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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND ORGANISATIONAL CREATIVITY OF HOSPITALS IN THE NIGER-DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study sought to ascertain the impact of knowledge management strategies on organisational creativity of hospitals in the Niger-delta region of Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the impact of knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and knowledge implementation on organisational creativity. This gave rise to three specific research questions and hypotheses which guide the study. A descriptive survey design adopted for the study; using a cross sectional survey, and the researchers gathered their data from primary sources using a 5-point Likert validated questionnaire. The target population of the study comprised medical staff of both federal and state teaching hospitals in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. Using a purposeful sampling technique, the questionnaire was distributed to 255 respondents across the selected hospitals. The data was analysed using correlation analysis. This method was used to process the data since it allows researchers to estimate relationship between two variables. The result revealed that a statistically significant positive relationship between knowledge management strategies and organisational creativity. Specifically, the result showed beta (β) coefficients of 0.493, 0.681 and 0.904 respectively on the relationships between knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and knowledge application with organisational creativity. Management and policy makers in Health sector especially hospital should as a matter of urgency develop policies that would encourage knowledge management practices in the industry. Also government and other relevant stakeholders are encouraged to improve funding of research and training for medical professionals.

Keywords:

Knowledge Application, Knowledge Creation, Knowledge Sharing, Knowledge Base Theory, Organisational Creativity



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Context of the Problem

The healthcare sector is perpetually undergoing transformation and fluctuation, necessitating proficiency, skill, and methodologies that leverage a greater wealth of information resources (Belay et al. 2021; Lee 2017). Efficiently managing knowledge in medical practice has become crucial for delivering high-quality healthcare. Healthcare organisations have consistently prioritised the development of proactive strategies, such as implementing knowledge management (KM) strategies, to enhance patient care. In the dynamic and highly competitive setting of hospitals, it is essential to focus on the quality of treatment provided to patients (Kieft et al., 2014). The primary purpose of a hospital is to provide high-quality healthcare services, which necessitates the use of highly specialist expertise. The creation, acquisition, dissemination, and use of knowledge are essential components of a hospital's organisational learning and service delivery endeavours, all of which are highly imperative for fulfilling the hospital's purpose (Ayanbode&Nwagwu 2020). The capacity of hospitals and other medical facilities to provide high-quality service to patients mostly depends on the creativity and innovation of the medical practitioners employed in these institutions (Ajanaku&Mutula 2021; Salehi et al., 2015). This situation highlights the need for effective knowledge management techniques.

Knowledge management involves a variety of tactics that impact how knowledge is adopted and used in businesses. These variables are sometimes referred to as knowledge enablers and help businesses to effectively use and promote the growth of their knowledge. KM strategies refer to the tactical methods and practices that may stimulate and support KM activities within an organisation, ultimately leading to the establishment of a competitive advantage (Matin&Sabagh 2015). Theriou et al. (2011) found that knowledge strategies are influential factors utilised by organisations to consistently enhance and utilise knowledge. These strategies involve methods for fostering relationships and collaborations, as well as sharing requisite knowledge within and beyond an organisation, regardless of geographic and cultural barriers. Ghosh and Scott (2006) stated that knowledge management (KM) in health facilities has many advantages. These include enhancing the productivity of medical personnel, improving the timeliness of patient treatment, reducing needless patient transfers or returns, and enhancing the overall efficacy of patient care.

Healthcare institutions are rapidly adopting knowledge management (KM) due to their strong dependence on information and evidence-based practice, as well as the large amount of knowledge that healthcare practitioners need to manage (Wickramasinghe& Schaffer, 2006). Lee (2017) asserted that healthcare systems, like hospitals, are knowledge-intensive environments that undergo constant change due to advancements in medical technologies. This leads to the generation of more knowledge resources, which necessitate specialised tools, skills, and innovative methods for healthcare delivery. Hospitals have unique requirements compared to other organisations. These requirements include providing healthcare, diagnosing and treating illnesses, planning and implementing admission procedures, performing medical interventions, and making complex decisions within their networks (Kieft et al., 2014). Managers and administrators of businesses in this industry must possess the necessary skills to effectively govern, monitor, and improve knowledge exchange inside their organisations.

Moreover, the health service process is a fundamental or major component of hospital services, which is governed by the personnel working inside it. The hospital's human resources include both medical and non-medical staff. In order to achieve the establishment of high-quality healthcare services, it is essential to have healthcare professionals that possess intellectual, technical, and interpersonal skills, and who adhere to standardised protocols (Modest, 2020). The quality of medical services and patient satisfaction are key indicators of service quality at health facilities. When nursing services are of high

quality, patient satisfaction increases, leading to greater public trust in the quality of health services provided (Kim & Han, 2019; Samad-Hosseini et al., 2019). The quality of health services provided by healthcare professionals is crucial for ensuring patient satisfaction and improving overall public health (Damtie&Getahun, 2017; Wung et al., 2016). However, it has been noticed that the healthcare sector in Nigeria still lacks the necessary procedures for recruiting and retaining medical personnel, as well as providing in-service training. The health care business is a sector that requires a high level of education, where individuals provide services to others (Olalubi& Bello, 2020). This is quite uncommon since the medical field is focused on knowledge, which requires individuals in the sector to continuously acquire new information and get training in new abilities. Hospitals in Nigeria, particularly in the Niger Delta area, need to invest more efforts in developing their knowledge management infrastructure and ensuring that medical personnel have access to enough resources for gaining information and skills (Kaur et al., 2020). Achieving this objective requires a more strategic approach to knowledge management, and our research aimed to support this endeavour.

