

## Personality Traits, Demographic Factors and Knowledge-sharing Practices of Academics in University of Ilorin, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

The present study investigates personality traits, demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practices of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Based on quantitative design, this study employs survey research method. The empirical data consisted of 181 responses from the academic staff of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between the Big Five personality traits of conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents. Also, designation has a positive relationship with knowledge-sharing practices. However, there was no relationship between openness to experience and knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents. One possible limitation is that data was collected from only one university. Besides, the study could not include private universities that are also a significant part of university education in Nigeria. Hence, if more universities (private and public) were taken into consideration to collect data, the results might be different. Therefore, usual cautions overgeneralising findings from this sample, to populations for which it is not strictly representative apply. From a practical perspective, human resource managers, university administrators and policymakers in the education sector should take into consideration personality traits when recruiting graduates into the teaching cadre to ensure candidates with diverse range of skills and attributes that will promote knowledge-sharing practices are hired. The findings highlight personality traits that contributes to knowledge-sharing practices of academics from a developing country's perspective thereby enriching personality cum knowledge sharing literature in general and Library and Information Science in particular. The social implication is that university administrators and policy makers in the public universities could improve on the recruitment procedures of employees and new graduates to fit into career jobs and to ensure a diverse range of skills and attributes in the university settings as well as carrying out various organisational activities and to promote knowledge-sharing practices among lecturers. The study highlights the significant personality traits and demographic factor contributing towards knowledge-sharing practices of academics in a public university setting.

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## 1. Introduction

Universities are institutions of learning and research where academic and professional degrees in diverse areas of knowledge are awarded. They are a knowledge powerhouse and play a pivotal role in the sustainable socio-economic development of countries and repository to curated and organised knowledge. They are also organisations where knowledge is used to gain and sustain competitive advantages, and support innovations, social interactions, cultural transformations and training programmes (Akosile & Olatokun, 2020; Chikono, 2018; Dei & van der Walt, 2020; Shaukat, Ahmad, Naveed, & Rehman, 2023). It is a common practice within the university community to create (research), disseminate (publications), implement, and transfer knowledge through collaboration with other organisations.

The University of Ilorin, north-central Nigeria is a federal institution established by a decree of the Federal Military Government in 1975, in order to provide more opportunities for Nigerians who aspire to have university education and to contribute to the rapidly expanding economy. Over the years, the university has proved to be a centre of academic excellence; it was recently ranked 8<sup>th</sup> university in Nigeria, 42<sup>nd</sup> in Africa, 2432<sup>nd</sup> in the world in the 2023 rating. It scored 50% across 27 research topics. All these feats were made possible by the caliber and resourcefulness of the academics in the university.

Academics are university knowledge workers responsible for the tripartite mission of teaching (transmission of knowledge), research (knowledge advancement) and community service (knowledge translation) (Anyagou & Mabawonku, 2014). They play significant roles in the process of knowledge creation and sharing; they also exchange experiences and insights to generate new insights (Al-Kurdi, El-Haddadeh, & Eldabi, 2020; Tan, 2016; Veer-Ramjeawon & Rowley, 2020). However, their failure to promote knowledge-sharing practices with and among fellow academics within and outside their environment could create knowledge gaps, which could be an impediment to the university in attaining its desired goals and mission.

Knowledge is the most strategic resource, and it is perceived to be of great benefit in universities for the attainment of goals. It is required as a survival kit for any organisation to thrive in this age of technology (Brouwer & Jansen, 2019; Janus, 2016; Muafi, 2020). Universities are renowned for knowledge sharing to attain academic excellence and gain global recognition (Mutahar, Farea, Abdulrab, Yasen, Abdulmhen, & Grada, 2022). Knowledge sharing is the most important aspect of the knowledge management (KM) process, which comprises capturing, distributing, and using knowledge effectively (Wiggins, 2021). It is the act of disseminating intellectual capital among academics within a university; it is the conduit through which ideas, skills, and information travel from one location to another (Oyenuga, Adebisi, Mustapha, & Abimbola, 2019; Thomas & Gupta, 2022). Knowledge sharing fosters social ties among academics and has the dynamic capacity that shapes the competitiveness of a university locally and globally (Mutahar et al., 2022).

