



## Organisational Culture and Knowledge Sharing Practices among Academics in the School of Communication and Information Technology, The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro

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### Abstract

*The study examined the knowledge sharing practices and organisational culture among academic staff in the School of Communication and Information Technology, at The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Ogun state. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and employed a total enumeration sampling technique to include all the 47 academic staff in the school. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire that was validated by experts and tested for reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.85). Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, percentage) and inferential statistics (Pearson's correlation) were utilized for the analysis. Findings revealed that knowledge sharing was a regular and valued activity, largely facilitated through informal channels such as peer interactions and departmental meetings. Academics frequently exchanged teaching materials, research insights, and ICT-related skills, motivated by collegial support and professional development. The prevailing organisational culture was identified as clan culture, marked by strong interpersonal relationships, trust, and teamwork, with a secondary presence of adhocracy culture. There was a significant positive correlation between organisational culture – especially clan ( $r = 0.612, p < 0.01$ ) and adhocracy ( $r = 0.398, p < 0.01$ ) – and knowledge sharing practices. The study thus concluded that a supportive organisational culture enhances knowledge sharing among academics. It recommended institutionalising clan culture values, encouraging innovation, reducing bureaucratic barriers, and investing in collaborative platforms to promote sustained knowledge exchange.*

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### Introduction

In today's knowledge-driven economy, academic institutions are increasingly dependent on effective knowledge sharing to drive innovation, teaching excellence, and institutional performance. Knowledge sharing refers to the process through which individuals mutually exchange information, skills, and expertise to create new knowledge (Ismail & Yusof, 2023). Within academic environments, particularly in higher education institutions, knowledge sharing is essential for research collaboration, curriculum development, and professional development among academic staff (Alavi et al., 2022). However, the practice of

knowledge sharing is influenced by organisational factors, especially the prevailing organisational culture. Organisational culture encompasses the shared beliefs, values, norms, and practices that shape the behaviour of individuals within an institution (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). It determines how individuals interact, what they prioritise, and whether or not they perceive knowledge as a resource to be hoarded or shared (Nguyen & Malik, 2021).

In Nigerian polytechnics, where limited resources and institutional challenges often constrain academic performance, it becomes necessary to foster a culture that promotes knowledge-sharing behaviour. Despite

the strategic significance of knowledge sharing, there seems to be a dearth of empirical studies that examined the relationship existing between organisational culture and knowledge sharing practices within polytechnics – especially at the departmental or school level. Understanding how these two constructs interact can provide insight into how to foster collaboration, improve academic output, and develop a more cohesive intellectual community. The School of Communication and Information Technology at Federal Polytechnic Ilaro presents a unique case for such an investigation, given its diverse range of academic disciplines and professionals. This is because of the interdisciplinary nature of the School, its technological orientation, developing research culture, and manageable academic population. These characteristics make it an ideal environment for a deliberate investigation into how organisational culture shapes knowledge sharing among academics, as this is a vital area for institutional performance, innovation, and policy implementation. With 47 academic staff members, the school provides a manageable yet diverse population for exploring how organisational culture influences knowledge sharing behaviours among academics.

Knowledge sharing is a fundamental process in organisational learning and innovation. Ismail & Yusof (2023) aver that it involves the interchange of information, skills and expertise among individuals or groups to improve individual and collective capabilities. In academic institutions, knowledge sharing enables educators and researchers to collaborate more effectively, develop new curricula, co-author publications, and mentor early-career professionals. The practice can be formal (e.g., through seminars, academic journals) or informal (e.g., casual conversations, peer mentoring). According to Nonaka & Takeuchi's (1995) Knowledge Creation Theory, knowledge sharing is most effective when both tacit (experiential, intuitive knowledge) and explicit (documented, structured knowledge) forms are shared. In this context, the interaction between academics – through communities of practice or collaborative teaching – enhances

institutional knowledge creation. However, barriers such as lack of trust, poor leadership support, and weak communication channels often hinder this process (Alavi, et. al, 2022).

