

Impact of Knowledge Management Culture on Career Progression among Nigerian Educators

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of knowledge management culture on career progression among Nigerian educators. Survey research design was adopted for the study. Three research questions guided the study and one null hypothesis was formulated and tested at alpha level of 0.05. The population of the study comprised of 75 business educators from the universities in Delta State where business education is offered. No sample was needed as the population size was manageable. A 30-item structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was based on four point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (4points) Agreed (3points), Disagreed (2points), and Strongly Disagreed (1point). It was validated by three research experts and the reliability was determined using Cronbach alpha statistics which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.76. Data generated from the research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while data from the null hypothesis was analyzed with t-test statistics at an alpha level of 0.05. Findings revealed that educators who actively engage in knowledge management practices experience enhanced career advancement and achieve career milestones. Further findings also revealed a significant positive relationship between institutional knowledge management culture and educators' career growth. Based on findings, the study recommends that institutions should develop and adopt supportive knowledge management policies that encourage knowledge sharing, collaboration and application, quick access to learning resources, reward educators that actively contribute to knowledge management among others.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Knowledge Management Practices, Institutional Learning, Educators' Career Advancement.

Introduction

In the current global modifications in educational landscape, institutional are increasingly recognizing the application of knowledge as not just a valuable asset but also as a viable tool for individual improvement and institutional development. As the demand for knowledge increases, educators' expectations as drivers and conveyors of proficiency are also expanding to include not just improving teaching effectiveness but also effectively leveraging on KM to achieve long-term career progression in the dynamic and competitive educational environment. Knowledge management practices involve the systematic creation of knowledge, acquisition, sharing, and application among, others. It fosters

environments of continuous learning and collaborations among peers, creating opportunities to constantly stay abreast with teaching innovations and at the same time contributes profitably to institutional knowledge repositories. Knowledge management practices have gained exceeding prominence in most of the educational sectors especially in the higher institutions of learning where strategic knowledge management is paramount in career progression. Nonaka and Takeuchi (2023) noted that the major aim of knowledge management is to systematically influence knowledge sharing in creating values.

Knowledge management according to Kinyata (2014) involves organized and active surveillance of knowledge, leveraging its stores in institutions. It also entails the flow of information that equips educators with proficiencies required for smooth career path navigation and professional advancement. In the word of Deng, Tang, and Lai, (2023), knowledge management processes involve the acquisition, encoding, storage, transfer, application and its sharing. It is a systematic process of capturing, distributing, and utilization which has become integral to modern education sector. Guru (2024) posited that knowledge management practices cover the process of organizing, creating, using, and sharing collective knowledge within and outside an organization. Knowledge management procedures allow organizations to capture, store, and share institutional knowledge with individuals, thereby promoting collaboration and work efficiency (Heretto, 2023). Institutional knowledge management practices are essentially important for pedagogical innovations and individual development especially in the current dispensation where education system is undergoing continuous transformation for enhanced learning outcomes. Knowledge management is characterized with various dimensions. It covers a wide range of practices that involve - acquisition, sharing, application, collaboration, innovation, among others. These dynamic practices when strategically aligned with educators' specific needs enhance team work and facilitate learning progression.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpin of KM practices in education is grounded in organizational learning theory postulated by Argyris and Schön (1996). Organizational learning theory is a product of organizational inquiry. The theory focuses on collective learning but takes into cognizance that organizations do not perform the action but the individual members of the organization do. This theory underscores how shared learning and knowledge dissemination can improve individual knowledge-based leading to improved teaching methods and personal enhancement that culminates career advancement. The theory affirmed that in the process of inquiries, interaction is established and learning takes place. Argote (2013) also posited that the key practices that drive organizational learning are knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and knowledge application.

Knowledge Management Dimensions

Knowledge acquisition practice is a component in KM procedures, a continuous process that drives, facilitates career growth and the realization of goals via sharing and

collaboration. The practice encompasses a dynamic process of discovering existing information and obtaining new knowledge. It is also the process of gaining knowledge from internal and external sources. Through knowledge acquisition practice, educators are exposed to novel practices that can enhance skills in teaching methodologies. According to Priti (2019), knowledge acquired when maximally shared enriches the knowledge base of human capital and the institution resulting in profitable learning innovations, advancement, and enhanced professionals' building blocks.