Moreover, knowledge sharing is a behavioural characteristic that could be determined by the personality of an academic. The practice is an important component of the university system and is a critical activity for academics. It is directed at enhancing internal flow and use of expertise for organisational efficiency (Tahleho, 2016). It guarantees understanding and helps

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to develop the potential of academics to the fullest (Osman, Kamal, Ali, Noor, Wahianuar, & Othman, 2015).

In this study, knowledge-sharing practice is conceived of as the extent to which an academic engages in acts that could help equip fellow academics with the required knowledge to do their jobs (Manamela, 2018). The adoption of knowledge-sharing practices among academics could significantly improve academic activities, promote teaching, learning and research processes, and enhance institutional ratings, competitive advantage and organisational performance (Ayodele, Yao, Hasnah, & Sui, 2016). Many studies have postulated that the big five personality factors could predict why some people share knowledge while others do not (Farrukh, Sajid, Zreen, & Khalid, 2020; Iqbal, Ishaq, & Habibah, 2020; Lotfi, Muktar, Ologbo, & Chiemeké, 2016).

Personality is an important factor influencing an individual's knowledge-sharing behaviour (Shaukat et al., 2023). Personality can be defined as typical mindset, feelings and behaviours that influence the way academics interact with their immediate physical and social environments (Suryadi, Muis, Taba, & Hakim, 2022). Personality trait is a mixture of the inner and external components compelling an academic to act in a certain manner, such as sharing knowledge (Keshavarz, 2022). It is the pattern of thoughts, feelings, behaviours and unique features of an individual (Tus, 2019). According to Anwar (2017), personality trait is a unique and distinctive pattern of ideas that represent a person's emotions, behaviour, practices and attitudes as well as physical characteristics that are not the same but differ from group to group. Personality traits influence everything, from relationships to the way academics live, behave and share knowledge.

The five-factor model, which delineates the broad traits of extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, neuroticism and conscientiousness, is important in studies that reported the effect of personality traits on knowledge-sharing practices (Keshavarz, 2022; Xiaoyan, Liren, & Yasir, 2019). Many studies have examined the effects of personality traits on knowledge sharing among different professionals in different contexts. They reported that there was significant relationship between personality traits and knowledge-sharing practice (Chrapek, 2021). Extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, emotional intelligence and religiosity were positively associated with knowledge-sharing practice (Farrukh et al., 2020). Personality factors significantly influenced attitude towards knowledge sharing (Wu & Lin, 2017). Conscientiousness had a positive impact on tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour and influenced the eagerness to share knowledge (Obrenovic, Du, Godinic, & Troy, 2021). Therefore, personality trait as a predictor of workplace behaviour would, to a great extent, affect the knowledge-sharing practice of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. This could positively or negatively impact on the knowledge-sharing practice in universities.

Another variable of interest in this study is demographic factors. These are the qualities used in gathering, accessing and describing a person's unique features (Adkins, Anderson, Goodman, Twentyman, Danielson, Kimball, & Wiltz, 2020; Namazkhan, Albers, & Steg, 2020). Demographic factors involve the characteristics of a population, such as age, gender and marital status (Longley, 2020). Previous studies have revealed that demographic factors promote and motivate knowledge-sharing practices of researchers (Lawal, Oriogu, & Ogbuyi, 2017; Pangil & Nasurudin, 2008; Tan & Trang, 2017). Demographic factors are used in defining the behaviour of a particular group

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within a population, and knowledge sharing is a factor in this regard (Simha & Wiltz, 2012).

Knowledge sharing plays an important role in optimising the overall effectiveness and competitiveness of the outputs of academics (Akosile & Olatokun, 2020). However, despite having enabling environment and tools which could help to better promote effective knowledge-sharing practices among academics, academics are not usually willing to share knowledge voluntarily with their colleagues, owing to lack of trust, individual differences, and personal encounters within their environment (Mutahar et al., 2022). Although demographic factors have a role to play in the knowledge sharing of academics, the success of the process will depend on the academics' personality and demographic factors.

