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ORGANIZATIONAL AND PERSONALITY FACTORS PREDICTING KNOWLEDGE SHARING INTENTION AMONG EMPLOYEES OF SOME SELECTED BANKS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of organizational and personality factors on knowledge sharing intention among bank employees in Nigeria. Using the accidental sampling techniques, a total of two hundred and seven (207) employees of two commercial banks in Nigeria participated in the study. Males were 113 (54.6%), while females were 94 (45.4%). The ages of the participants ranged between 26-47 years with a mean of 33.35 years and standard deviation of 3.87. Data collection was through a battery of measures combined into a single structured questionnaire. Multiple regression was used to test the hypothesis. Findings indicated that need for achievement and need for affiliation significantly independently predicted knowledge sharing intention among bankers, whereas need for power, organizational culture and organizational trust did not. This implies that emphasis should not be placed on need for power, organizational culture, and organizational trust as these may not be the major drivers of intention to share knowledge among bank employees. However, human resource managers, recruiting officers, and agencies should develop competence in the identification of individuals high in need for achievement and need for affiliation, since they have shown to be well disposed to mutual knowledge sharing within organizations.

Key words: Organisational factors, personality factors, knowledge sharing intention.

INTRODUCTION

The banking industry in Nigeria has witnessed some crises in recent time (Soludo, 2004). These crises were characterized by persistent liquidity problems, poor risk management skills, and weak corporate governance, which were associated with the global financial crises (Sanusi, 2010), which underscores the dynamism in the banking industry. The implication is that such crises might be averted if the

management and employees of banks had been applied and religiously adhered to basic principles and practice of risk and asset management. Therefore, a strong connection may exist between organizational performance and the knowledge base of the organization and its employees. Gammelgaard and Ritter (2000) defined knowledge as a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that provide a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information within an organization. Knowledge has been recognized as one of the key factors for sustainable competitive advantage in contemporary workplace (Davenport & Prusak, 1998; Grant, 1996).

Most studies on the recent financial crises in the Nigerian banking industry tend to focus more its effects on the banks, employees, and customers (Ogungbamila, 2010; Ojedokun, 2008). Less research attention has been devoted to how employees' intention to share knowledge can be predicted by organizational factors (e.g. organizational culture and organisational trust) and personality variables such as needs for affiliation, achievement, and power. An investigation of this connection is important because the dynamic nature of knowledge makes it imperative for organizations, especially banks to explore the factors that are implicated in knowledge sharing or intention to share knowledge. This study, therefore, aimed to investigate the extent to which organizational factors such as organisational culture and trust, and employees' needs for affiliation, achievement, and power predict their intention to share knowledge associated with the banking industry.

Organisational knowledge can be got through experience and work practices, and can be transferred by observing and applying it (Tan, Lye, Hock Ng, & Lim, 2010). In response to continuously sharing of work knowledge in organisation, the banking Industry is beginning to understand the relevance and importance of knowledge sharing (KS), since it is knowledge based and this is due to the fact that KS is seen as the most significant and valued asset that could lead to organisational performance and at the same time, it is unquestionably an important component for organisations especially to the banking institutions in pursuing knowledge as an intangible and sought-after asset (Tan, et al., 2010).

Lin, Lee, and Wang (2009) defined knowledge sharing as a social interaction culture, involving the exchange of employee knowledge, experiences, and skills through the whole department or organisation. Harder (2008), conceptualized knowledge sharing as

the voluntary and social process to transfer, absorbs, and reuse the existing knowledge among employees in order to serve an organisational end. Knowledge sharing is the process of capturing knowledge or moving it from a source unit to recipient unit (Bircham-Connolly, Corner, & Bowden, 2005). Despite the past studies done on knowledge sharing (Lin et al., 2010, Willem, 2003, & Wilson 2002).

Knowledge sharing intention could be described as an aim or plan to share ones knowledge with a group of people in an organisation or the society. To Hollander and Offerman (1990), a person sharing his knowledge with others will lose his power in an organisation. This concern ordinarily will reduce the intention to share knowledge. Tannenbaum (1986) asserted that it is not certain whether sharing knowledge leads to elimination of individual power. On the contrary, when a person with expertise is willing to share, this may lead an organisation as well as his co-worker to depend on him.