Knowledge sharing is another important element in KM practices due to its social interaction involvements, information dissemination and providence in educational guidance. Knowledge sharing practices create opportunities that encourage research collaboration and innovations. According to Shamsie and Mannor (2013), knowledge sharing involves a mutual exchange of ideas that influence team work and development. It enhances skills, amplifies visibility, values, and facilitates achievement of individual specific objectives and over-all institutional goals. Garry, Adams, and Lamont, (2013) also postulated that knowledge sharing promotes, maintains mentorship, assist employees in developing talents, achieving objectives, retaining job values and allows for career growth, a major key in continuous learning experiences. The sharing structure focuses in gaining new experiences, maximizing abilities, generating solutions and developing sustainable learning advantages. Knowledge that is acquired, shared and not applied could be translated as total abuse of knowledge.

Knowledge application (KAP) is crucial in strategic KM practices. It involves the active application and translation of acquired information into practical terms. Knowledge application aims at integrating knowledge obtained from internal and external sources into driving objectives for goal accomplishment. Lencion (2022) noted that knowledge application encourages collaborative team-building, increase creativity and enhance productivity. When knowledge is timely articulated, knowledge gaps are bridged and problems are promptly attended to, and as such significant progress reflects in the entire system. When knowledge application practices are promptly exercised, educators who are the utmost beneficiaries of knowledge gain more insight and ultimately turning into seasoned professionals. It is of great important that acquired knowledge be timely and adequately disseminated to those who need them for profitable improvement in their career endeavors. Applying knowledge remains crucial in education as knowledge transfer is tantamount to knowledge base enhancement. According to Lencioni (2022), knowledge acquisition but not application is equivalent to knowledge deficiency. Kinyata (2014) also opined that KM process does not lead to effective leveraging of knowledge but the absolute application of knowledge does. Through strategic institutional knowledge management, information adaptability and career development are enhanced. These supportive reflective processes go along-way in promoting the overall academic trajectories

Career progression is a multifaceted process that involves upward mobility for enhanced visibility. Unlike the linear career trajectories in some professions, career in education involves a transition link between teaching roles, leadership responsibilities, and expertise

functions. This progression is often shaped by external factors like technological interference and societal expectations. In Fullan (2007), it was noted that total KM practice integration in education will facilitate educators' professional journey. The author emphasized that educators who actively engage in continuous learning tend to progress faster in their profession than those that rarely engaged in KM practices.

Knowledge Management Practices and Career Progression

The education sector is basically a knowledge-based industry where knowledge flow and management is crucial for advancement. Knowledge management practices foster continuous learning and relevance especially in the educational landscape (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2019). Academic prowess and leadership responsibilities demand strategic knowledge management skills for effective discharge of duties either as a teacher or an administrator. The professional learning communities most at times serve as conduits for knowledge sharing practices by providing enabling environment for knowledge transfer and exchange in experiences. These reflective practices empower educators to assess the level of progression and identify areas for immediate enhancement. Institution that prioritizes knowledge management creates adaptive environment for career advancement. KM practices also influence career progression by providing individuals with access to resources, learning platforms and knowledge repositories. Others benefits include:

- Encourages collaboration: promoting inter-departmental knowledge sharing through workshops, seminars or collaborative researches.
- Recognizing educators who actively contribute to the institutional knowledge management base.

Challenges of KM Practices and Its Implication

Despite the widely acknowledged roles and benefits of knowledge management practices in education, some impediments have been identified as factors that influence the effective knowledge management implementation in some higher institutions. These include but not limited to inadequate career development opportunities, limited access to fund and learning resources, resistance to changes, and lack of strategic alignment between KM initiatives and institutional goals. Educators may also face barriers related to time constraints and insufficient training in KM tools. Addressing these challenges require institutional concerted effort to adopting KM practices culture with implementation policies for total adherence. With the current growing trend and emphases on equity and inclusive education, the call for KM culture in addressing the diverse needs that are associated in general education and specific need of individual advancement remain resolute especially on the need of business educators in Nigerian tertiary education levels. Knowledge management is not just a personal tool for career advancement but a culture which when well cultivated enhances global visibility and recognition of both individual educators and institutions. Practicing knowledge-sharing and strategic knowledge

applications foster continuous learning that facilitate easy career path navigation global changing work environments with little or no stress

