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# Improving Research Productivity of Bottom-Level Academics Through Knowledge Acquisition and Sharing Behaviours

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**ABSTRACT**

University rankings are heavily influenced by the research productivity of their academic staff, making it a strategic resource for enhancing their reputation and social impact. For bottom-level academics, publishing research in reputable journals is crucial for their academic and professional growth. The quality of their research output largely depends on acquiring knowledge from quality sources and sharing knowledge with colleagues both within and outside their universities. Unfortunately, research that primarily focuses on the research productivity of bottom-level academics and the factors that contribute to it has been hitherto ignored. This study investigates the relationship between knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, and research productivity among bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. A correlational survey research design was employed. The population comprised 645 bottom-level academics from three universities in Ogun state. A sample size of 215 was obtained, and 178 properly filled questionnaires were returned. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analysis were used for data analysis. The findings revealed high levels of knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing among the respondents. However, the overall mean level of research productivity was low, despite a high level of publications in learned journals. Correlation analysis results indicated a significant and positive relationship between knowledge acquisition and research productivity, and between knowledge sharing and research productivity. Multiple regression analysis showed that knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing had a combined effect on the research productivity of the respondents. The study concludes that knowledge acquisition and sharing significantly influence the research productivity of bottom-level academics in Ogun-State, Nigeria. Recommendations are presented based on these findings.

**Keywords:** Knowledge Acquisition, Knowledge Sharing, Research Productivity, Bottom-Level Academics, Universities, Ogun State, Nigeria.



## I. Introduction

Universities, regardless of their geographical setting, are widely recognised as epicentre for the creation and dissemination of knowledge, with most research outputs originating from them (Tweheyo, Abaho, & Verma, 2022). Publishing high-quality research is a fundamental goal in academia, it advances knowledge, guiding policy, and enhances the reputation and visibility of academics and their universities. This is true because the performance and productivity of faculty members are the key determinants of the ranking of universities (Syed et al., 2021). The emergence of global university rankings has transformed research from an academic vocation into a strategic resource (Ryazanova & Jaskiene, 2022) that attracts social impact and reinforces their achievements and reputations. Given the significance of research productivity of academics, it becomes crucial for universities to prioritize scholarly research and ensure that factors promoting publication output are thoroughly considered and addressed.

Research productivity refers to the outcomes resulting from research activities. For the purpose of this study, the

indicators used to measure research productivity are published articles in refereed journals, conference papers, ongoing research and book chapters. Research productivity and its regular assessment has become fundamental feature of contemporary universities, and the significance of publication in the growth and development of the academics (Okonedo, Popoola, Emmanuel, & Bamigboye, 2015), especially bottom-level academics cannot be overestimated.

Bottom-level academics are teaching staff that are in the early stages of their academic careers, specifically, those at the grade levels of assistant lecturer, lecturer II, and lecturer I. They are at the forefront of teaching and learning and their research output significantly contributes to the universities' intellectual capital. As early-career or emerging academics, it is important for them to show appreciable levels of research productivity because their promotion and career recognition are tied to it (Okonedo, 2015). Thus, for the purpose of academic and professional advancement, it is essential for bottom-level academics to conduct research and publish their findings in reputable academic journals. Research productivity holds significant importance for these academics and their universities. However, their potential to produce impactful research is often influenced by some knowledge management practices- knowledge acquisition and sharing behaviour.

Knowledge acquisition is regarded as knowledge activities geared towards seeking and obtaining knowledge from both internal and external sources/ environment. It is a critical component of research productivity, as it equips academics with the necessary skills and insights to conduct rigorous and impactful research. Although some other terminologies have been used to depict the process of acquiring knowledge, terms such as seek, acquire, capture, generate, etc. all refer to the process of knowledge accumulation (Gold, Malhotra, & Segars, 2001).