Previous research conducted in developed nations has demonstrated that implementing a knowledge management (KM) system in hospitals leads to several benefits, including increased knowledge sharing among healthcare providers, improved treatment procedures, decreased healthcare expenses, and enhanced quality of patient care (Koushazade, Omidianpoor&Zohurian, 2015). Research conducted by Akhavan, Jafari, and Fathian (2014), Gold, Malhotra, and Segars (2001), Lee (2017), and Nguyen (2010) has found many knowledge management (KM) techniques that impact the efficiency of KM in commercial organisations. Moreover, scholarly literature has extensively examined the correlation between knowledge processes and organisational performance. These processes include knowledge creation, acquisition, sharing, utilisation, storage, transfer, and application. Various studies by Chen & Chen (2006), Inkinen (2016), and Zaim et al. (2019) have explored the impact of these activities on different outcomes of organisational performance. Certain researchers consider KM skills to be autonomous indicators of performance and propose that their impacts are applicable to all situations (Wang & Wang, 2012); nevertheless, other studies have yielded contradictory findings (Zheng et al., 2013). Unfortunately, there has been little attention given to the effect of knowledge management strategies on organisational creativity (Sandhu et al., 2011). At the field of health care, the use of Knowledge Management (KM) as a management model has not been well known or studied at hospitals in the Niger-Delta area of Nigeria. Limited study has been conducted on this issue, as shown by studies conducted by Massaro et al. (2015) and Sibbald et al. (2016). This lack of research has resulted in a clear gap that this study aimed to remedy.

Objectives of the study

This study sought to ascertain the impact of knowledge management strategies on organisational creativity of hospitals in the Niger-delta region of Nigeria. Specifically, the study would examine the impact of knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and knowledge implementation on organisational creativity. This gave rise to three specific research questions and hypotheses which guide the study. Thus the specific objectives of this study are to provide empirical explanation to the following research questions;

Research Question 1:*What is the relationship between knowledge creation and organisational creativity?*

Research Question 2:*What is the relationship between knowledge sharing and organisational creativity?*

Research Question 3:*What is the relationship between application creation and organisational creativity?*

In line with the research question, the following hypotheses were put forward in their null form.

H₀:1 There is no significant relationship between knowledge creation and organisational creativity.

H₀:2 There is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and organisational creativity.

H₀:3 There is no significant relationship between knowledge implementation and organisational creativity.

Literature review

Theoretical Review

The underlining theory for this study shall be the knowledge based theory and organisational learning theory.

Knowledge Based Theory

The knowledge-based theory established by Grant (1996) is a valuable theory that greatly enhances our comprehension of information sharing dynamics. He argued that the organization's experience is not the source of competitive advantage due to the risk of obsolescence and the repetition of similar information. Implicit individual knowledge, rather than a patented kind of expertise, is what defines long-term competitive advantage. The idea posits that the organization's capacity to effectively align the expertise, specialised knowledge, and tacit knowledge of people is essential for achieving lasting competitive advantage (Andem et al., 2022). The firm's basic premise is founded on a knowledge-based philosophy, which asserts that organisations exist because they are better equipped to manage information compared to their competitors who utilise other organisational structures.

Organisations are social structures that acquire, retain, and preserve internal knowledge, competences, and abilities that are essential for the development and prosperity of the organisation. +Hospitals and other medical organisations depend greatly on knowledge; they must have reservoirs of valuable information in order to achieve efficient functioning. Hence, the generation, dissemination, and transmission of information inside these organisations have emerged as a crucial determinant of their innovation and achievement (Andem et al., 2022). This theory is applicable to the research as it suggests the creation of a diverse knowledge framework, such as the hierarchical structure of medical and clinical personnel in hospitals, as a necessary condition for attaining a lasting competitive advantage based on knowledge.