Organisational culture is a term that refers to the common beliefs, values, the attitudes, and the assumptions that influence how people behave within an organisation (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Culture shapes the way employees interact, how decisions are made, and how knowledge is shared or retained. In academic institutions, organisational culture influences collaboration, innovation, and openness to new ideas (Nguyen & Malik, 2021). One of the most widely adopted frameworks for diagnosing organisational culture is the Competing Values Framework (CVF) propounded by Cameron & Quinn (2011), which categorises organisational cultures into four types:

- i. Clan culture: Focused on collaboration, mentorship, and teamwork.
- ii. Adhocracy culture: Oriented towards innovation and risk-taking.
- iii. Market culture: Competitive and result-oriented.
- iv. Hierarchy culture: Structured, rule-based, and control-driven.

The presence of clan culture or adhocracy culture is often positively correlated with open communication and knowledge sharing, whereas hierarchical culture or market culture may inhibit free exchange due to rigid structures and power distances (O'Reilly, et. a., 2020).

Knowledge sharing practices in tertiary education institutions like Polytechnics is crucial to improve the academic quality, innovation, and staff development. Academic environments are naturally rich in knowledge resources, but these are often underutilized due to structural, behavioural, or cultural constraints (Boateng & Abdulai, 2022). Studies have shown that supportive leadership, trust among peers, incentives, and a collaborative culture enhance knowledge sharing among academics (Memon, et. al, 2021). In Nigeria, Eze (2022) noted that institutional challenges

such as inadequate funding, limited ICT infrastructure, and bureaucratic bottlenecks often weaken the motivation for academic collaboration. Despite these constraints, departments or schools with a positive organisational climate and leadership that encourages cooperation tend to report better knowledge sharing outcomes.

There is plethora of literature to support the relationship that exists between organisational culture and knowledge sharing practices. A culture that promotes openness, learning, and collaboration significantly enhances knowledge sharing behaviours among staff (Nguyen & Malik, 2021; Ismail & Yusof, 2023). Specifically, clan and adhocracy cultures positively correlate with knowledge sharing due to their emphasis on interpersonal relationships and innovation, respectively. In contrast, hierarchical cultures may foster knowledge hoarding due to rigid roles and status-based authority (O'Reilly, et. al, 2020). Empirical studies in tertiary institutions support these claims. For instance, Memon, et. al (2021) found that academic departments with strong clan cultures reported significantly higher levels of intra-departmental knowledge exchange. Similarly, Alavi, et. al (2022) observed that organisational culture was the most significant predictor of knowledge sharing behaviour among faculty in Malaysian universities.

Although there is a growing interest in organisational behaviour research in Nigerian academia, studies specifically linking organisational culture and knowledge sharing are still limited. Eze (2022) examined knowledge sharing practices in Nigerian polytechnics and found that organisational support and cultural alignment were key predictors of academic collaboration. Likewise, Akinwale & George (2023) emphasized that the absence of a knowledge-friendly culture impedes innovation and research development in Nigerian higher education institutions. Given the scarcity of focused studies in Nigerian polytechnics – especially at the school or departmental level – there is a clear research gap. Investigating this relationship in the School of Communication and Information Technology, Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, will provide

new insights and contribute to both theory and practice.

This study is anchored on two complementary theories: The Theory of Nonaka and Takeuchi's Knowledge Creation (SECI Model) and the Competing Values Framework (CVF) by Cameron and Quinn. These frameworks jointly provide a multidimensional lens for understanding the relationship between knowledge sharing and organisational culture within academic environments.

### **Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI Model**

The SECI Model – developed by Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) – is one of the most influential frameworks in knowledge management literature. It describes how knowledge is created and shared within organisations through the dynamic interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge. The model consists of four modes of knowledge conversion:

- Socialisation (Tacit to Tacit) – Sharing experiences through direct interaction (e.g., mentoring, observation).
- Externalisation (Tacit to Explicit) – Articulating internal knowledge into formal concepts (e.g., writing reports, research papers).
- Combination (Explicit to Explicit) – Systematically combining different pieces of explicit knowledge (e.g., compiling databases or manuals).
- Internalisation (Explicit to Tacit) – Learning and embodying explicit knowledge through practice (e.g., applying theories in teaching).

In an academic setting, the SECI model is particularly useful for understanding how lecturers, researchers, and administrators exchange knowledge through formal (lectures, conferences) and informal (discussions, collaborations) channels. The model assumes that for knowledge sharing to be effective, institutions must foster environments where these four processes can thrive. Thus, the organisational culture

must support openness, trust, and continuous learning – highlighting the intersection with cultural factors.