Knowledge sharing is another factor that could influence the research productivity of academics in universities. Knowledge sharing allows for the cross-fertilisation of ideas, promotes interdisciplinary research, and enhances the overall quality of research output. Knowledge sharing empowers the learning process in research activities and outputs (Okonedo, 2015). It plays key roles in information dissemination, research, teaching, and learning and exposes academics to a wide range of endless streams of opportunities, as well as providing them with channels for communicating research findings.

Despite the importance of research productivity to the development and career progression of bottom-level academic staff working in universities, researchers have observed low research productivity among academic staff in Nigerian HEIs (Lawal & Olawale, 2020; Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2023; Haruna, Momoh, & Ismail, 2023). It is widely recognised that knowledge acquisition and sharing behaviour are generally presumed to be critical behaviours which guide and inspire academics to achieve the high research productivity necessary for rapid career progression, particularly for young and mid-career academics. However, studies that have focused on bottom-level academics as a separate group of academics in Nigeria are rare. Hence, the study investigates the nature and interrelationships of knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, and research productivity among bottom-level academics. The specific objectives of the study include to:

1. Ascertain the level of knowledge acquisition for research activities by bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State
2. To ascertain the extent of knowledge sharing among the bottom-level academics.
3. Find out the research productivity level of the bottom-level academics.
4. Determine the significant relationship between knowledge acquisition and research productivity of bottom-level academics.
5. Establish the significant relationship between knowledge sharing and research productivity of bottom-level academics.
6. Find out the significant combined contribution of knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing to research productivity of bottom-level academics.

This study posed and addressed the following research questions.

1. To what level do bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State acquire knowledge for research activities?
2. To what extent do bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State share knowledge?
3. What is the research productivity level of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State?

Hypotheses formulated and tested in this study include:

H01: Knowledge acquisition has no significant relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

H02: nowledge sharing has no significant relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

H03: Knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing have no significant combined contribution to research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

## II. Literature Review

### *a. Research productivity of academics*

Research productivity is a key measure of academic achievement and often determines an academic's status among peers (Oyeyemi et al., 2019). The scholarly achievements of academic staff, which contribute to the prestige of programs and institutions, are emphasized (Simisaye, 2019; Owate, Iroeze, & Echem, 2020). In Nigerian universities, commitment to scholarly activities, leading to knowledge and idea production, is a defining feature. Academics regard research activities as a crucial part of their roles, leading to new knowledge and scientific discoveries (Kpolovie & Dorgu, 2019). Research and publication are argued to be the most conspicuous determinants of academic status in universities and other

higher learning institutes in many countries, including Nigeria (Albert, Davia, & Legazpe, 2016).

Numerous empirical studies have been conducted to understand the research productivity of academics in higher education institutions. While some reported low research productivity, others reported high or moderate level. For example, a study was carried out by Basiru (2018) on the research productivity of academics in private universities in South-West Nigeria found that the research output of the academic staff in these institutions is moderately low. Also, a study by Haruna, Momoh, and Ismail (2023) on the research and publication productivity of the academic staff at Auchi Polytechnic in Nigeria found that the publication productivity among the staff was low. Abiodun-Oyebanji (2023) surveyed lecturer research output in Colleges of Education (CoE) in Southwestern Nigeria and found that lecturers' research productivity was low. Other research reported high publication outs among academics. For example, Bamigboye, Adenekan, and Olude (2018) surveyed the research output of 536 academic staff at the Federal University of Agriculture in Abeokuta, Nigeria and found that the level of research output among the staff was high.

### *b. Knowledge acquisition by academics*

Liao, Wu, Hu, and Tsui (2010) regarded knowledge acquisition as the first step in the process of developing knowledge and also the gatekeeper of any knowledge management system. Knowledge acquisition acts as the primary channel through which new knowledge is added to the knowledge repository. Pacharapha and Ractham (2012) mentioned that the acquisition of knowledge requires the recipient's willingness, attitude, and ability to use it. Both the source and the recipient should be willing to share and acquire knowledge. Knowledge acquisition, a process involving the gathering and learning of suitable knowledge, utilises a variety of internal and external resources (Gholami, Asli, Salman, & Noruzy, 2013). According to the authors, these resources include expert mentoring, relevant documents, experience, dialogue, education, and training, which are among the most common techniques for acquiring knowledge.

