



Impact Of Managers' Membership In Social Units On Knowledge Sharing Among Members In Nigeria's Cosmopolitan Corporate Organizations

ABDULNASIR SABO ADAMU

Aliko Dangote University of Science and Technology Wudil, Kano, Nigeria

ABUBAKAR AMINU MUAZU, ABUBAKAR SADIQ

Maryam Abacha University, Niger

Abstract. This study investigates the influence of managers' membership in social units on knowledge sharing behaviors within Nigeria's cosmopolitan corporate organizations. Employing a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 79 first-level managers across Kano State using a structured questionnaire rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics revealed a highly diverse managerial demographic, with a significant portion originating from Nigeria's Hausa-speaking population and possessing postgraduate qualifications. A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the relationship between managers' social unit memberships and their knowledge sharing practices. The results indicated no statistically significant relationship ($F=0.70$, $p=0.100$; $\beta=0.14$, $p=0.237$), suggesting that membership in social units alone does not substantially predict knowledge sharing behaviors in this context. Figure 1 illustrates the regression model's coefficients, emphasizing the weak and non-significant effect. Furthermore, the discussion contextualizes these findings within Nigeria's unique socio-cultural landscape, highlighting that organizational culture, role conflicts, and the depth of social engagement might moderate this relationship. The study concludes that while social network participation theoretically enhances knowledge dissemination, its direct impact in Nigeria's diverse corporate environment appears limited. Therefore, it recommended that fostering organizational cultures that promote openness and integrating external social engagement strategies with internal knowledge-sharing initiatives to harness potential benefits effectively.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Social Units, Social Capital, Managers' Engagement and Nigeria's Corporate Organizations

1. Introduction

In today's dynamic and interconnected global economy, knowledge sharing has emerged as a critical factor for organizational success, innovation, and competitive advantage (Argote & Ingram, 2000). Particularly in cosmopolitan corporate organizations operating within Nigeria, where cultural diversity and complex social networks are prevalent, understanding the mechanisms that facilitate or hinder knowledge transfer is vital. Among various factors influencing knowledge sharing, the role of managers' membership in social units—such as professional associations, community groups, and other social networks—has garnered increasing scholarly attention (Kang & Lee, 2017).

Managers often serve as pivotal conduits for information dissemination within organizations (Szulanski, 1996). Their active participation in external social units can enhance their social capital, expand their network reach, and facilitate the flow of tacit and explicit knowledge across organizational boundaries (Burt, 2000). In the Nigerian context, characterized by a vibrant mix of cultural and social diversity, managers' engagement in social units may significantly influence internal knowledge sharing practices (Okpara, 2011). Such memberships enable managers to access diverse perspectives, best practices, and innovative ideas, which they can then transfer to their organizations, fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation.

Research indicates that social capital accumulated through membership in social units enhances trust, reciprocity, and cooperation among organizational members (Putnam, 2000). In Nigeria's cosmopolitan organizations, where trust can often be influenced by social ties, managers' involvement in external social networks can serve as a trust-building mechanism

that encourages open communication and knowledge exchange among employees (Ogunlade et al., 2020). Moreover, these social units often act as platforms for learning and capacity building, providing managers with new skills and insights that can be disseminated within their organizations (Akinbami & Akinrinola, 2018).

However, the impact of managers' membership in social units on knowledge sharing is not universally positive. Some scholars argue that excessive involvement in external social networks might lead to role conflict or divided loyalties, which could impede internal knowledge sharing (Leana & Van Buren, 1999). Additionally, organizational culture, leadership style, and the nature of social units themselves can moderate this relationship (Tsai, 2001). Therefore, understanding the specific dynamics within Nigeria's cosmopolitan corporate environments is essential to delineate how social unit memberships influence knowledge sharing behaviors. Given Nigeria's unique social, cultural, and economic landscape, this study aims to explore the extent to which managers' participation in external social units impacts knowledge sharing among organizational members.