Organisational factors (e.g., organisation culture and trust) may endear bank employees to knowledge sharing intention among his/her co-workers. Desphande and Webster (1989) defined organisation culture as the set of shared values that help organisational members understand organisational functioning and thus guide their thinking and behaviour. Organisations do not operate in a social vacuum but are influenced by the social-cultural context (Hofstede, 2001); hence, the organisational culture has also been considered as a form of organisational capital (Camerer & Versalainen, 1998). Organisational culture consists of behaviours, actions, and values that people in an organisation are expected to share and follow (Tahir, Basit, Anis-UI-Haque, Mushtaq, & Anwar, 2010). Organisational factors play a vital role in the success of KS process in banks (Willem, 2003). The intention to share knowledge will not occur unless they are supported by the banking institution itself (Rolland & Chauvel, 2000). According to Tan, et.al (2010), organisational culture drives the banks formal and informal expectations of individuals, defined the types of people who will fit into the organisation, and affected how people interacted with others both inside and outside the organisation. Thus, an effective culture in banks is crucial in achieving effective KS process (Govindarajan & Gupta, 2000; Gummer 1998). Scholars and Practitioners (e.g., Lopez, et al. 2004; Kulkarni, Ravindran, & Freeze, 2007), believed that organisational culture that is supportive and or adaptive will enable the success of knowledge sharing intention. Organisational

The need to gain recognition (need for achievement) from others in a place of work may also endear bank employees to knowledge sharing intention. McClelland, (1987) defined need for achievement as a behavior directed toward competition with a standard of excellence. Characteristics of high achievers are (a) a strong desire to assume personal responsibility for performing a task or finding a solution to the problem, (b) a tendency to set moderately difficult goals and take calculated risks, and (c) a strong desire for improvement and ways of doing things better (McClelland, 1987). An achievement-oriented employee is likely to enjoy completing challenging tasks and feel competent when such tasks are accomplished (Deci & Ryan, 1980).

To such employee, being able to share knowledge with his co-workers will make him fulfilled in all his endeavors (Rutter, Smith, & Hall, 2005). Achievement need is positively related to knowledge sharing and other behaviour like knowledge management (Wu & Sukoco, 2010). Apart from making friends and gaining recognition at work, the need to control and influence others in an organisation may be another personality factor that may make employees to have intention to knowledge sharing. The need for power is characterized by the desire to influence, direct, and exercise control over others, employees with a high need for power tend to win arguments, persuade others, and seek power position (McClelland, 1984). Bank employees with this type of need and have the intention to share knowledge will want their co-worker to depend more on them as Hickerson, Hinning, Lee, Schnech, and Pennings (1981) noted that power need is related to interdependence among employees. We, therefore, hypothesized that:

Organisational culture, organisational trust, need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power will have significant independent and joint influence on intention to share knowledge among commercial bank employees.

Methods

Research Design

This research adopted a cross-sectional survey to investigate the influence of organizational and personality factors on knowledge sharing intention among some selected bank employees. The dependent variable is knowledge sharing intention, while the

independent variables are organizational culture, organizational trust, and personality factors (need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power).

Participants

Using an accidental sampling technique, two hundred and seven (207) employees of two commercial banks located in Lagos and Ibadan, Nigeria participated in the survey. They were drawn from different departments of the banks. Males were 113 (54.6%), while females were 94 (45.4%). With regard to rank, 88 (48.9%) were middle level staff, 78 (43.3%) senior staff and, 14 (7.8%) were in the management cadre 136 (65.7%) were single, 70 (33.8%) married, and others 1 (0.5%). In terms of educational attainment: HND/first degree 169 (81.7%), MA/M.Sc/M.Ed 37 (17.9%), and SSCE/GCE have 1 (0.5%). The ages of the participants ranged between 26 and 47 years with a mean of 33.35 years and standard deviation of 3.87.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of five (5) sections;

Section A. This section taps demographic information of the participants like: age, sex, marital status, rank, educational qualification, and religion.

Section B is a twenty (20)-items modified organizational culture scale developed by Khandwalla (1976/1977). It is a Likert-format scale with 5 response options ranging from 1= strongly disagree (SD) to 5= strongly agree (SA). Khandwalla (1976/1977) reported a Cronbach Alpha of .92. Revalidation for the purpose of this study yielded Cronbach Alpha of .84. A high score on this scale indicate favourable perception of organization culture, while low score means unfavorable perception of culture.