The literature review reveals a dearth of empirical studies on knowledge acquisition, but many studies focus on the sources and methods academics use to acquire knowledge. These findings are often reported under the topics of information needs and seeking behaviour. Various terms like 'acquire', 'seek', 'generate', and 'capture' are used to describe the process of accumulating knowledge (Gold et al., 2001). The study by Shuva and Taisir (2016) at the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh, reported that most academics employed journals in their research and teaching practices. In a study conducted by Kaba and Ramaiah (2018) on knowledge acquisition among faculty members, it was discovered that journals, newspapers, books, magazines, and conference proceedings are the primary sources through which faculty members in the UAE acquire knowledge. On the home front, Ogunmodede and Oniovosa (2019) found that the Internet, e-resources (e-books/e-journals/online databases), print resources (textbooks/journals/reference books), mass media (TV/radio/newspapers), conferences/seminars/workshops, and interaction among colleagues were the sources of knowledge acquisition by the academic staff of three universities in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. In the same vein, Omah and Urhiewhu (2019) reported the results of the information-seeking behaviour of academic staff at Taraba State University, Jalingo, Nigeria. Findings indicated that academics at Taraba University acquire knowledge mostly through the internet, workshops, conferences, seminars, and informal academic interaction, and these sources were used for their teaching and research activities.

### *c. Knowledge sharing by academics*

Knowledge sharing has been defined severally by scholars in their various works. According to Nguyen (2020), knowledge sharing is a process of exchanging information, skills, and experiences. Madugu and Manaf (2018) explain that the sharing of knowledge entails the activities of exchanging, disseminating, or transmitting knowledge that has already been acquired. The authors further conceived knowledge sharing as "disseminating ideas, thoughts, experiences, understandings, or events on given subject(s) with anticipation to achieve more understandings or insights" (p. 23). Kalu, Usiedo, and Chidi-Kalu (2019) described knowledge sharing as a mutual exchange of ideas and information that could shape the learning process within teams in organisations.

Over the years, several frantic research efforts have been made to find out knowledge sharing behaviours of academics. For instance, Ogunmodede and Popoola (2019) conducted a survey on the level of knowledge sharing among academic librarians in the federal universities in Nigeria and found that the level of knowledge sharing among academic librarians in the federal universities in Nigeria was high. Eiriemiokhale and Idiedo (2020) investigated knowledge sharing practices among lecturers at Kwara State University, Malete and found that academics were most likely to share knowledge with their colleagues in universities. Abbas (2017) investigated the phenomenon of knowledge sharing among academic staff in Bayero University, Kano; the University of Maiduguri; the University of Ibadan; and the University of Port Harcourt. The study discovered that academics in the four universities were sharing knowledge through participation in workshops, seminars, and conferences, membership of professional associations and societies, and a willingness to share knowledge and other resources with their colleagues.

### *d. Knowledge acquisition, sharing and research productivity of academics*

The literature review has shown a dearth of studies on the relationship between knowledge acquisition and research productivity, compared to other knowledge management activities like sharing and utilisation. No known studies directly address this relationship, making the current study relevant. However, some studies have explored the relationship between knowledge acquisition and other performance outcomes like organisational

performance and innovation. It's assumed that knowledge acquisition can enhance academic research productivity. Lyles and Salk (2007) found a positive relationship between knowledge acquisition and organisational performance. This underscores the importance for institutions to identify best practices for achieving excellent performance (Zwain, Teong, & Othman, 2012), a good indicator of research productivity. Knowledge acquisition is a crucial part of the learning cycle, helping academics continuously develop and expand their knowledge repository.