Statement of the Problem

In today's knowledge driven society, possessing critical knowledge is of great importance in professionalism. The inestimable role of knowledge management practices has evolved beyond institutional memory conservation to become a potential enabler in professional advancement and institutional competitiveness. However, despite the growing awareness of knowledge management culture which encompasses knowledge acquisition, sharing, application among others, many educators experience stagnation in career progression. One of the major factors contributing to this fact is the culture of knowledge management in institutions. While knowledge management culture has been revealed to facilitate learning experiences, its impact on educators' career trajectories cannot be underestimated. Though, observation seems to reveal a critical gap in understanding how KM culture influence educators career progression in terms of development opportunities, skill acquisition and professional recognitions. In an environment where knowledge sharing, collaboration or insufficient institutional support prevails, educators are bound to face career frustration and professional stagnations. Conversely, a positive knowledge management culture enhances continuous learning, innovations. And also promotes educators' visibility and career advancement. Again, the inability of some institutions of learning to holistically integrate knowledge management culture in their day-to-day operations, have remain as concerns in career path advancements. Consequently, these objectionable situations have resulted in creating knowledge and expertise gap in the field of education. It is of paramount importance therefore, that these anomalies be critically investigated with the aim of providing evidence-based insight that can inform institutional practices and ultimately contributing to more supportive and growth-oriented educational environments. It is based on these aforementioned that this study examined the impact of knowledge management culture on career progression of educators by exploring the dimensions of KM and how these can change the narratives and contribute specifically to career advancement among business educators in Delta State Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

This study examined the impact of knowledge management culture on career progression among Nigerian educators. Specifically, the study assessed:

1. how knowledge acquisition practices influence career growth of business educators in Delta State Nigeria
2. the ways in which knowledge sharing practices affect career advancement of business educators in Delta State Nigeria
3. how knowledge application practices contribute to career progression of business educators in Delta State Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. In what ways do knowledge acquisition practices influence career growth of business educators in Delta State Nigeria?
2. How do knowledge sharing practices affect career advancement of business educators in Delta State Nigeria?
3. How do knowledge application practices contribute to career progression of business educators in Delta State Nigeria?

Null Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male and female business educators' perception on the impact of knowledge management culture on career progression.

Methodology

This study adopted a survey research design. Three research questions were raised and answered and one null hypothesis tested at the alpha level of 0.05. The population of the study comprised of 75 business educators from the universities that offer business education in Delta State. No sample was needed as the population size was manageable. A 30-item structured questionnaire titled "Impact of Knowledge Management Culture on Career Progression of Business Educators Questionnaire" (IKMCCPBEQ) was used for data collection. The questionnaire consists of two sections, A and B. section A was made-up of demographic variables which encompassed gender, rank, years of experience, and school location while section B was made up of 30 response items drawn from the research questions. The responses were rated on a four point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) 4points, Agreed (A) 3points, Disagreed (D) 2points, and Strongly Disagreed (SD) 1point. The instrument was validated by three research experts from the Department of Business Education, Delta State University, Abraka. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha statistics which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.76. In order to obtain maximum response, a cover letter accompanied the instrument explaining the study objectives with assurance of confidentiality on all information provided Data generated from the research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while data from the null hypothesis was analyzed with t-test statistics at an alpha level of 0.05. The decision rule for the research questions were based on a value of 2.50. Where values above 2.50 were regarded as Agreed, values below 2.50 were considered as Disagreed. The tested null hypothesis was based on alpha level of 0.05. Where the t-statistical value is greater than the t-critical at 0.05 alpha level, null hypothesis was rejected and accepted if otherwise. Findings revealed that educators who actively engage in knowledge management practices experience enhanced career advancement and achieve career milestones. Further findings reveal that there is a significant positive relationship between institutional knowledge management culture and educators career growth as knowledge sharing and collaboration enhance professional networking leading to continuous learning and progression. Based on

findings, the study recommends among others that institutions should develop and adopt supportive knowledge management policies to encourage knowledge sharing, collaboration, application, quick access to learning resources and reward educators that actively contribute to institutional knowledge base.