Section C is a 10-item modified version of organizational trust scale developed by Cummings and Bromiley (1996). It is a Likert-format scale with 5 response options ranging from 1 strongly disagree (SD) to 5 strongly agree (SA). Cummings and Bromiley (1996) reported a Cronbach Alpha of .92. A Cronbach Alpha of .91 was obtained in this study. A high score on this scale indicates high organization trust, while low score means low trust.

Section D of the questionnaire is the McClelland, Atkinson, Clark and Lowell (1958) personality questionnaire with three sub scales (need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power). The need for achievement sub scale has 10 items with reliability coefficient Alpha of .72 as reported by the authors while a revalidation yielded .66. High score on this scale indicates high need for achievement, while low score means low need for achievement. The need for affiliation sub scale is also a 10-item Likert format scale with Cronbach Alpha of .68 while the revalidation yielded Alpha of .83. High score on this scale indicates high need for affiliation, while low score means low need for affiliation. The Need for Power sub scale as well has 10 items and authors reported Cronbach Alpha of .64 while revalidation yielded Alpha of .66

Section E consists of 24-items that measured knowledge sharing intention and developed by Cavana et al. (2000). It is a 5 point response option Likert format scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A high score on the instrument indicates a high degree of knowledge sharing intention among respondents. The authors reported Cronbach Alpha of .87

Procedure

Questionnaire administration took place in the offices of the respondents. Permission was sought from the managers by the researchers before the administration of the questionnaires. Verbal consent of prospective participants was sought after brief explanation of the purpose of the research. Those who consented were given the questionnaire with assurance of anonymity and confidentiality of responses. Participants were also informed that they were not under any obligation to participate and that they have the right to withdraw at any point they feel inclined to discontinue with the exercise. It was impressed on the participants that there were no right or wrong answers but they were encouraged to be honest in their responses.

Data analysis

A simple multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the data; knowledge sharing intention was regressed on organizational culture, organizational trust, need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power.

Results

Table 1: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of organizational culture, organizational trust, need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power on knowledge sharing intention among bankers

Variables	Beta	t	p	R	R ²	F	P
Organizational Culture	0.03	-0.31	>.05	0.49	0.24	12.97	<.001
Organizational Trust	0.01	-0.01	>.05				
Need for achievement	0.44	-6.29	<.001				
Need for affiliation	0.14	2.14	<.05				
Need for Power	0.13	1.81	>.05				

Table 1 shows that there was significant joint influence of organizational culture, organizational trust, need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power on knowledge sharing intention among bankers [F (5,201)=12.97, p<.001]. The R value of 0.49 shows a positive relationship between the independent variables and knowledge sharing intention among bankers. The R² value shows that the independent variables jointly contributed 24% to knowledge sharing intention among bankers. Meanwhile, the independent influence of the predictor variables shows that need for achievement ($\hat{\alpha}=-0.44$, $t=-6.29$, $p<.001$) and need for affiliation ($\hat{\alpha}=0.138$, $t=2.14$, $p<.05$) independently and significantly influence knowledge sharing intention among bankers. Whereas need for power ($\hat{\alpha}=-0.13$, $t=1.81$, $p>.05$), organizational culture ($\hat{\alpha}=0.03$, $t=-0.31$, $p>.05$) and organizational trust ($\hat{\alpha}=0.01$, $t=-0.01$, $p>.05$) have no significant independent influence on knowledge sharing intention.

Discussion

This study examined the influence of organisational and personality factors on knowledge sharing intention among employees of some selected banks in Nigeria. The hypothesis which states that organisational culture, organisational trust, need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power will have significant independent and joint influence on knowledge sharing intention was partly confirmed. Need for achievement and need for

affiliation independently and significantly influence knowledge sharing intention. While, need for power, organizational culture and organizational trust did not independently and significantly predict knowledge sharing intention. The results shows that there was a joint significant influence of organizational culture, organizational trust, need for achievement, need for affiliation and need for power on knowledge sharing intention.

