knowledge sharing among student and among staff in the University of Benin. The study comprises five chapter the introductory chapter where the background to the study was discussed, the research question which the study seeks to answer were highlighted etc. review of literature was done in chapter two where relevant articles and journals from different authors as it relates to the study was reviewed, chapter three discuss the research methodology, the survey design was used and a total of 200 respondents made up the sample size.

The findings of the study on review of related literature and analysis of data gathered were as follow:

1. The medium of knowledge sharing among students and among staff in the University of Benin includes online discussion forum, interactive workshops, social media, peer coaching, tutorials, conferences, seminar and defense etc
2. That factors that enhances knowledge sharing are the availability of teamwork spirit, availability of reward mechanism, respect, self satisfaction, out of altruism to help others, to develop in-depth relationship, flexible organization structure, incentives and rewards, collaborative working environment etc
3. The barriers to knowledge sharing among students and among staffs in the University of Benin are lack of time, lack of knowledge sharing culture; knowledge is power mentality, lack of initiative to voluntarily share information, rigid organizational structure, inadequate communication skills, lack of reward and incentives, fear, restrictive communication flow, lack of technological resources etc.
4. Knowledge sharing improves University of Benin students and staffs performance in general, it increases their knowledge capacity, it increases productivity, it brings about innovation, it brings about acknowledgement from colleagues and it increases interpersonal relationship amongst others.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study knowledge sharing is an indispensable tool in the attainment of the objectives of academic institution as academic institution is viewed as the place where knowledge transfers occurs the most through teaching and learning in Nigeria. Knowledge sharing is considered as a tool to reducing the gap between knowledge and practice thus its importance must be stressed on, also, students and staffs in the university should be encourage to share their knowledge as regular as possible to enhance the performance both personally and academically of both the students and staffs in the University of Benin. This will improve the value of the tertiary institution and impacts positively on the economy of Nigeria in general.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Despite the perceived benefit of knowledge sharing as a tool for enhancing academic performance, and attainment of the goals of education institutions, its importance is not being acknowledged by students and staff in the University of Benin due to one reasons or another. It is necessary for academic institutions to inculcate the spirit of knowledge sharing in students and in staffs in the university as it does not only enhances students and staffs performance but improves the institutions performance at large, especially in developing county like Nigeria where the level of education is considered low as compared to other advance countries.

With the above view in mind, the following recommendations were made:

1. The University of Benin should embark on a mission to bring to the students and staff awareness (awareness campaign) the importance of knowledge sharing and its perceived benefit to both themselves and the University.
2. The academic staff of the University of Benin should decrease over emphasis on grade as this may result to students in the university viewing knowledge solely as power which should be coveted but not shared.
3. To encourage enhanced knowledge sharing, there should be in place proper reward system or mechanism in the form of praise or other appropriate means that will encourage students and staffs in the University of Benin to share their knowledge.
4. Finally the school culture should be modified in such a way so as to inculcate a knowledge sharing culture in students and in staffs in the university. Knowledge sharing can even be introduced into the curriculum as general studies for all students, cross department interactions should be encourages since all departments contribute in one way or another to the attainment of the university goals and objectives and

there should be availability of knowledge sharing infrastructures such as free internet access, good ICT networks, good and useful workshops with modern equipments etc. as the availability of such infrastructures will promote knowledge sharing in University of Benin

#### **5.4 Limitation of the Study**

The limitation of the study was the unfavorable response to filling questionnaire by students and staff of the University of Benin because they considered it too lengthy and most students and staff were reluctant to spare their time in filling the questionnaire, and not all items of the questionnaire were ticked which also affected the analysis of the study. Time also was a constraint.

#### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Further investigation could be done in arrears of knowledge sharing strategies, knowledge sharing infrastructures and ways of improving knowledge sharing among students and staff in the university.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

**DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING,**

**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE,**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,**

**BENIN CITY.**

Dear Respondents,

I am a postgraduate diploma student in the above named department. As part of the requirement of my degree program, I am conducting a research investigation on **KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**. Kindly answer the following questions for me as frankly as possible.

You are to tick ( ) the answer of your choice, please be assured that your response will be treated with utmost confidence and used for the stated purpose only.

Thank you

## SECTION A

1. **Gender:** Male ( ) Female ( )
2. **Age:** Below 23( ) 25-30( ) 31-40( ) Above 40( )
3. **Faculty/Sections:** Management Science ( ) Others (specify)\_\_\_\_\_
4. **level:** 100( ) 200( ) 300( ) 400( ) 500( ) 600( ) PGD( ) Masters( ) PhD( )
5. **Marital Status:** Single ( ) Married( ) Separated( ) Divorced( )

## SECTION B

**Instruction:** Please Tick ( ) For Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Medium of Knowledge Sharing among University Students</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Online discussion group or forum				
2	Interactive workshops				
3	Casual meetings				
4	Peer coaching				
5	Seminar and defences				
6	Social media				
7	Committees				
8	Conferences				
9	Tutorials				

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Factors Enhancing Knowledge Sharing among Students</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Available of teamwork spirit				
2	For reward				
3	To gain respect of other students				
4	To impress the teacher				
5	To develop relationship with other students				
6	Self satisfaction				
7	To have a feeling of self belonging				
8	Out of altruism to help others				