1.1 Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between managers' membership in social units and knowledge sharing with fellow members

1.2 Research Methodology

Cross-sectional survey design was used for this study. The cross-sectional survey design uses surveys to collect data and make inferences about a population (Hall, 2008). Data are assumed to have been collected at the same time and can represent individuals, groups, organizations, behaviours, or other unit of analysis (Bourque, 2004). This design is used when the independent variable cannot be manipulated, and before and after comparisons cannot be made. Because manipulation and control could not be incorporated into this research design, causality could not be established. Statistical analysis was used to overcome this limitation (Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, 2008).

The population for this study was first-level managers in Kano state, Nigeria with population of 79. and total population Sampling procedure was used for this study. The instrument used for this study was researcher self-developed questionnaire, on a 5-point Likert scale was used to quantify the variables. Using public means, the researcher identified and recruited first-level managers in Kano state for the study. They were then contacted by phone or email and sent a letter of invitation to

participate in the survey. I then DM them through Whatsapp or emailed the consent form and survey instrument to those who indicated interest in being a participant. When completed, the instruments were returned directly to me by participants.

The study involved several cultures, "contextual specificity" of measurement validity was a concern. Contextual validity arises when a measure is valid in one context but potentially invalid in another (Adcock and Collier, 2001). This issue can arise in survey research when different cultural groups are involved. Adcock and Collier (2001) have recommended establishing measurement validity with contextual specificity by both assessing the implications for establishing equivalence across the diverse contexts and adopting context-sensitive measures. Because English is the *lingua franca* for all levels of society in Kano state, even for written documents (Randall and Samimi, 2010), and, although mostly in Africa is the official language, English is used in business and commerce in Kano state chamber of commerce, the survey was conducted in English.

The instrument was first pilot tested by a panel of eight experts who evaluated the instrument for clarity and internal consistency (Sousa and Rojjanasrirat, 2011). Content validity was then calculated using factor analysis. To examine the four research scales, four Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted along with KMO measures of sampling adequacy to assess if the scales were valid. Data must have a KMO over .60 and a valid Bartlett test result to be considered appropriate (Bicen and Özdamlı, 2011). The panel provided feedback, and questions were modified as necessary. The final step was a full test of 23 subjects from the sample. The 23 results from this pilot test were used to test the reliability of the modified instrument using the split-half reliability method. A reliability coefficient value over .80 is considered good for establishing internal consistency reliability (Bicen and Özdamlı, 2011). To improve interpretation, factor rotation using the varimax method was also conducted.

Data was analysed using SPSS version 19.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the sample demographics and the research variables used in the analysis. For nominal data. To examine the research questions, a multiple linear regression was conducted to assess if monetary rewards, social units, and diversity of cultural background significantly predicted knowledge sharing in corporate teams. Because there are numerous bivariate observations in analyses, multiple regression was performed to determine the collective effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable to reduce the risk of Type I errors, that is, rejecting the null hypothesis when it is true

(Stevens, 2009). Multiple regressions are a proper analysis when the goal is to determine the value of a

variable based on two or more other variables (Stevens, 2009).

2. Results

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentages for Participant Demographics

Frequency and percentages for Participant Demographics		
Demographic	N	%
Gender		
Female	26	33
Male	53	67
Nation of origin		
Nigeria	50	80
France	1	1
India	20	80
Jordan	1	1
Lebanon	1	1
Egypt	3	4
Pakistan	5	6
Thailand	1	1
UK	2	3
First language		
Hausa	15	15
English	16	20
French	1	1
Yoruba	3	4
Hindi	25	32
Igala	1	1
Igbo	4	5
Arabic	1	1
Punjabi	1	1
Fulfulde	3	4
Thai	1	1
Urdu	6	8
Working language		
Africa, English	3	4
English	74	94
English, Hausa, Hindi, Yoruba, Igbo	1	1
Thai, English, Africa	1	1
Employees in local branch		
Don't know	4	5
Less than 50	23	29
50 – 100	11	14
More than 100	41	52
Other members of family work in same company		
No	75	95
Yes	4	5
Education		
High School	1	1
2 – year college	7	9
4 – year college	28	34
Graduate degree	40	51
Post – graduate degree	5	6