Conceptual Review

The following is a rather in-depth explanation of the key ideas from this research. This will ensure that the reader has a solid foundational knowledge of the study's core principles. Nevertheless, the following conceptual framework encapsulates the construct:

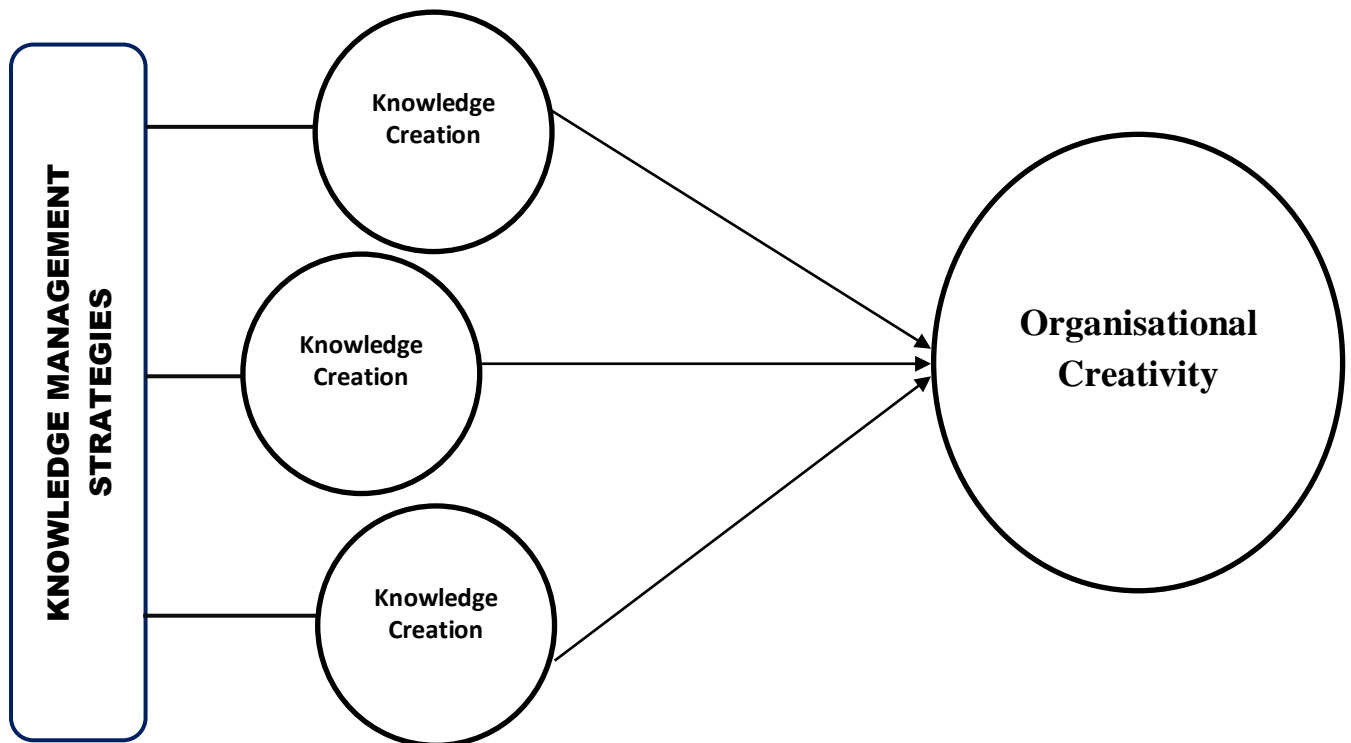


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the study

Source: Researchers' Conceptualisation Based on the Identified Variable of the Study

Knowledge Management

The term "knowledge" denotes to the aggregate understandings, insights, and practical know-how that individuals have. It is regarded to be the primary resource that enables humans to behave wisely. Thus, knowledge may be seen as an intangible resource that must be obtained via complicated cognitive processes such as perception, learning, communication, association, and reasoning (Agba et al., 2021). Probst et al. (2000) define knowledge as the set of abilities and talents that individuals employ to solve problems. As a framework for analysing and absorbing new experiences and knowledge, it combines structured experience, values, contextual data, and expert views. Within organisations, knowledge is created and subsequently absorbed into not just written documents or databases, but also the organization's established routines, procedures, practices, and norms (Agba et al., 2021). Knowledge is the full collection of learning and skills that individuals utilise to properly address and overcome problems. It includes both concepts and practical suggestions and instructions for everyday work.

Knowledge management is an intricate and diverse process that involves all the activities an organisation undertakes to make knowledge accessible to the business. This includes incorporating important information into systems and processes, using incentives to motivate employees, and forming alliances to introduce new knowledge into the business. Knowledge management encompasses a series of processes related to the generation, acquisition, and use of knowledge to enhance performance. This topic has garnered interest among researchers in the healthcare industry (Kothari et al., 2011). Knowledge management involves the establishment and improvement of

internal organisational circumstances that include all activities necessary for achieving the organization's goals (Alan, 2014). Information management is the deliberate process of using information gained from earlier experiences to improve the efficacy of the outcome of current and future decisions executed within an organization. (Jennex, 2007; Ada & Akan, 2019). It is the process of using prior experiences to improve the effectiveness and performance of an organisation in current and future situations. According to Holsapple & Joshi (2004), it refers to an organization's intentional and organised actions to expand, nurture, and use existing knowledge in ways that enhance the organization's value by achieving its goals or fulfilling its mission. Knowledge management is a systematic process that effectively manages the generation, spreading, and impact of information with the intention of achieving an organization's objectives. Its purpose is to enable personnel better express their ingenuity and aptitude with exceptional efficiency, ultimately creating value for the firm.