Furthermore, previous studies on knowledge sharing by academics focused either on personality traits and knowledge-sharing practice (Keshavarz, 2022; Lin, Hsieh, & Lian, 2018; Lofti et al., 2016; Manaf & Marzuki, 2014; Xiaoyan, Liren, & Yasir, 2019) or on demographical factors and knowledge-sharing practice (Boateng, Dzandu, & Agyemang, 2015; Ismail & Yusof, 2009; Lawal, Oriogu, & Ogbuiyi, 2017). Besides, the literature linking together the aforementioned variables is scarce. A clear understanding of the drivers of knowledge-sharing practices may be helpful in devising strategies to make academics share knowledge voluntarily with fellow academics, thereby promoting academic excellence and attainment of global recognition of their universities. It is against this background that this study examined the influence of personality traits and demographic factors on knowledge-sharing practice of academics in the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

### *1.1 Objectives of the study*

Hence, the objective of this study was to examine how personality traits and demographic factors influenced knowledge-sharing practice of academics in the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

- (1) ascertain the prevalent personality traits that influence knowledge-sharing practice among academic in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria;
- (2) ascertain the demographic factors that influence knowledge-sharing practice among academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria;
- (3) identify the types of knowledge shared among academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria; and
- (4) ascertain the knowledge-sharing practice of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

### *1.2 Hypotheses*

The following null hypotheses, formulated and tested at  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance, guided this study:

- (1) There is no significant relationship between personality traits and knowledge-sharing practice of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
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- (2) There is no significant relationship between demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practice of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- (3) There is no significant joint effect of personality traits and demographic factors on knowledge-sharing practice of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

### 2.1 *The concept of knowledge sharing*

Knowledge sharing among individuals is very crucial for greater creativity and enhancement of performance in knowledge-based organisations, such as universities (Akbar, Malik, & Warraich, 2023). It is an integral part of human experience. It is a social process that takes place through interaction and communication between individuals (academics). It allows reshaping and sense-making of the knowledge in the new context (Omar & Aduce, 2017; Tan & Trang, 2017; Wiggins, 2021). People share their knowledge to develop and understand ideas and concepts in their fields of specialisation (Akbar, Malik, & Warraich, 2023).

Knowledge sharing is a communication process between two or more individuals that is characterised by an exchange of individual knowledge to collectively create new knowledge (Akbar, Malik, & Warraich, 2023). According to Maheshwari, Sarrion, Motiani, O'Sullivan, and Chandwani (2021), knowledge sharing is an individual and voluntary act driven by some internal beliefs and factors. It is the practice of exchange and dissemination of idea, data, abilities, intelligence, experience and knowledge with others to ensure the knowledge continues and gets sustained and retained (Razak, Pangil, Md Zin, Yunus, & Asnawi, 2016). Similarly, Odunewu, and Haliso (2019) aver that knowledge sharing is the process of exchanging task information, expert knowledge and feedback regarding a procedure or product to create new knowledge or ideas, deal with issues and achieve common goals. Thus, knowledge sharing is an act that facilitates the collective intelligence and progress (Wiggins, 2021).

Knowledge-sharing practice is a key component of knowledge management programmes in terms of organisational and individual learning (Alhawary, Abu-Rumman, & Alshamaileh, 2017). It is an act of exchanging data among academics, teams, groups, individuals and organisations (Osman et al., 2015). To Montcalm (2013), knowledge-sharing practices involve all the activities, processes and procedures established by institutions, both formal and informal, through which knowledge is created and shared throughout an organisation. And Manamela (2018) avers that knowledge-sharing practices, such as brainstorming, coaching, apprenticeship, mentoring and after-action review in organisations, promote knowledge sharing because they are initiated and enforced to disseminate understanding and individual learning within an organisation.

Knowledge-sharing practice can be regarded as a valuable means through which academics learn from one another. They grow intellectually because of the accrued benefits of improved collaboration, enhanced productivity, fostering of decision-making, mentorship, minimising organisational memory loss and getting more value from existing knowledge (Wiggins, 2021).

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## 2.2 *Personality traits and knowledge-sharing practice of academics*

Personality trait is a psychological concept that refers to a qualitative and relatively stable description of a person's unique behavioural patterns, internal motivations, emotions, thoughts, and drivers. It is a set of traits that are consistent across different cultures and can be used to classify human personalities (Sciedirect.com, 2024). Personality traits play a pivotal role in various contexts of life, determining the emotional and behavioural adaptation of individuals to their environments, job attitudes and work-related behaviour (Landolfi, Barattucci, & Presti, 2020). Personality traits have to do with consistency, stability and forecast of workplace behaviour (Fagbola & Popoola, 2015; Lim, 2023). They are an organised and dynamic set of characteristics possessed by an individual. They have a significant impact on such a person's cognition, motivation, and conduct (knowledge-sharing practice) (Lofti et al., 2016).