Results

Research Question 1: In what ways do knowledge acquisition practices influence career growth of business educators in Delta State Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean responses on ways knowledge acquisition practices influence on career growth of business educators in Delta State Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	My exposure to new pedagogy in teaching is as a result of regular access to relevant articles and other publications	3.68	0.64	Agreed
2	I ensure full participation in professional development opportunities In order to stay updated in my field	2.74	0.56	Agreed
3	Devoting time for personal study has widen my knowledge horizon	3.23	0.45	Agreed
4	My additional qualification helped me in achieving career growth	2.89	0.47	Agreed
5	Attending workshops aided my acquisition of new knowledge	3.76	0.43	Agreed
6	I attend professional seminars/conferences to advance my career	3.89	0.56	Agreed
7	Holding leadership positions in my institution has made me to gain more new knowledge	2.23	0.55	Disagreed
8	I use feedback to measure my academic progression	3.64	0.23	Agreed
9	I actively explore diverse resources to enhance my subject	2.67	0.38	Agreed
10	I have gained knowledge by engaging in discussions with colleagues	3.74	0.36	Agreed
	Grand Total	3.25	0.45	Agreed

Source: Field Survey 2025

The analysis of research question one as shown in Table 1 shows that the mean response of respondents on knowledge acquisition practices ranged from 2.23-3.89. With a grand mean of 3.25 above the criterion mean of 2.50, it suggests a moderate level of agreement among respondents that knowledge acquisition practices influence their career progression. With a standard deviation of 0.45, this indicates a fair level of consensus among respondents. This signifies that most respondents share similar opinion on the influence of knowledge acquisition practices on their career progression.

Research Question 2: How do knowledge sharing practices affect career advancement of business educators in Delta State Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of respondents on how knowledge sharing practices affect career advancement of business educators in Delta State Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
11	I create and share information to support team work	3.43	0.54	Agreed
12	My institution encourage expertise knowledge sharing through collaborative assignment	2.56	0.23	Agreed
13	Sharing knowledge with others have helped to strengthen my understanding in my field of study	3.78	0.66	Agreed
14	My active participation in interdisciplinary academic projects has made me to gain new knowledge	2.86	0.42	Agreed
15	Sharing knowledge with others has contributed to my academic visibility as an expert in my field	2.78	0.58	Agreed
16	I am valued in my institution due to my knowledge sharing pattern	2.34	0.26	Disagreed
17	Ability in sharing knowledge has effectively increased my knowledge bank	2.45	0.34	Disagreed
18	Collaborative work has expanded my professional network	3.24	0.57	Agreed
19	Knowledge sharing practices have equipped me with new skills that are crucial in my career progression	2.67	0.34	Agreed
20	I gained more confident in taking up leadership roles due to insight from shared knowledge	3.25	0.45	Agreed
	Grand Total	2.94	0.43	Agreed

Source: Field Survey 2025

The analysis of research question two as shown in Table 2 revealed that the mean responses on knowledge sharing practices ranged from 2.34-3.78. With the grand mean score of 2.94 above the criterion mean of 2.50, it indicates a fairly consistent perception of knowledge sharing practices among business educators as most respondents agreed with the statement. The result suggests a high level of positive endorsement of the item statements as most of the responses did not deviate widely from the criterion mean of 2.50. The standard deviation of 0.43 suggests that there is connection between knowledge sharing practices and educators' career progression. The result indicates that business educators rated the level of knowledge sharing practices within their institution as moderate.

Research Question 3 How do knowledge application practices contribute to career development of business educators in Delta State Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean ($\bar{X}$) rating of respondents on how knowledge application practices contribute to career development of business educators in Delta State Nigeria

S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
21	Ability to incorporate innovative ideas gained from experts in my field has enhanced my career growth	3.86	0.23	Agreed
22	Application of knowledge gained has opened new career opportunities for me	3.55	0.31	Agreed
33	My efforts in mentoring others has given me recognition in my institution	2.47	0.34	Disagreed
24	Ability to quickly adapt to new knowledge application has given me professional edge	3.56	0.67	Agreed
25	Practical application of knowledge has made me gained visibility	3.27	0.25	Agreed
26	I gained an accelerated promotion due to my knowledge application pattern	3.86	0.24	Agreed
27	Ability to apply new knowledge has enhanced my academic reputation	2.67	0.21	Agreed
28	Problem-solving skills gained from applied knowledge have contributed to my career progress	3.02	0.41	Agreed
29	Apply knowledge skills has yielded me tangible career result	3.56	0.34	Agreed
30	Applying knowledge to align with institutional objectives has made me to gain career speed	3.65	0.45	Agreed
	Grand Total	3.35	0.35	Agreed

Source: Field Survey 2025

The analysis in Table 3 shows the mean response on how knowledge application practices contribution to career progression. The scores ranged from 2.47 - 3.86 with an aggregate mean score of 3.35 above the criterion mean of 2.50. This signifies that on the average, respondents agreed that knowledge application practices contribute to career progression. A standard deviation of 0.35 suggests that majority of respondents' opinion aligned positively to the contribution of knowledge application on career growth but with less variability in perception.