### **Competing Values Framework (CVF)**

The competing values framework, developed by Cameron & Quinn (2011), is widely used to diagnose and understand organisational culture. It categorizes organisational culture into four dominant types:

- Clan culture – Emphasizes teamwork, employee involvement, mentoring, and a family-like environment.
- Adhocracy culture – Values innovation, creativity, and risk-taking.
- Market culture – Focuses on competition, achievement, and goal attainment.
- Hierarchy culture – Prioritizes structure, formal procedures, stability, and control.

By applying the CVF, this study examines which cultural orientation dominates the School of Communication and Information Technology and how this orientation impacts the willingness and capacity of academics to share knowledge.

The integration of the SECI Model and CVF enables a holistic analysis of knowledge sharing practices. While the SECI model explains *how* knowledge is shared (mechanisms and processes), the CVF helps explain *why* knowledge is shared or withheld (cultural influences). Together, these theories offer a conceptual foundation for exploring the research questions and guiding data interpretation. Specifically, in the context of the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, where academic collaboration and innovation are essential for institutional growth, understanding how culture (via CVF) enables or inhibits knowledge sharing processes (via SECI) is crucial. This theoretical lens supports the study's aim of exploring not only practices but also the structural and behavioural enablers or constraints of those practices. Thus, this study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between organisational culture and knowledge sharing in Nigerian polytechnics. The findings will inform institutional policies aimed at

promoting academic collaboration and building a knowledge-friendly organisational culture. Administrators, policymakers, and academics alike may benefit from the recommendations, thereby improving overall institutional effectiveness.

Although knowledge sharing is essential for academic excellence, preliminary observations show that the School of Communication and Information Technology at the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro still struggle with knowledge silos, poor collaboration, and a lack of institutional support for knowledge exchange. These issues may be rooted in the prevailing organisational culture, which may not encourage open communication or reward knowledge contributions. Yet, the specific relationship between organisational culture and knowledge sharing remains underexplored, particularly in the context of School of Communication and Information within the Nigerian polytechnic institutional settings. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the knowledge sharing practices and organisational culture among academics in the School of Communication and Information Technology, Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, which has an interdisciplinary nature, technological orientation, and developing research culture.

The objectives of this study are to: examine the knowledge sharing practices among academics in the School of Communication and Information Technology; identify the prevailing organisational culture within the school; and investigate the relationship between organisational culture and knowledge sharing practices.

### **Materials and Methods**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is appropriate for obtaining factual and attitudinal data from a population with the aim of describing existing phenomena. The study population is the 47 academic staff members in the School of Communication and Information Technology at the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Ogun State, Nigeria. A total

enumeration technique was adopted because of the manageable size of the population. A structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Items that measured knowledge sharing practices were adapted from validated scales by Alavi et al. (2022) and Ismail & Yusof (2023), covering frequency, methods (formal/informal), and perceived benefits of knowledge sharing. Items on organisational culture were based on the Competing Value Framework (CVF) by Cameron & Quinn (2011), assessing the extent to which clan, adhocracy, market, or hierarchy cultures are perceived to be dominant in the school. The responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Face and content validity were carried out by two experts in library and information science, as well as one specialist in organisational behaviour. The choice was grounded in the interdisciplinary nature of the study. It was to ensure that the instrument reflected both the information-

sharing dimension and the organisational culture dimension of the study, thus achieving comprehensive content validity and interdisciplinary balance. The reliability was tested using five academic staff members from other Schools within the same institution. The internal consistency of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha, which yielded the following results: knowledge sharing practices = 0.87; and organisational culture dimensions = 0.83; with an overall value of 0.85. These values indicate that the instrument is reliable and suitable for data collection (Hair, et. al, 2019). The collected data were analysed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS.

### Results and Discussions

40 respondents filled out the questionnaire, and their responses were used for the analysis of the results. Their response makes it a return rate of 85%.