Extraversion (one of the big five personality traits) is denoted by being sociable, assertive and active. Individuals with this trait have social skills and usually exhibit the desire to work with others, which may involve knowledge sharing. Individuals with agreeableness trait are helpful, generous, sympathetic, courteous and willing to share their knowledge. Conscientious individuals are self-disciplined, reliable and careful; they are predisposed to taking initiative and solving problems. Individuals that exhibit neurotic personality trait are self-conscious, anxious and prone to irrational ideas. Openness to experience, another personality trait, denotes being imaginative, cultured and intelligent; it represents the highest level in the personality hierarchy. It embraces all the significant variations of dynamic personalities in any organisational setting (Akbar, Malik, & Warraich, 2023).

Personality traits and qualities can explain and explore variability among academics in universities, as they constitute one of the yardsticks for understanding and predicting the behaviour of people in organisations. Research outcomes have shown that personality traits have significant influence on knowledge-sharing practices in different sectors of the economy (Gupta, 2008; Keshavarz, 2022; Lin, Hsieh, & Lian, 2018; Lofti et al., 2016; Xiaoyan, Liren, & Yasir, 2019). For instance, Akbar, Malik, and Warraich's (2023) study on big five personality traits and knowledge sharing intentions of academic librarians in Pakistan reported that agreeableness and openness to experience positively influenced university librarians' knowledge-sharing intention. Similarly, Shaukat et al. (2023) studied the impact of personality traits on knowledge-sharing behaviour of academics of University of Sargodha, Punjab, Pakistan. They discovered a statistically significant and positive correlation between the personality traits of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience and the overall knowledge-sharing behaviour of their respondents.

Suryadi et al. (2022) found that extraversion, agreeableness, openness and conscientiousness had a positive impact on knowledge-sharing behaviour of college students in Makassar, Indonesia. Teh, Yong, Chong, and Yew (2011) reported a positive relationship between extraversion, neuroticism, openness to experience, and knowledge sharing at Malaysian universities. Iqbal et al. (2020) studied personality traits predicting knowledge hiding behaviour: empirical evidence from academic institutions of Pakistan discovered that teachers who scored high in extraversion and openness to experience did not hide knowledge, compared to the teachers who had a high score in agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism.

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Matzler, Renzl, Müller, Herting, and Mooradian (2008) studied personality traits and knowledge sharing within teams of an international engineering company in Austria. They discovered significant correlations between the personality traits and knowledge sharing of the respondents. They explained that agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness influenced knowledge-sharing practices. Farrukh et al's. (2020) study on knowledge sharing in higher education institutes: an empirical investigation of individual characteristics in Pakistani found that extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness, were positively associated with knowledge sharing.

Moreso, Rahman, Mannan, Hossain, Zaman, and Hassan (2018) studied tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour among the academic staff in Bangladesh. Findings revealed that personality traits of agreeableness, extraversion, neuroticism, and openness to experience affect tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour among the academic staff of higher learning institutions. Similarly, in South Africa, Van Greunen, Venter, and Sharp (2019) reported that personality traits of extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness were significantly related to the dependent variable knowledge-sharing intention of workers in knowledge-intensive organisations. Abou-Shouk, Zoair, Aburumman, and Abdel-Jalil's (2022) study on the effect of personality traits and knowledge-sharing on employees' innovative performance: a comparative study of Egypt and Jordan revealed that positive personality traits significantly improve employees' knowledge-sharing behaviour and contribute to their innovative performance advancement. Lin, Hsieh, and Lian (2018) studied knowledge sharing and personality traits moderated by transformational leadership in Taiwan. They discovered that knowledge sharing is significantly and positively influenced by openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Teh et al's. (2011) study on do the big five personality factors affect knowledge-sharing behaviour? a study of Malaysian universities found that extraversion and neuroticism are positively related to the attitude towards knowledge sharing while openness to experience is found to have an inverse relationship with the attitude towards knowledge sharing.