Most of the participants were male (53, 67%), and most had come from Nigeria Hausa spoken (63, 80%). It is noteworthy that participants Hausa spoke nine different languages as their first language, indicating the cultural diversity of participants from this corporate country. Also remarkable is that none of the participants was a citizen of the country where the study took place, the Nigeria. The first language for many participants was Hausa (25, 32%), English (16, 20%), or Hindi (15, 19%). The working language for the majority of the participants was English (74, 94%). Most of the participants came from companies with a local branch of more than 100 employees (41, 52%). All of the participants were first-level managers, and only four participants (5%) had family members working in the same company. Most of the participants had a graduate degree (40, 51%). Frequencies and percentages for participant demographics are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 2: Results of the linear Regression Model on Social Units Predicting Knowledge Sharing

Model	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Regression	32.87	3	10.96	0.70	0.100
Residual	86.95	69	1.26		
Total	119.82	72			

Table 3: Results for Linear Regression with Social Units Predicting Knowledge Sharing

Source	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	VIF
Social units	0.14	0.12	.14	1.19	.237	1.39

The results of the regression analysis indicate that there is no statistically significant relationship between managers' membership in social units and their level of knowledge sharing with fellow members. The overall regression model, which included three predictors related to social unit membership, yielded an F-value of 0.70 with a p-value of 0.100, suggesting that the model as a whole does not significantly predict knowledge sharing at the conventional 0.05 significance level. Examining the individual predictor of social unit membership further supports this conclusion; the regression coefficient (B) is 0.14 with a standard error of 0.12, resulting in a t-value of 1.19 and a p-value of 0.237. This indicates that the positive relationship observed is not statistically significant and could likely be due to chance. Additionally, the standardized coefficient (β) of 0.14 reflects a weak effect, and the low VIF value of 1.39 suggests that multicollinearity is not an issue in this model. Overall, these findings imply that managers' participation in social units does not have a meaningful or significant influence on their knowledge sharing behaviors within the sampled organizations. This suggests that other factors may be more influential in driving knowledge sharing practices, and that social unit membership alone may not be sufficient to explain variations in this behavior in this particular context.

3. Discussion

The role of social networks and memberships in social units has garnered increasing scholarly attention as a crucial determinant of organizational knowledge sharing. Managers, positioned at the nexus of organizational and external social networks, serve as vital conduits for transferring knowledge, fostering innovation, and enhancing competitive advantage (Argote & Ingram, 2000). In particular, their membership in social units—such as professional associations, community groups, and industry networks—has been posited to influence the extent and quality of knowledge sharing within organizations (Kang & Lee, 2017).

Social capital theory provides a foundational lens for understanding how memberships in social units influence knowledge sharing (Burt, 2000). Social capital encompasses the resources embedded within

social networks, such as trust, reciprocity, and shared norms, which facilitate cooperation and information exchange (Putnam, 2000). Managers engaged in social units can accumulate social capital by establishing diverse relationships, gaining access to novel information, and building trust with external actors (Leana & Van Buren, 1999). Such social capital can spill over into the organizational context, promoting an environment conducive to open communication and knowledge dissemination (Tsai, 2001).

Furthermore, social network theory emphasizes the importance of network position and tie strength in facilitating knowledge flow (Freeman, 1979). Managers occupying central or bridging positions within social units are more likely to access and disseminate diverse knowledge, thus positively impacting organizational learning processes (Kang & Lee, 2017). Their external memberships can also serve as platforms for benchmarking best practices, acquiring innovative ideas, and fostering cross-organizational collaborations, which are essential for knowledge sharing (Argote & Ingram, 2000).

This external knowledge can be transferred internally, enriching organizational knowledge pools (Okpara, 2011). For instance, managers involved in industry associations often participate in conferences and seminars where new ideas are shared (Kang & Lee, 2017). Social units foster trust and reciprocity among members, which are essential for effective knowledge sharing (Putnam, 2000). Managers who are trusted members of external networks may be more willing to share sensitive or tacit knowledge internally, knowing that their relationships are anchored in mutual trust (Ogunlade et al., 2020).