Several studies have reported the relationship between the two constructs of knowledge sharing and research productivity in different geographical contexts. For instance, Fauzi, Nya-Ling, Thursamy, and Ojo (2019) investigated the role of knowledge sharing on research productivity of academics from public and private universities in Malaysia and found that academic knowledge-sharing behaviour has a substantial impact on research productivity. In a recent study in Indonesia, Aulawi (2021) investigated the impact of knowledge sharing on research productivity among academic staff at a private university in Indonesia and found that knowledge sharing significantly influenced the university's research productivity. On the home front, Owate, Iroeze, and Echem (2020) investigated the knowledge sharing and research productivity of academic librarians in the Donald Ekong Library of the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that both academic librarians who have publications and those without publications agreed that knowledge sharing among academic librarians is relevant to their productivity. The study conducted by Bamigboye, Adenekan, and Olude (2018) also revealed a significant relationship between knowledge sharing and research output among the academic staff of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. On the contrary, finding from the study by Okonedo and Popoola (2012) showed that knowledge sharing was not relatively significant for research productivity.

## III. Methodology

This study employed the survey research design of correlational type. The population of this study consists of 645 bottom-level academics spread across faculties/colleges in the selected universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select homogenous faculties/colleges in three universities (Federal university of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Olabisi Onabanjo University, and Covenant University), focusing on common faculties like engineering, science, and social science/management. Out of 372 bottom-level academics in these faculties, 215 were selected from common departments. Subsequently, the census method was applied to the 215 selected homogenous departments. A structure questionnaire was used to gather data. Out of 215 copies of administered questionnaire, 178 were properly completed and used for the study. The Croabach alpha coefficient values obtained for the instrument were Research productivity scale = 0.775, Knowledge acquisition scale = 0.788 and Knowledge sharing scale = 0.788.

## IV. Findings

Research Question 1: To what extent do bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State acquire knowledge for research activities?

TABLE I
TEST OF NORM SHOWING THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AMONG BOTTOM-LEVEL ACADEMICS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN OGUN STATE

| Interval | Mean index | Extent of knowledge acquisition | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-7 | | Very low extent | - | - |
| 8-14 | | Low extent | 5 | 2.8 |
| 15-21 | | Neutral | 19 | 10.6 |
| 22-28 | **27.5196** | High extent | 78 | 43.6 |
| 29-35 | | Very high extent | 77 | 43.0 |

Table 1 shows the percentage extent of knowledge acquisition among bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State. 5 (2.8%) respondents had low extent of knowledge acquisition, 19(10.6%) respondents were neutral, 78(43.6%) respondents had high extent of knowledge acquisition, and 77(43.0%) respondents had a very high extent of knowledge acquisition. Hence, there was a high extent of knowledge acquisition among bottom-level academics in the study. This is in line with Kaba and Ramaiah (2018) who posited that regardless of the nature of an academic institution, academic staff members are continuously involved in activities related to knowledge acquisition. To carry out quality research work, they must engage in the process of knowledge acquisition.

Research Question 2: To what extent do bottom-level academics share knowledge?

TABLE II
TEST OF NORM SHOWING THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG BOTTOM-LEVEL ACADEMICS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN OGUN STATE

| Interval | Mean index | Extent of knowledge sharing | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-7 | | Very low extent | 1 | 0.6 |
| 8-14 | | Low extent | 4 | 2.2 |
| 15-21 | | Neutral | 34 | 19.0 |
| 22-28 | **24.3352** | High extent | 91 | 50.8 |
| 29-35 | | Very high extent | 49 | 27.4 |

Table 2 displays the extent of knowledge sharing among bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State, expressed in percentages. Specifically, 1 respondent (0.6%) exhibited a very low extent of knowledge sharing, 4 respondents (2.2%) showed a low extent, 34 respondents (19.0%) were neutral, 91 respondents (50.8%) demonstrated a high extent of knowledge sharing, and 49 respondents (27.4%) indicated a very high extent. Thus, it can be inferred that there is a high extent of knowledge sharing among the bottom-level academics in the study. This is in agreement with the study by Ogunmodede and Popoola (2019) who found that the level of knowledge sharing among academic librarians in the federal universities in Nigeria is high. This finding is supported also by Obinyan, Adetona, and Adeniyi (2021) who

reported a high level of knowledge sharing among LIS professionals in Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What is the research publication output level of bottom-level academics?