Obrenovic et al. (2021) reported that conscientiousness had a positive impact on tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour of the participants in their study. Wu and Lin (2017) found that extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness significantly and positively influenced attitudes towards knowledge sharing in Taiwan. Anwar (2017) discovered that openness to experience, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion were positively related to knowledge-sharing behaviour, whereas neuroticism was negatively related to knowledge-sharing behaviour of individuals working in high-level knowledge-sharing organisations in Pakistan. Ayub, Kanwal, and Kausar (2019) established that openness, agreeableness, and extraversion positively influenced knowledge-creation capability of managers. In Poland and Chrapek (2021) reported that there was a strong positive correlation between openness, conscientiousness and knowledge sharing; a moderate positive correlation was found between extraversion and knowledge sharing. Lofti et al. (2016) found that the personality traits dimension was an important characteristic that influenced knowledge sharing, with openness to experience, extraversion and conscientiousness having positive significant influence on individual's knowledge-sharing behaviour and openness to experience having the most significant influence on knowledge sharing of the academics surveyed.

Raza and Shah (2017) found that openness to experience, a dominant factor in knowledge-sharing practices and the degree of trust and integrity between lecturers determined readiness to share expertise.

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Gupta (2008) established that individuals high in agreeableness and conscientiousness were found to be more involved in knowledge-sharing activities than those low on agreeableness and conscientiousness. However, Baig, and Waheed's (2016) study on the significance of factors influencing online knowledge sharing: a study of higher education in Pakistan reported that extraversion and openness to experience do not have a positive effect on the online knowledge sharing behaviour.

Personality traits influence the knowledge-sharing practices of academics because individuals in an organisation have a unique pattern of feelings, thoughts and behaviours, all of which form a fairly stable combination of personality traits (Tus, 2019). There is a correlation between personality traits and knowledge-sharing practices. This confirms the notion that knowledge sharing depends on human behaviour.

### *2.3 Demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practices of academics*

Demographic factors, such as age, gender, marital status, are categorical independent variables because they cannot be manipulated (Salkind, 2010). Thus, change in demography is one of the factors that may affect knowledge sharing in institutions (Herlina, Saroso, Lasmy, Sudrajat, & Syahchari, 2019). The demographic factors studied were gender, age, marital status, designation, educational qualification and years of work experience. Previous studies have shown that demographic factors affect knowledge-sharing practices. For example, Chidiezie-Chineke, Nwagwu and Onwusonye (2019) affirmed that gender had a significant influence on the knowledge-sharing behaviour of lecturers in south-east, Nigeria. Tan and Trang (2017) discovered that male staff members tended to share knowledge more than their female counterparts in Vietnam. Akosile and Olatokun (2020) reported that gender had a significant influence on knowledge sharing of academics in Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria. Pangil and Nasurudin (2008) found that male Research and Development workers had a higher tendency to share tacit knowledge compared to their female counterparts.

Similarly, Boateng, Dzandu, and Agyemeng (2015) found that gender and educational qualifications played a major role in enhancing knowledge-sharing practice among teachers in Ghana. Lawal, Oriogu, and Ogbuiyi (2017) discovered that there were significant relationships between gender, rank of researchers and knowledge-sharing practice among researchers in research institutes in Ibadan, Nigeria. They reported further that knowledge sharing correlated with the demographic factors examined (age, gender, marital status, religion and educational level). Kuruppuge, Gregar, Jayawardena, and Kudláček (2018) discovered that employee's age, level of education and job orientation have significant influence on the knowledge sharing intentions of employees in family businesses in Sri Lanka. Grubić-Nešić, Matić, and Mitrović (2015) reported that gender, level of education, organisational tenure and advance at work have significant impact on knowledge sharing in Serbia. In addition, based on the review of extant literature, Omar, and Aduce (2017) concluded that demographic variables of gender, age, organisational tenure and designation all have key roles in improving knowledge-sharing behaviour. Unarguably, knowledge sharing is of great importance among academics. Hence, university management needs to put measures in place to promote and encourage academics to share knowledge voluntarily with one another. With this, they will be able to contribute to the development of institutional knowledge base and ranking.