Knowledge Management Strategies

Knowledge management involves carefully and deliberately developing the fundamental knowledge of an organisation. This allows the knowledge assets of a company to be effectively used, resulting in the greatest advantages and feedback. In their study, Lacetera & Zirulia (2012) suggested that it has the potential to use an organization's experiences, knowledge, and skills in order to enhance performance and attain greater values. In order to completely maximise the advantages of KM, it is essential to concentrate on achieving its objective(s) within the set timeframe to boost workers' creativity, job performance, and productivity. In order to do this, it is crucial to develop appropriate procedures for knowledge management. This research used knowledge production, knowledge sharing, and knowledge implementation as the aspects of knowledge management techniques.

Knowledge Creation: Knowledge capture encompasses the processes involved in introducing new knowledge into an organization's system, which includes knowledge creation and exploration. It refers to the activities of gathering or generating novel information. The process of knowledge production necessitates the presence of an individual or a collective entity that generates novel ideas, fresh thoughts, and inventive goods, procedures, and services. According to Styhre et al. (2002), knowledge generation involves using intricate and intermittent occurrences and phenomena to address challenges that are collectively defined. Takeuchi and Nonaka (2004) conducted a research on organisational knowledge generation, which is based on two aspects. The first dimension is predicated on the notion that knowledge is only generated by humans. That is, the process of transforming implicit information into explicit knowledge. The second component pertains to the interplay between explicit and implicit knowledge. This involves transferring information from the individual level to the group, organisational, and inter-organizational levels.

Knowledge Sharing: Organisational knowledge sharing involves the transfer of information between parties (Bordoloi & Islam, 2012; Mohayidin, 2007). Thus, information may have little developmental influence unless it is efficiently shared. Rashmi (2009) defines sharing knowledge as learning, understanding, extending, and repeating information, ideas, viewpoints, and resources on a certain topic. Knowledge is shared among individuals, groups, communities, organisations, or collaborating parties. People share information and produce new knowledge via knowledge-sharing (Van den Hoof & Huysman, 2009). It includes information sharing and receiving (McEvily et al., 2000; Noor & Salim, 2011).

Knowledge sharing can occur anywhere; in bars, coffee shops, and classrooms through sign language, coaching, teaching, and any other method of communication among contemporaries. Sharing is vital to knowledge application, creativity, and organisational competitiveness (Collins & Smith, 2006; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). Top management support influenced staff

commitment to knowledge management methods, which affected knowledge sharing level and quality, according to Connelly and Kelloway (2003). Information sharing from a health care viewpoint involves stakeholders explaining and sharing context-sensitive health care information using a collaborative communication medium to increase their expertise. In addition, knowledge sharing methods let team members merge their disciplines, ideas, expertise, and information and communicate more often. Teams perform better together because they have a tacit knowledge and require fewer explanations and demonstrations (Sapsed et al., 2002). Tacit knowledge cannot be communicated across time and distance without team interactions. Team members must engage and understand each other to transfer tacit knowledge (Lam, 2000).

It was identified by Zhou and Nunes (2012) that three forms of knowledge exist; Technical knowledge comprises identifying patient diseases and issues, explanations and goals for patient care, patient history, treatment method, and stated patient needs. (2) Ethical and emotional knowledge, including how to communicate with, persuade, and manage patients, and how to build credulous and supportive professional-patient rapport (Fennessy& Burstein, 2007). (3) Social and behavioural knowledge, including predicting others' conduct and understanding patients' implicit needs, emotions, and expectations (Fennessy& Burstein, 2007). Health care practitioners and patients may share knowledge via the Internet, intranet, extranet, social media, and emails. Knowledge sharing needs individuals, teams, or units to collaborate and exchange knowledge for mutual benefit. Organisational operational performance is more affected by it than financial performance (Son, et al., 2020). Literature shows that information sharing improves operational performance in every single establishment (Nguyen et al., 2019).

Knowledge application: Knowledge application is the act of obtaining and recording information about knowledge in its explicit forms. Efficient knowledge management leads to a substantial decrease in job completion time and effectively minimises, if not eliminates, excessive duplication. Abidi (2007) suggests that a successful method for enhancing the utilisation of knowledge in the healthcare industry involves creating advanced information systems that combine automated knowledge sources with electronic health registers and medical result support tools.

Information application talks about the procedure for incorporating the information acquired by the personnel over time into the everyday routines and practices of the organisation. Every member of the staff must be committed to improving their performance on a daily basis by using knowledge management strategies inside and across teams (Ghebregiorgis, 2019). Therefore, the job of a knowledge specialist becomes apparent when the information acquired over time is disseminated among the professionals in order to guide and enhance the development of new workers and the organisation as a whole. To achieve comprehensive and high-quality healthcare services, it is necessary for the authorities of healthcare organisations and Health Information Management Practitioners to include knowledge management methods into their policies and everyday operations.