Table III: Research publication output level of bottom-level academics in selected university in Ogun State within the period of 5 years.

In answering research questions 3, the researcher applied the decision rule: 1.5- 2.0=very low, 2.1-2.49= low, 2.5-3.49 =high, 3.5-4.0 =very high.

TABLE III

| S/n | Research productivity | None | 1-3 | 4-6 | 7-9 | 10 above | $\bar{X}$ | S.D. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Articles in learned journals | 5 2.8% | 22 12.3% | 31 17.3% | 36 20.1% | 85 47.5% | 3.97 | 1.182 |
| 2 | Conferences proceedings | 39 21.8% | 88 49.2% | 39 21.8% | 4 2.2% | 9 5.0% | 2.20 | 0.972 |
| 3 | Completed research | 25 14.0% | 89 49.7% | 49 27.4% | 6 3.4% | 10 5.6% | 2.37 | 0.959 |
| 4 | Chapters in books | 133 74.3% | 41 22.9% | 4 2.2% | - | 1 0.6% | 1.30 | 0.567 |
| | | | | **Mean =2.46** | | | | |

Source: Field survey, 2023

In Table III, 85 (47.5%) academics published over 10 articles in learned journals, 36 (20.1%) published between 7-9 articles in learned journals, 31 (17.3%) published between 4-6 articles, and 22 (12.3%) published between 1-3 articles in learned journals. The majority of academics (48.2%) published between 1 and 3 conference proceedings, and 89 (49.1%) had between 1 and 3 ongoing research, respectively. Articles in learned journals have the highest mean score (=3.97), followed by completed research (=2.37), conference proceedings (=2.20), chapters in books, which had the lowest mean score (=1.30). It can be inferred therefore that the level of research publication output of bottom-level academics between 2018 and 2023 was low. However, the table also shows that within 2018-2023, 121 (67.6%) of the respondents had published above 7 articles, with the level of their journal articles publication are high.

In universities across Nigeria, academic staff are promoted every three years, with the expectation that they will present proof of their published works. If an academic staff member can publish seven or more articles in scholarly journals over a five-year period, their publication output rate can be considered fair. This finding aligns with research conducted among academics in universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. Studies by Basiru (2018), Haruna, Momoh, and Ismail (2023), and Abiodun-Oyebanji (2023) similarly found the research productivity of academic staff to be low. Consistent with the results of this current study, they also found a high number of publications in scholarly journals. This study supports the findings of Bamigboye, Adenekan, and Olude (2018), who found articles published in scholarly journals to be high among academic librarians.

H01: Knowledge acquisition has no significant relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

TABLE IV

PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION (PPMC) SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AND RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY OF BOTTOM-LEVEL ACADEMICS

| Variables | Mean | Std. Dev. | N | R | p-value | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research productivity | 9.8324 | 2.45747 | 179 | .351* | <.001 | Sig. |
| Knowledge acquisition | 26.8324 | 5.77041 | | | | |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table IV indicates that knowledge acquisition do have a significant and positive relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics (r =.351, n = 179, p <.05). This implies that knowledge acquisition influenced/enhanced research productivity of bottom-level academics at the selected universities in the study. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected and restated: Knowledge acquisition has significant relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

Hypothesis 2: Knowledge sharing has no significant relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

TABLE V

PEARSON PRODUCT MOMENT CORRELATION (PPMC) SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY OF BOTTOM-LEVEL ACADEMICS

| Variables | Mean | Std. Dev. | N | R | p-value | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research productivity | 9.8324 | 2.45747 | 179 | .334* | <.001 | Sig. |
| Knowledge sharing | 23.9665 | 5.45142 | | | | |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows knowledge sharing do have a significant and positive relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics (r =.334, n = 179, p <.05). The result in Table 5 depicts that knowledge sharing influenced/enhanced research productivity of bottom-level academics at selected universities in the study. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and restated: Knowledge sharing has no significant relationship with research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State. This is in line with the findings of Aulawi (2021) and Fauzi, Nya-Ling, Thursamy, and Ojo (2019) who found a significant relationship between knowledge sharing and research productivity academic staff.