**Table 1: Examine the Knowledge Sharing Practices among Academics**

| Knowledge Sharing Practices                                  | Always (%) | Often (%) | Sometimes (%) | Rarely (%) | Mean        | Interpretation |
|--|------------|-----------|---------------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| Sharing lecture notes and teaching materials with colleagues | 55.3       | 31.9      | 8.5           | 4.3        | 3.38        | High           |
| Discussing research ideas and findings informally            | 46.8       | 36.2      | 12.8          | 4.2        | 3.26        | High           |
| Collaborating on research and publications                   | 40.4       | 34.0      | 17.0          | 8.6        | 3.06        | Moderate       |
| Mentoring junior staff on academic writing or ICT skills     | 38.3       | 31.9      | 19.1          | 10.7       | 2.97        | Moderate       |
| Sharing information through WhatsApp and online platforms    | 63.8       | 25.5      | 8.5           | 2.1        | 3.51        | High           |
| Sharing knowledge during departmental seminars/meetings      | 42.6       | 40.4      | 14.9          | 2.1        | 3.23        | High           |
| Consulting colleagues for advice on teaching or research     | 46.8       | 38.3      | 10.6          | 4.3        | 3.28        | High           |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>  |            |           |               |            | <b>3.24</b> | <b>High</b>    |

These findings suggest that knowledge sharing is a common and largely collaborative practice in the school, though primarily informal and socially driven. Table 1 indicates that knowledge sharing among academics in School of Communication and

Information Technology is frequent and well-established. A large proportion of respondents always or often engage in sharing lecture materials, exchanging ideas through WhatsApp or departmental discussions, and seeking advice from colleagues. The

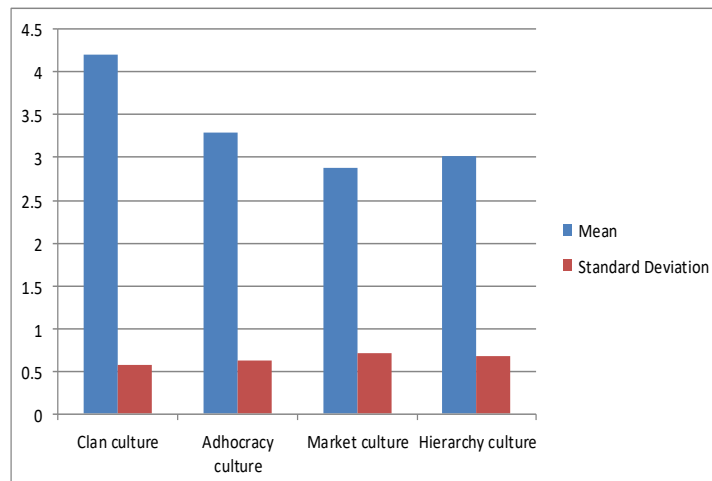
grand mean of 3.24 suggest an overall high level of knowledge sharing practice. Digital and informal channels, particularly WhatsApp and online communication platforms emerged as the most common means of knowledge exchange. This reflects a shift toward technology-mediated collaboration, consistent with the school’s ICT-driven context.

The findings revealed that a high percentage of academic staff engage in knowledge sharing frequently, especially through informal channels such as departmental meetings, WhatsApp groups, and interpersonal discussions. This aligns with the work of Ismail & Yusof (2023), who identified informal, peer-driven communication as the dominant mode of knowledge exchange in higher education settings. The respondents reported sharing teaching materials, research ideas, and ICT skills – suggesting that knowledge sharing is not limited to scholarly content but also includes pedagogical and technical competencies. This reflects the assertions of Nonaka

& Tateuchi’s (1995) SECI model, particularly the socialisation and externalisation phases, where tacit knowledge is shared through interaction and articulated into explicit formats. Motivations for knowledge sharing were primarily collegial support and professional development. These findings were consistent with Memon, et. al (2021), who emphasized the role of intrinsic motivation and trust in academic knowledge sharing. However, the relatively lower influence of institutional incentives suggests that while interpersonal motivations are strong, structural support may be lacking.