The influence of need for achievement and need for affiliation on knowledge sharing intention supports the findings of Mooradian, Renzl, and Matzler (2006), and Duval (1999). They reported that employees shared their knowledge based on the fact that they want to be recognized and get more involved with what is going on in the organisation. The results are in consonance with the findings of He and Wei, (2009); Hsu and Lin, (2008); and, Jarvenpaa and Staples, (2001). The authors pointed out that employees that enjoyed challenging tasks and helping others exhibited knowledge sharing intention. This means that bank employees with this personality needs will exhibit knowledge sharing intention and this inadvertently will enhance sustainable within the organization.

The result of this study also indicated that need for power; organizational culture and organizational trust have no significant independent influence on knowledge sharing intention. This contradicts the findings of Wu and Sukoco (2010) which reported a positive correlation of power need to knowledge sharing. According to them, power-oriented persons tend to exhibit knowledge sharing intention as a result of social cognition from others and the desire to dominate and exercise control over others. The reason for the result of the present study may be that the situations in which bank employees operate do not give room for dominance. This implies that bank employees with such need may believe that sharing their knowledge with others might lead to losing their power in the organisation, and as a result reduce their intent of knowledge sharing with their coworker.

The result of the present study did not corroborate Al-Alawi, Al-Marzooqi and Mohammed (2007) findings on organisational culture. To these authors, organisational culture is positively related to knowledge sharing intention. They explained that, employees who had knowledge sharing intention did so as a result of the set of shared values that guide their thinking and behaviour in the organisation.

Organisational culture was found to have no influence on knowledge sharing intention in the present study; this may be due to the fact that the nature of the workplace in Nigeria leaves little or no room for the personal values of employees to influence work behaviour and processes. The work atmosphere makes employees to be mechanical in the discharge of their duty. Tan et al (2010), Ford (2003), Rolland and Chauvel (2000) findings on trust which emphasized that trust had a positive correlation with knowledge sharing intention did not corroborate the present study result. According to the authors, a high level of trust among coworker helps to facilitate an effective knowledge sharing intention. The reason for the result of the present study may be as a result of the existence of intra personal relationship rather than inter personal relationship among bank employees thereby making some of the employees to be more inclined to conceal what they know as a result of lack of strong knowledge of coworkers' personalities. Finally, the present study showed that there was significant joint influence of organizational culture, organizational trust, need for achievement, need for affiliation and need for power on knowledge sharing intention among bankers. Moreover the result going by the joint percentage contribution indicates that the factors considered in this study are to some extent strong predictors of knowledge sharing intention.

Conclusion and Implication of findings

In conclusion, this study found that personality factors had a positive influence on knowledge sharing intention among employees in the Nigerian Banking Industry than the organisational factors. This means that need for achievement and need for affiliation are salient factor that determines bank employees' knowledge sharing intention. Although, we cannot conclude from the result of the present study that personality factors are the only factors that can predict bank employees' knowledge sharing intention. There could be other personality factor not considered in this study that can predict the intention to share knowledge. The findings of the present study also reveal no significance influence of need for power, organizational culture and organizational trust on knowledge sharing intention which may be as a result of fear of employees losing their power, not defined set of shared values and lack of trust among the employees.

In order to enhance knowledge sharing intention, bank employees should be given the opportunity to affiliate more with their co-worker and learn more about the relevance of achievement need as these might go a long way to make them develop the intent to knowledge sharing. In addition, human resource managers, recruiting officers and agencies should develop competence in the identification of individuals high in need for achievement and need for affiliation, since they have shown to be significantly well disposed to mutual knowledge sharing within organizations. The contribution of these individuals may enhance the growth of the organization.

Limitation of the study

Several limitations exist in this study that suggests areas for future research. First, the insignificant influence of need for power, organizational culture and organizational trust on knowledge sharing intention seems to contradict prior studies (Wu & Sukoco, 2010; Al-Alawi, Al-Marzooqi, & Mohammed, 2007; and Tan et al, 2010). However, this might be because of the method (accidental) used in selecting the participants and also as a result of samples (Nigerians) used in the study. The result of the present study might also be due to variability in culture. Moreso, another factor that militate the result of this study is the sample used. Out of twenty four banks in Nigeria, only two banks were selected for this study which may not give room for generalizing the results to other banks. Future research should use more banks as its sample and focus more on other methods such as systematic sampling techniques in order to replicate this study. Second, Future research should also focus on other area of personality factors and other aspect of organisational culture (power sharing, expertise and mentoring). Furthermore, future study should make use of cross-cultural samples in determining bank employees' knowledge sharing intent.

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