Organisational Creativity

Organizational creativity serves as a cornerstone for innovation and competitive advantage amidst the rapidly evolving business landscape. In this context, creativity refers to the generation and implementation of innovative ideas, practices, and processes aimed at enhancing healthcare delivery, patient care, and organizational performance. Investigating the underlying factors that influence creativity within organizational settings is imperative for nurturing an environment conducive to innovation. Organizational creativity in hospitals is crucial for addressing complex healthcare challenges, improving patient outcomes, and enhancing operational efficiency. Organisational

creativity is explained in this study within context of individual, team, organisational culture and organisational structure;

Individual Creativity: Individual creativity is influenced by a wide range of cognitive, psychological, and motivational factors. Cognitive flexibility, specialised knowledge, and proficient problem-solving abilities play a vital role in the development of ideas and divergent thinking (Amabile, 1988). Healthcare personnel have a crucial impact on fostering innovation in hospitals. Healthcare professionals that possess a wide range of clinical knowledge, strong problem-solving abilities, and a strong desire for further education are more inclined to provide creative solutions for intricate healthcare issues (Gilmartin, D'Aunno, & Jiang, 2012). Promoting a culture that cultivates autonomy, daring, and experimentation among healthcare workers has the potential to enhance creativity at the individual level. In addition, there is a correlation between personality attributes such as being open to new experiences, having a high tolerance for ambiguity, and being intrinsically motivated, and having higher levels of creativity. People who have inherent desire, together with independence and a clear objective, demonstrate higher levels of involvement and perseverance in creative pursuits.

Team Dynamics: Efficient collaboration is crucial for fostering originality and ingenuity in medical environments. Teams consisting of doctors, nurses, administrators, and other healthcare professionals from different disciplines collaborate to solve problems and generate ideas. This collaboration benefits from the unique perspectives, skills, and knowledge areas of the team members (Borrill et al., 2000; Shalley& Gilson, 2004). Establishing a team environment that fosters open communication, mutual respect, and psychological safety is crucial for promoting creative expression and the exchange of ideas among team members.

Organizational Culture and Climate: Hospital creativity is significantly impacted by the organisational culture. Cultures that place a high value on patient-centred care, evidence-based practice, and continuous quality improvement are more favourable for fostering innovation (Scott, Mannion, Davies, & Marshall, 2003). Cultures that adopt a mind-set of experimentation, see failure as a chance for growth, and encourage the exchange of information have a tendency to cultivate creativity (West, 2002). Hospitals that cultivate a culture of education, exploration, and information exchange enable their staff to question established practices and suggest innovative approaches to healthcare obstacles. Leadership is crucial in defining the culture of an organisation via the communication of a distinct vision, encouragement of innovation, and acknowledgment and incentivization of innovative efforts.

Organisational Structures and Processes: The presence of organisational structures and procedures in hospitals may have either a positive or negative impact on creativity. Organisational structures that are adaptable and encourage cooperation across different disciplines, include collective decision-making, and foster transparent communication, enable the sharing of ideas and information among healthcare professionals (Olden, Gomes, Mader, & Hart, 2019; Shalley& Gilson, 2004). Furthermore, by developing efficient procedures for generating, evaluating, and implementing ideas, such as quality improvement initiatives and innovation centres, healthcare personnel may be equipped with the necessary tools and assistance to effectively put new ideas into action.

Empirical Review

The study of Ilechukwu et al. (2023) evaluated how knowledge management practices influence organisational performance of teaching hospitals in Anambra State, Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design, the researchers gathered data via a validated questionnaire which was randomly administered to 279 staff of the selected hospitals. Regression analyses was utilised to analyse the data and the results revealed that Knowledge retention has significant effect on organizational performance of teaching hospitals in Anambra state, Nigeria; while knowledge storage did not. It was recommended that suitable policies should be put in place to encourage learning and training of both medical and non-medical staff. ADEM et al. (2022) in their study examined knowledge sharing strategies impact the operational efficiency of University of Uyo Teaching hospitals. Proportional sampling technique was used to select clinical staff of the University who participated in the study. A total of 400 clinical staff was selected for the study and data was fetched via questionnaire. Using a regression analysis to analyse the data, it was found that that knowledge sharing has a substantial consequence on the operational performance of the hospital. Thus, they recommended that the University should intensify knowledge sharing by taking advantage of technological innovation since this has the potential to improve their operational performance.

In a research conducted by Onyekwelu et al. (2021), knowledge management (KM) and organisational commitment were examined at private universities in Anambra State, Nigeria. The research strategy for the study was a survey. The 95 randomly selected faculty members from 4 private schools in the specified area make up the study population. A well-structured questionnaire was used to gather data; its validity was checked using face and content validation while the data was analysed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics. The results show that the two variables are positively and significantly correlated. The study demonstrated a momentous correlation between knowledge management and continuous commitment. The study recommended that more seasoned employees teach newer ones all the things they know. As a result, an atmosphere of competence will be fostered.