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## 2.4 Theoretical framework

This study is anchored to the Social Exchange Theory. The theory argues that social behaviour, in this case knowledge-sharing practices of academics, is the result of an exchange process. The purpose of this exchange is to maximise benefits and minimise cost (Cherry, 2023). People (academics) will interact with others (academics) based on a self-interest appraisal of the costs and benefits of their action (knowledge-sharing practice). Consequently, they tend to maximise the benefits of their actions (which may not be tangible) with an expectation of future reciprocity, and minimise the cost when knowledge is being shared. Thus, all human interactions are exchange of values, whereby someone (an academic) benefits and the other party bears the cost of the exchange (Razak et al., 2016).

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) is relevant to this study because the theory has been found to play important roles in building and maintaining relationship for knowledge-sharing among team members in organisations. Thus, examining the influence of personality traits and demographic factors on knowledge-sharing practices of academics in University of Ilorin, Nigeria is of great significance. Through, the Social Exchange Theory, this study tries to fill the knowledge gap by examining the influence of personality traits and demographic factors on knowledge-sharing practice of academics in a university setting. On this note, the conceptual framework for the study is shown in Fig 1.

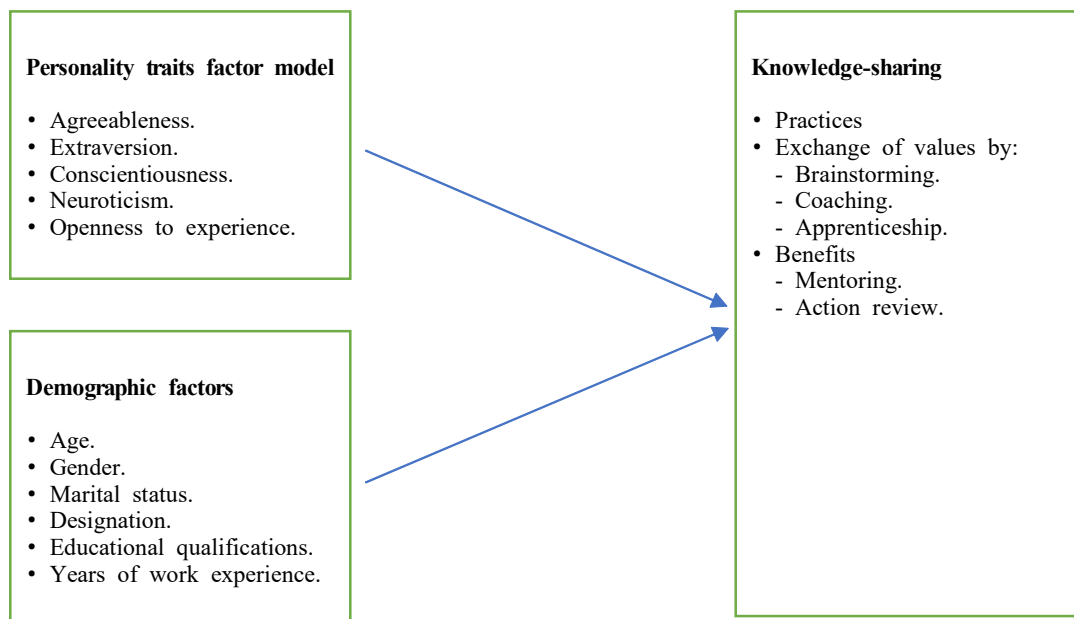


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of knowledge management practices of academics

Source: Self-constructed

### 3. Methodology

The population for this study comprised all the One thousand, five hundred and six (1,506) lecturers in the fifteen (15) faculties in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The survey research design of the correlational type was used for the study. The stratified random sampling technique was adopted in selecting the faculties, departments and academics used. A sampling fraction of 20% was used to select the respondents from each department in each of the faculties, giving a total sample size of Two hundred and ten (210) academics. This is consistent with Smart Methodology (2012), as cited in Ogunwuyi (2017), which allows for equal representation of the study sample. A questionnaire titled Personality traits, demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practice of academics (PTDFKSPA) was used for data collection.