**Identify the Prevailing Organisational Culture within the School**

To assess organisational culture, responses were scored and classified using the Competing Values Framework (CVF) dimensions. Dominant culture types were as follows:



**Figure 1: Organisational Culture within the School**

The results indicate that Clan culture is the dominant culture in the school. This type is characterised by collaboration, shared values, participative decision-making, and a sense of family. The analysis of organisational culture revealed that Clan culture is the dominant type within the school. This culture is

characterised by shared values, teamwork, and strong interpersonal relationships. Such an environment fosters openness and frequent communication – key enablers of knowledge sharing, as noted by Cameron & Quinn (2011). The presence of a secondary adhocracy culture – which values innovation and

experimentation – further supports the practice of knowledge sharing, especially in contexts that involve research and curriculum development. These findings are consistent with the work of Nguyen and Malik (2021), who found that both clan and adhocracy cultures positively influence collaborative knowledge behaviours. Notably, market and hierarchy cultures scored lower, indicating that competition and rigid structures are not dominant in the school. This may explain why knowledge hoarding and communication

barriers were not highlighted as major concerns among respondents.

### **Investigate the Relationship between Organisational Culture and Knowledge Sharing Practices**

To explore the relationship between the dominant culture type and knowledge sharing practices, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis was conducted.

**Table 2: Relationship between Organisational Culture and Knowledge Sharing Practices**

| Organisational Culture Type | r-value | p-value |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------|
| Clan culture                | 0.612   | 0.000** |
| Adhocracy culture           | 0.398   | 0.004** |
| Market culture              | 0.211   | 0.143   |
| Hierarchy culture           | 0.101   | 0.462   |

( $p < 0.05$ )

The results show that: there is a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between Clan culture and knowledge sharing ( $r = 0.612$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); adhocracy culture also showed a moderate, significant relationship ( $r = 0.398$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ); while market and hierarchy cultures have weak and non-significant relationships.

These results imply that academics in environments with collaborative and innovative cultures are more likely to share knowledge, while competitive or bureaucratic cultures may hinder such practices.

The positive and statistically significant correlation between clan culture and knowledge sharing ( $r = 0.612$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) supports previous studies, such as Boateng & Abdulai (2022), who found that relationship-oriented cultures significantly enhance knowledge exchange in academic environments. Similarly, the moderate correlation with adhocracy culture ( $r = 0.398$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) is indicative of a knowledge-friendly environment where innovation and risk-taking are encouraged. These cultural traits align with the SECI model's combination and internalisation stages, where new knowledge is synthesized and internalized through experimentation.

On the other hand, the weak, non-significant correlations with market and hierarchy cultures suggest that these organisational models may inhibit free knowledge flow. This resonates with O'Reilly, et. al (2020), who argued that control-driven or highly competitive environments may discourage openness and collaboration. The findings, therefore, reinforce the theoretical assumption that organisational culture is a critical factor in determining how and to what extent knowledge is shared among professionals. The dominance of clan culture in this case study serves as an enabling factor for collaborative learning and academic productivity.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The study has explored the relationship that exists between knowledge sharing practices and organisational culture among academic staff in the School of Communication and Information Technology, at the Federal Polytechnic Ilaro. The findings revealed several important insights. First, knowledge sharing among academics is a common and valued practice, largely driven by informal communication, collegiality, and professional

development motives. The staff engage in regular exchange of teaching materials, research information, and technical know-how, facilitated by both formal (e.g., meetings, seminars) and informal (e.g., peer interactions, messaging platforms) channels.

The prevailing organisational culture in the school is predominantly clan-based characterised by collaboration, trust, mentorship, and shared values. This culture appears to provide a conducive environment for frequent and effective knowledge exchange. A secondary presence of adhocracy culture, with its emphasis on innovation and flexibility, also contributes positively to knowledge sharing. Third, the study confirmed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between organisational culture – especially clan and adhocracy types – and knowledge sharing practices. Cultures that promote openness, interpersonal trust, and innovation significantly enhance academic collaboration and knowledge dissemination.

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings, the literature, and the theories.

- i. While informal sharing is active, the school should strengthen formal mechanisms like departmental repositories, teaching resource databases, and internal academic journals to preserve institutional memory and increase access to shared knowledge.
- ii. The institution should actively promote values associated with clan culture, such as teamwork, mutual respect, and mentoring. This can be achieved through departmental retreats, inter-staff mentorship programs, and collaborative research incentives. Management should also create platforms that reward creativity and innovation, such as research competitions, innovation hubs, or seed grants for interdisciplinary projects. These initiatives will encourage risk-taking and continuous learning.
- iii. The School Management should incorporate knowledge sharing into performance appraisal systems, promotion criteria, and award

schemes will institutionalise the behaviour and motivate continued participation among staff.

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