In their research, Forouzan et al. (2021) sought to understand how knowledge management impacts organisational performance and what factors impact its empowerment and implementation. The study was conducted in Kabul Steel mill which is the largest steel mill in Afghanistan. A thorough review of the relevant literature formed the basis for the research model. A questionnaire consisting of 48 queries was used to gather the main data for the investigation. A total of one hundred and eighty-two people, including managers and administrative staff, participated in the study. Software such as SPSS and Smart PLS were used to examine the collected data. The findings showed that trust, leadership, culture, and structure all had a role in improving an organization's knowledge management. Organisational performance is affected by knowledge management both directly and indirectly via human capital, a mediating element. In order to improve knowledge management practices and human resources it was suggested that managers should execute adequate knowledge management strategies because keeping up with the competition in the market requires this.

The influence of organisational culture on the relationship between knowledge management and non-role-related behaviour was studied by Edeh et al. (2020). Using a simple random sample method, researchers in the Southern area of Nigeria examined twenty ICT firms. The research survey used was a cross-sectional one. By distributing questionnaires, we were able to collect data from the participants. The validity of the instrument was verified by using face validity, and its reliability was determined by employing Cronbach α . The study found that ICT businesses in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, exhibited better extra-role conduct after implementing knowledge management methods in the following areas: information gathering, sharing, storage, and application. This study's findings support

the idea that knowledge management may be a powerful tool for HR professionals in the IT industry to inspire their staff to take on more responsibilities outside of their job descriptions.

The effect of knowledge transfer on the sustainability of Kenyan sugar businesses was studied by Akoko (2020). Using a descriptive survey, the study was focused on a sample size of 250 managers from sugar enterprises controlled by the state. Correlation analysis was used to as a method of statistical analysis and results showed that Knowledge conversion and the sustainability of sugar enterprises in Kenya substantial correlation.

The findings shows how successful knowledge management is in implementing conversion policies to promote growth and sustainability, create new products, and increase productivity. The study called for public-private partnership by all stakeholders in the implementation of knowledge management.

Industrial enterprises in Rivers State, Nigeria, were the subjects of an investigation by Evwierhurhoma and Onouha (2020) on the association between KM tool and overall performance. A cross-sectional research survey approach was used in the study, and 144 readily accessible managers were selected as the respondents. The data was collected by a questionnaire, and the given hypotheses were tested using SPSS software with the Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient statistical test. A robust and statistically substantial association between knowledge management technology adoption and key performance indicators was found. According to the findings, KM is indispensable for business success; especially in regard to customer satisfaction and profitability. It was recommended that managers in the manufacturing sector may boost their companies' bottom lines and delight customers by instituting a knowledge management strategy that makes good use of collaboration and social media.

Organisational performance in Nigeria's food and beverage industrial sector was studied by Akpa, Akinlabi, Asikhia, and Nnorom (2020) in relation to knowledge management. Using a survey research methodology, the study gathered data from 320 personnel in selected food and beverage enterprises in Nigeria. A validated questionnaire was used to gather data, which was then evaluated using SEM. According to the results, knowledge creation significantly hindered invention, but information exchange significantly enhanced creativity. In addition, the findings showed that knowledge generation significantly improved job satisfaction, but information sharing hardly reduced it.

The research conducted by Wasim et al. (2015) investigated the influence of knowledge sharing (KS) activities on the effectiveness of banks using a human-mediated method and approach. Data was collected from 810 middle-level managers from 42 institutions using a modified instrument and the survey method. The model's overall appropriateness was assessed using CFA and analysis conducted using SEM. The study's results indicate that a framework and a human-centred approach play a crucial role in mediating the link between explicit and implicit knowledge-sharing-driven success. This allows managers to give greater importance to KM strategies, since it helps them to better coordinate KM activities with enhanced information exchange, which may have a long-term effect on performance. Therefore, the study results suggest that explicit knowledge sharing practices have a smaller impact on bank efficiency compared to implicit knowledge sharing practices. As a result, managers should give more priority to explicit information sharing.

Mukhtar (2012) conducted a cross-sectional research to assess the impact of KM on the performance of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs). The data used in this study was obtained within a single time period and included a new sample of 278 managers and owners of manufacturing SMEs in Nigeria. Small and medium companies (SMEs) are crucial for Nigeria's economic advancement since they provide jobs, make significant contributions to industrial growth, accumulate capital, facilitate the production of intermediate goods, and encourage the proliferation of artisanal work. The literature review produces a model that aims to analyse the links between the components being studied. The findings from the study revealed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between KM and the commercial performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Other notable scholars (Agba et al., 2021; Ajanaku&Mutula, 2021; Opele&Okunoye 2019) in their various studies found that knowledge management strategies have positive impacts on the productivity of health practitioners in Nigerian hospitals and other medical facilities.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design using a cross sectional survey, and the researchers gathered their data from primary sources using a 5-point Likert validated questionnaire. The target population of the study comprised medical staff of both federal and state teaching hospitals in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. Using a purposeful sampling technique, the questionnaire was distributed to 255 respondents across the selected hospitals.