Hypothesis 3: Knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing have no combined contribution to research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

TABLE VI:
MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS SHOWING THE COMBINED CONTRIBUTION OF KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING TO RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY OF BOTTOM-LEVEL ACADEMICS

**(a) Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .407[a] | .166 | .156 | 2.44876 |

a. Predictor: (Constant), Knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing

**(b) A N O V A[a]**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | DF | Mean Square | F | Sig. | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 209.465 | 2 | 104.732 | 17.466 | .000[b] | Sig. |
| | Residual | 1055.373 | 176 | 5.996 | | | |
| | Total | 1264.838 | 178 | | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Research productivity
b. Predictor: (Constant), Knowledge Acquisition, knowledge sharing

**(c) Coefficients[a]**

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standardized Coefficient | T | Sig. p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta Contribution | | |
| (Constant) | 2.775 | 1.003 | | 2.766 | .006 |
| Knowledge acquisition | .118 | .035 | .256 | 3.379 | .001 |
| Knowledge sharing | .111 | .037 | .226 | 2.981 | .003 |

a. Dependent Variable: Research productivity

The multiple regression analysis result presented in Table 6 (a & b) indicates that knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing have combined contribution to research productivity of the bottom-level academics [R =.407, F(2, 176) =17.466, $p < 0.05$]. With the Adjusted R2 = 0.156, the model implies that 15.6% of the variance in research productivity is explained by the variation in the two predictor variables, knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing when taken together. This implies that the remaining 84.4% of the variance, which is not explained by the two predictor variables in the model, can be attributed to other extraneous variables. Accordingly, the null hypothesis (H02) is rejected. Thus knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing had a significant combined effect on the research productivity of bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State.

Further, Table 6 (c) presents the results of individual multiple regression analyses. The relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable is expressed as beta weights, viz., knowledge acquisition ($\beta$ =.256, $p<.05$) and knowledge sharing ($\beta$ =.226, $p<.05$), respectively. Hence, knowledge acquisition and knowledge sharing were significant, i.e., they could independently and significantly predict the research productivity of bottom-level academics in the study.

## V. Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the relationship between knowledge acquisition, knowledge sharing, and research productivity among bottom-level academics in selected universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. Based on the findings of this research, these academics acquire knowledge extensively from both tacit and explicit sources, and they exhibit a positive attitude towards knowledge sharing, primarily through face-to-face interaction. Despite the overall research productivity appearing low, the publication of articles in scholarly journals was notably high, possibly due to the fact that their promotion is largely based on these publications. However, their contributions to conference proceedings and book chapters remain low. These findings underscore the critical role of knowledge acquisition and sharing in enhancing research productivity, particularly in the publication of articles in learned journals. Future research could further explore the factors hindering the research productivity of bottom-level academics. Additionally, these findings could serve as a foundation for future studies investigating these relationships in different contexts and among other academic groups. This would contribute to a more holistic understanding of the dynamics of research productivity in academia.

## VI. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following:

1. The study highlights a high level of knowledge acquisition and sharing among respondents. However, it recommends that university management should further encourage this, especially among bottom-level academics. The suggested strategies include: Establishing programs where experienced academics guide less experienced colleagues, implementing a system to incentivize knowledge sharing, such as acknowledging contributions in various platforms, providing platforms like online forums and shared digital libraries to facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing, and promoting a culture that values knowledge sharing and collaboration, reflected in the university's mission statement, policies, and practices.
2. University management should take steps to encourage and support bottom-level academics in their efforts to publish more publications. This could include providing financial assistance to attend conferences, offering workshops or training on writing for publication. By doing so, universities can help to foster a more diverse and robust culture of research and publication among their academic staff.

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