Null Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference between male and female business educators' perception on the impact of knowledge management culture on career progression.

Table 4: t-test of difference in the mean response scores of male and female business educators' perception on the impact of knowledge management culture on career progression

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	p-value	t-statistics	t-critical	Decision
Male	45	3.80	0.70	73	0.05	1.87	1.99	NS
Female	30	3.50	0.65					

Source: Field work 2025

The result in Table 4 reveals a t-statistical value of 1.87 and t-critical of 1.99 with a degree of freedom of 73. Since the t-statistical value of 1.87 is less than the t-critical of 1.99 ($t=1.87 < 1.99$) at 0.05 level of significance, the result shows no statistical significance, making the null hypothesis to be retained. This implies that there is no significant difference between the male and female business educators' perception on the impact of knowledge management practices on career progression. Both male and female educators generally perceive KM practices as important to their career advancement.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from research question one as shown in Table 1 depicts that knowledge acquisition practices contribute positively to career advancement. Most responses were in agreement to positive impact of knowledge acquisition on career progression. This affirmation is in corroboration with Priti (2019) who noted that knowledge acquired when optimally utilized enriches the knowledge base of both individuals and institutions bringing about profitable enhancement in learning innovations and career advancement. However, several limitations may have influence the lower scores observed in the Table 1 on knowledge acquisition influence on career progression. It could be as a result of some respondents not having the insight understanding of knowledge acquisition strategies for career growth or it could be traced to some institutions not prioritizing knowledge acquisition practices for educators' career enhancement

Findings from research question two as presented in Table 2 indicates that knowledge sharing plays a significant role in enhancing career development of business educators. The responses depicts that educators who actively engage in sharing professional experiences tend to gain more visibility and enhancement in their professional credibility. In consonance to this assertion, Shamsie and Mannor (2013) posited that knowledge sharing influence team work and development and that it enhances skills, amplifies visibility, values and achievement of the over-all and general goals and objectives of the educators and the institutions. Garry, Adams., and Lamont, (2013) also affirmed that knowledge sharing promotes, assists in talent development, achieving objectives, retaining job values and allows for career growth. Regardless of these strong affirmations on the positive influence of knowledge sharing on career growth, few responses reveals a total disagreement to the stipulations. The disparity in opinion might be as a result of individual in-depth

understanding of the item statement or on the institutional knowledge management policies.

In Table 3, the research question which was on knowledge application impact on career progression revealed that out of the ten questions, nine responses positively affirmed to knowledge application practices contribution to career progression of educators. This finding agrees with Lencion (2022) study which revealed that knowledge application practices encourage team-building collaboration, improve productivity and increase creativity. The author further stressed that acquiring knowledge without application is equivalent to knowledge abuse.

The result of the null hypothesis as shown in Table 4 reveals no statistical significance difference between male and female business educators' perception on the importance of knowledge management culture on career progression. Both groups similarly recognize that effective knowledge acquisition, sharing/collaboration and application are key factors that contribute positively to their professional advancement. The result indicates a share understanding among educators on the crucial role that knowledge management practices play in shaping their career trajectories. Hence the study concluded that male and female business educators do not significantly differ in their opinion on the impact of knowledge management culture on their career progression. Since the t- statistical value of 1.87 is less than the t-critical of 1.99 at 0.05 level of significant, the stated null hypothesis, was retained.

Conclusion

Based on findings, the study concluded that an organized institutional-based knowledge management has significant impact in educators' career growth. Knowledge management practices - such as knowledge acquisition, sharing, application and collaborative team work, promote learning environment drive innovation, adaptability and contributes in steering career advancement and growth. With a supportive knowledge management learning system, educators can actively leverage opportunities, accessing learning resources to boost their knowledge base and to thrive professionally.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the established findings:

1. Knowledge sharing and collaboration should be institutionalized by developing supportive knowledge management policies to encourage research projects and team-building.
2. Institutions should recognize and reward educators that actively contribute to the knowledge management culture so as to encourage others.
3. Leadership training and career development initiatives should be tied to knowledge management practices.
4. Policy-makers should recognize knowledge management as key in the knowledge economy and support the total integration of its principles into national curriculum.

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