In order to ensure the instrument's validity, professionals in the field examined several copies and offered feedback on each. These suggestions were considered and included into the final version of the survey to ensure its face validity while the reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach alpha value for internal consistency. The data was analysed using correlation analysis. This method was used to process the data since it allows researchers to estimate relationship between two variables.

Analysis and Results

A total of four hundred and fifty-five (255) copies of the questionnaire was administered to the research participants, out of which two hundred and twenty-eight (228) were retrieved. From these retrieved copies, only two hundred and twenty were completely filled (220) respondents. The data collected from these copies were subsequently used for the analysis. The demographic attributes of the respondents are detailed thus;

Table 1 Demographics of respondents

| Variables | Categories | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Gender | Male | 147 | 67 |
| | Female | 73 | 33 |
| Age | 18-25 years | 35 | 16 |
| | 26-35 Years | 114 | 52 |
| | 36-45 Years | 51 | 23 |
| | 46 Years and above | 20 | 9 |
| Marital Status | Single | 75 | 34 |
| | Married | 121 | 55 |
| | Others | 24 | 11 |
| Years of Experience | 1-3 Years | 57 | 26 |
| | 5-6 Years | 103 | 47 |
| | 7-10 Years | 38 | 17 |
| | 10 years and Above | 22 | 10 |
| Position | Doctors | 58 | 26.4 |
| | Nurses | 77 | 35.0 |
| | Pharmacist | 46 | 20.9 |
| | Lab Scientist | 17 | 7.7 |

Table 1 above shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. It revealed that majority of the respondents were males accounting for about 67% of the entire sample size. A major notable demographic detail of the respondents is their years of experience in the medical industry and their job position. Majority of the staff have over 3 years of experience (74%) meanwhile the distribution of the job position is fairly spread such that no singly position or job level transcend 50%; this is expected to reflect in the quality of responses and minimal biases from any of the job positions.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Assessment of Measurement Model

| Constructs | Item Scale | Mean | S.D | Cronbach α |
|----------------------------------|------------|------|-------|-------------------|
| Knowledge Creation | KC Item 1 | 3.54 | 1.071 | 0.821 |
| | KC Item 2 | 3.59 | .982 | |
| | KC Item 3 | 3.51 | .884 | |
| | KC Item 4 | 3.80 | .918 | |
| Knowledge Sharing | KS Item 2 | 3.80 | .918 | 0.776 |
| | KS Item 2 | 3.59 | .982 | |
| | KS Item 3 | 3.54 | 1.071 | |
| | KS Item 4 | 3.16 | 1.141 | |
| Knowledge Application | KA Item 1 | 3.80 | .918 | 0.869 |
| | KA Item 2 | 2.36 | .690 | |
| | KA Item 3 | 3.57 | .934 | |
| | KA Item 4 | 3.64 | .919 | |
| Organisational Creativity | OC Item 1 | 3.87 | .693 | 0.807 |
| | OC Item 2 | 3.79 | .824 | |
| | OC Item 3 | 3.68 | .659 | |
| | OC Item 4 | 3.86 | .722 | |

The descriptive analysis the study is presented in Table 2. The result unveiled the average score and standard deviation of the elements comprising the questionnaire for every construct. The outcome demonstrated a high mean value, suggesting that the majority of respondents concurred with the questions. Additionally, the standard deviation accurately assessed the variability or spread of the responses, which was deemed satisfactory. This suggests that the selected samples sufficiently reflected the entire population under investigation (Dauglas&Marting, 2005; Mary, 2008).

Test of Hypotheses

Test of Hypothesis One: Relationship between Knowledge creation and Organisational Creativity

Correlations

| | | Knowledge Creation | Organisational Creativity |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Knowledge Creation | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .001 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .493 |
| | N | 220 | 220 |
| Organisational Creativity | Pearson Correlation | .001 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .493 | |
| | N | 243 | 243 |

The correlation result showed that there is a moderate positive relationship between relationship Knowledge Creation and Organisational Creativity; showing a correlation value of 0.493 at a P value of 0.001. The result clearly showed that Knowledge Creation can positively influence Organisational Creativity of hospitals in Niger delta Region of Nigeria. The r^2 of 24.3 clearly shows that Knowledge Creation can positively impact or improve Organisational Creativity up to the magnitude of 24.3%.

Test of Hypothesis Two: Relationship between Knowledge Sharing and Organisational Creativity

Correlations

| | | Knowledge Sharing | Organisational Creativity |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Knowledge Creation | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .001 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .681 |
| | N | 220 | 220 |
| Organisational Creativity | Pearson Correlation | .001 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .681 | |
| | N | 243 | 243 |

The correlation result showed that there is a strong positive relationship between relationship Knowledge sharing and Organisational Creativity; showing a correlation value of 0.681 at a P value of 0.001. The result clearly showed that Knowledge sharing can positively influence Organisational Creativity of hospitals in Niger delta Region of Nigeria. The r^2 of 0.464 clearly shows that Knowledge sharing can positively impact or improve Organisational Creativity up to the magnitude of 46.4%.