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Barriers of Knowledge Sharing among Students in the University</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Lack of time				
2	Lack of knowledge sharing culture in school				
3	Lack of in-depth relationship				
4	Fear of providing wrong information				
5	Lack of initiatives to voluntarily share knowledge				
6	Students only share with those that share with them				
7	Fear of being portrayed as show-off				
8	Fear that other students may outperform me in studies				
9	Fear that a clash of opinion may spoil relationship				
10	Lack of appreciation for knowledge sharing				
11	Do not know what to share				
12	Limited opportunity to face- to -face interaction with other students				

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Students Attitude to Knowledge Sharing</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Knowledge sharing is useful for learning new knowledge				
2	Knowledge sharing will help me learn more efficiently				
3	It encourages collaboration				
4	It integrate evidence into decision making				
5	Brings about innovation				
6	Too much emphasis on grade discourages students from knowledge sharing				
7	Knowledge sharing is useful for enhancing my learning performance				

8	Proper awareness and motivation helps develop positive sharing attitude				
9	Belief of 'knowledge is power' mentality discourages knowledge sharing				

S/N	Importance of Knowledge Sharing among University Students	SA	A	D	SD
1	Improves my performance and that of others				
2	Increases my knowledge capacity				
3	It encourages collaboration				
4	Integrates evidence into decision making process				
5	It brings about innovation				
6	Helps others to solve problems				
7	Create new business opportunities				
8	Improves work processes				
9	Increases productivity				
10	Helps university to achieve its objectives				
11	Results in personal happiness and fulfilment				
12	Brings praises and acknowledgement from colleagues				
13	Helps me to know more and master the subject matter				
14	Helps me to get assistance from colleagues in the future				
15	Expansion of interpersonal relationship				

**APPENDIX 2**

**QUESTIONNAIRTE**

**DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING,**

**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE,**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,**

**BENIN CITY.**

Dear sir/madam,

I am a postgraduate diploma student in the above named department. As part of the requirement of my degree program, i am conduction a research investigation on **KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG ACADEMIC OR NON ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**. Kindly answer the following questions for me as frankly as possible.

You are to tick ( ) the answer of your choice, please be assured that your response will be treated with utmost confidence and used for the stated purpose only.

Thank you

## SECTION A

6. **Gender:** Male ( ) Female ( )
7. **Age:** Below 30( ) 31-35( ) 36-40( ) 41-50( ) Above 50( )
8. **Faculty/Sections:** Management Science ( ) Others (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_
9. **Highest Qualification:** B.sc ( ) PGD( ) Masters( ) PhD( ) Others (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_
10. **Marital Status:** Single ( ) Married( ) Separated( ) Divorced( )

## SECTION B

**Instruction:** Please Tick ( ) for Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Means of Knowledge Sharing among University Staff</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Online discussion group or forum				
2	Interactive workshops				
3	Casual meetings				
4	Peer coaching				
5	Seminar and defences				
6	Social media				
7	Committees				
8	Conferences				
9	Lecture/teaching				

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Factors enhancing Knowledge Sharing among University Staff</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Available of teamwork spirit				
2	Availability of knowledge sharing facilities				
3	Motivation				
4	Flexible organisation structure				
5	Management support towards knowledge sharing				
6	Organisation culture				
7	Trust				
8	Collaborative working environment				
9	A shared vision				

10	Leadership				
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S/N	Barriers of Knowledge Sharing among Academic /Non- Academic Staff	SA	A	D	SD
1	Rigid organisational structure				
2	Knowledge is power mentality				
3	Inadequate communication skills				
4	Lack of trust				
5	Inadequate awareness on knowledge sharing				
6	Lack of reward and incentives				
7	Fear				
8	Lack of collaboration among staff				
9	Lack of transparent reward and recognition				
10	Restricted communication flow and lack of cross department interaction				
11	Lack of familiarity with IT system				
12	Lack of technological resources				

S/N	Knowledge Sharing behaviour among Staff in The University	SA	A	D	SD
1	I discuss teaching experience and method with colleague				
2	I love to share research outcome and feedback with colleagues				
3	I share the latest information/ technique with colleagues				
4	I share my opinion about the school and educational policies with colleagues				
5	I discuss students counselling approach with colleagues				

6	I share my administrative experience with colleagues				
7	I share my experience in counselling students				
8	I share teaching experience with colleagues				
9	I share published outlets and articles with colleagues				

S/N	Importance of Knowledge Sharing among University Staffs	SA	A	D	SD
1	Improves my performance and that of others				
2	Increases my knowledge capacity				
3	It encourages collaboration				
4	Integrates evidence into decision making process				
5	It brings about innovation				
6	Helps others to solve problems				
7	Create new business opportunities				
8	Improves work processes				
9	Increases productivity				
10	Helps university to achieve its objectives				
11	Results in personal happiness and fulfilment				
12	Brings praises and acknowledgement from colleagues				
13	Helps me to know more and master the subject matter				
14	Helps me to get assistance from colleagues in the future				
15	Expansion of interpersonal relationship				









