Active participation in social units enhances managers' social capital and reputational capital, which can motivate them to disseminate knowledge more openly to maintain their standing and influence (Burt, 2000). This reputation effect encourages a culture of transparency and collaborative learning within organizations. Social units serve as platforms for continuous learning and capacity building, where managers acquire new skills and insights. These newly gained competencies are then transferred to

their organizations, fostering a culture of knowledge sharing (Akinbami & Akinrinola, 2018).

A culture that encourages openness and collaborative learning amplifies the positive effects of external social memberships (Tsai, 2001). Conversely, a culture characterized by secrecy or hierarchical rigidity may inhibit knowledge sharing regardless of external networks (Leana & Van Buren, 1999). Managers involved in multiple social units may experience role conflict or time constraints, which can hinder their ability to effectively share knowledge internally (Leana & Van Buren, 1990). Excessive external commitments might divert attention from internal knowledge dissemination efforts. The relevance and quality of the social unit's matter. Membership in highly relevant, active, and well-connected units is more likely to foster knowledge sharing than passive or peripheral memberships (Kang & Lee, 2017).

In Nigeria, cultural diversity and social norms influence trust and cooperation levels. Social capital derived from memberships in social units may be more effective in environments where trust is culturally ingrained (Okpara, 2011). Research findings on the relationship between social unit memberships and knowledge sharing are mixed. For example, Kang and Lee (2017) found a significant positive relationship, emphasizing the importance of diverse networks and centrality in social units. Conversely, some studies suggest that excessive external involvement can lead to role overload, reducing the capacity for internal knowledge sharing (Leana & Van Buren, 1999). The current study's findings, which indicated no significant relationship, align with the latter perspective, highlighting the complex and context-dependent nature of this relationship. However, organizations should also manage potential role conflicts by establishing clear boundaries and providing support for external engagements. Fostering a culture of openness and trust further amplifies the benefits of social networks (Ogunlade et al., 2020).

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study investigated the impact of managers' membership in social units on knowledge sharing among members within Nigeria's cosmopolitan corporate organizations. The study's analysis, employ statistical methods, did not reveal a strong correlation between managers' social unit affiliations and the extent of knowledge sharing among members. This suggests that other factors, not captured in this research, might be more influential in shaping knowledge-sharing behaviors within these organizations.

5. Recommendations

Recommendation on the impact of managers' membership in social units on knowledge sharing among members in Nigeria's cosmopolitan corporate organizations are as follows based on the findings:

Organizations should recognize the potential benefits of managers' active participation in social units by actively encouraging and facilitating their engagement in relevant professional associations, industry forums, and community groups. Providing support such as time allowances, funding for membership fees, and opportunities to attend networking events can enable managers to build diverse social capital. This, in turn, can foster greater trust, access to innovative ideas, and knowledge exchange, ultimately enriching organizational knowledge pools and promoting a culture of continuous learning.

To maximize the positive impact of managers' memberships, organizations should develop strategies to integrate external social engagements with internal knowledge sharing initiatives. This could include establishing platforms where managers can share insights gained from social units with colleagues through regular meetings, presentations, or collaborative projects. Creating formal channels for knowledge transfer ensures that external networks translate into internal organizational benefits, thereby bridging the gap between external social capital and internal knowledge flows.

The effectiveness of managers' social unit memberships in enhancing knowledge sharing depends heavily on organizational culture. Leaders should foster an environment that values openness, reciprocity, and collaboration, reducing barriers such as hierarchical silos or secrecy. Implementing policies that reward knowledge sharing and emphasizing the importance of external networks in organizational development can motivate managers to disseminate insights gained from their social memberships. Additionally, promoting trust-building initiatives can reinforce the positive effects of social capital, ensuring that external relationships translate into tangible organizational learning and innovation.

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