Test of Hypothesis Three: Relationship between Knowledge Application and Organisational Creativity

Correlations

| | | Knowledge Application | Organisational Creativity |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Knowledge Application | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .001 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .904 |
| | N | 220 | 220 |
| Organisational Creativity | Pearson Correlation | .001 | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .904 | |
| | N | 243 | 243 |

The correlation result showed that there is a strong positive relationship between relationship Knowledge application and Organisational Creativity; showing a correlation value of 0.904 at a P value of 0.001. The result clearly showed that Knowledge application can positively influence Organisational Creativity of hospitals in Niger delta Region of Nigeria. The r^2 of 0.817 clearly shows that Knowledge Creation can positively impact or improve Organisational Creativity up to the magnitude of 81.7%.

Discussion of Findings

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of knowledge management strategies on organisational creativity of selected hotels in Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the impact of knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and knowledge implementation on organisational creativity. This gave rise to three specific research questions and hypotheses which were subjected to statistical analysis. The research used purposive sampling method to choose two hundred and fifty-five (255) participants across selected hospitals in the Niger Delta. The result of the analysis revealed that a statistically significant positive relationship between knowledge management strategies and organisational creativity. Specifically, the result showed beta (β) coefficients of 0.493, 0.681 and 0.904 respectively on the relationships between knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and knowledge application with organisational creativity.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that knowledge management strategies have a significant positive impact on organisational creativity and can be harnessed to improve the creativity of the health sector towards greater level of productivity. The result is not far from reality. First the practicality of the result showed that until knowledge is put to use (application), health care professional may not get bet out of it. In the same vein, knowledge sharing is worth more than its acquisition or creation itself since sharing them would make it ,ore available for use by many health workers.

Furthermore, the outcome of this study is supported by previous empirical investigations. For instance, Ilechukwu et al. (2023) found that that knowledge sharing has a momentous consequence on the operational performance of the hospital. Their study in corroboration with this study also revealed further that technology paramount for knowledge distribution in the establishment. Similar study by Ajanaju and Mutula (2021) as a result of their findings recommended that there is a need for nursing management to cultivate a pleasant and flexible administrative arrangement that would support knowledge sharing in medical facilities; especially in hospitals. Onyekwelu et al. (2021) in their study has similar finding showing that knowledge management is highly impactful on organisational commitment and recommended that more seasoned employees teach newer ones all the things they know. As a result, an atmosphere of competence will be fostered.

Aside the medical industry, Akpa, et al. (2020) had similar result in the food and beverage production industry, Mukhtar (2012) confirmed this result amongst SME business owners; while Wasim et al.(2015) got the same result in the banking sector. Other notable scholars (Agba et al., 2021; Edeh et al., 2020; Forouzan et al., 2021; Opele&Okunoye 2019) in their various studies found that knowledge management strategies have positive impacts on the productivity of health practitioners in Nigerian hospitals and other medical facilities.

Implication of Findings of Study

Based on the findings of this research, it is imperative that policy makers and experts in the health sector prioritise the implementation of suitable knowledge management strategies to enhance their creativity and productivity. This underscores the necessity for implementing rigorous policies and create favourable organisational climate that would effectively guarantee the brainstorming discussions that would spur health worker to sharing knowledge and ideas.

This study has successfully demonstrated that knowledge management extend beyond knowledge acquisition and sharing; until such knowledge is out to use, it may not yield the desired benefits. Therefore the study has placed an obligation on health care managers to encourage and carefully guide younger colleagues to applying their newly acquired knowledge.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research provided that following specific recommendations as a result of the findings therein;

1. Management and policy makers in Health sector especially hospital should as a matter of urgency develop policies that would encourage knowledge management practices in the industry.
2. Health practitioners are urged to install and integrate a computerised health information management system in all public hospital to help engender a sustainable knowledge management practice.
3. Management and other stakeholder in the industry should create a friendly climate for knowledge sharing through routine training, seminar, conferences, workshops, symposia and other platform that would enhance sustainable knowledge management practices.
4. All members of the medical team should develop the willingness and be self-motivated to repeatedly create and share new insights, ideas, best practices and expertise to enhance their professional development for overall benefit of their hospitals.
5. Government representative in the industry are urged to fund in-service training for medical professional. This is necessary in order to get improved result in their level of creativity and productivity. However, this should be adequately monitored by the relevant regulatory body.
6. Adequate technological facilities should be made available to ease knowledge storage and security in the hospitals. A public-private-partnership could be arranged to facilitate investment in modern technology and equipment that would enhance knowledge sharing and storage.
7. Lastly government and other relevant stakeholders are encouraged to improve funding of research and training for medical professionals. This is necessary if they desire to improve their creativity.

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