The questionnaire was divided into four main parts. Part 1 measured the demographic factors of the respondents. It was a six-item scale. It requested information on age, gender, designation, marital status, years of work experience and educational qualifications of the respondents. Part 2 measured personality traits of the respondents. It was a ten-item personality traits scale developed by Gosling, Rentfrow, and Swann, Jr. (2003). Examples of the items are “I see myself as extraverted, enthusiastic”, “I see myself as open to new experiences, complex” and “I see myself as reserved, quiet”. It was measured on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree (SA= 4) to strongly disagree (SD = 1). The scale had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of 0.70. Part 3 measured types of knowledge shared by academics. It was made up of seventeen-item statements on types of knowledge shared by academics in the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. It was measured on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree (SA= 4) to strongly disagree (SD = 1). Part 4 measured knowledge-sharing practices among academics. It was made up of ten-item statements on knowledge-sharing practices among academics in the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. Example of the items are “willingness to share my knowledge freely with colleagues”, “I use available channels to share my knowledge with colleagues”, “I collaborate with colleagues to promote knowledge sharing”. It was measured on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree (SA = 4) to strongly disagree (SD = 1). The scale had a Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of 0.75. The items in each of the sections were informed by the literature and some relevant instruments used in previous studies.

Copies of the questionnaire for the study were administered by the researchers to the selected academics in the eleven (11) faculties sampled, with the assistance of four trained research assistants. The questionnaire administration and retrieval lasted four weeks. The participants’ consent was sought through the introduction letter attached to the questionnaire. Out of the 210 copies of the questionnaire administered, 181 were duly filled and returned, giving a response rate of 86%. The Statistical Products for Service Solution (SPSS) version 25 Software was used for data analysis. Hypotheses One and Two were tested using simple correlation analysis-Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Method. Hypothesis Three was tested using regression analysis. For all the statistical tests, an alpha level of 0.05 was used.

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#### 4. Results and Discussion of the findings

In this section, the results and discussion of the findings from the study were presented starting with the demographic profiles of the respondents as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of demographic data of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Female.	92	51
Male.	89	49
Total	181	100
<b>Age range</b>		
25-34 years.	33	18
35-44 years.	54	30
45-54 years.	61	34
55 years and above.	33	18
Total	181	100
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married.	122	67
Single.	31	17
Others.	28	16
Total	181	100
<b>Cadre</b>		
Professorial.	49	27
Senior Lecturer.	29	16
Lecturer I.	33	18
Lecturer II.	36	20
Graduate Asst / Asst. Lecturer	34	19
Total	181	100
<b>Level of Education</b>		
Ph. D.	77	43
Master.	41	23
Post-graduate Diploma.	42	23
Bachelor.	21	11
Total	181	100
<b>Years of work experience</b>		
1-10 years.	79	44
11-20 years.	57	31
21-30 years.	32	18
31 years and above.	13	7
Total	181	100

Table 1 reveals the demographic profiles of the respondents. Most of the respondents were females. Their ages ranged from 25 years to more than 55 years ( $\bar{x} = 44.19$ ,  $SD = 9.92$ ). The majority of the respondents were from the Faculty of Education. With regard to designation, the range was from Graduate Assistant/Assistant Lecturer to the professorial cadre. Their educational qualification ranged from Bachelor to Ph.D. Finally, their years of work experience ranged from one (1) year to more than thirty-one (31) years.

Table 2 presents Pearson's Product Correlation between personality traits and knowledge-sharing

practices of academics.

Table 2. Correlation between personality traits and knowledge-sharing practices

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Knowledge sharing practices.	1					
Extraversion.	.206*	1				
Agreeableness.	.302*	-.131	1			
Conscientiousness.	.156*	.076	.067	1		
Neuroticism.	.179*	-.161*	.187*	.101	1	
Openness.	-.012	.068	-.130	-.056	-.210	1
Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ).	29.59	6.01	4.33	4.80	4.29	5.67
Standard Deviation (SD).	5.39	1.21	1.29	1.30	1.39	1.46

Correlation significant @  $p < 0.05$

Dependent variable: Knowledge-sharing practices

Table 2 shows that there was a significant relationship between the personality traits of conscientiousness ( $r = .156$ ,  $p (.036) < 0.05$ ); neuroticism ( $r = .179$ ,  $p (.016) < 0.05$ ), extraversion ( $r = .206$ ,  $p (.005) < 0.05$ ), and agreeableness ( $r = .302$ ,  $p (.001) < 0.05$ ) and knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents. Conversely, there was no significant relationship between openness to experience ( $r = -.012$ ,  $p (.873) > .05$ ) and knowledge-sharing practice of the respondents.

Table 3 presents Pearson’s Product Correlation between demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practice of academics.

Table 3. Correlation between demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practices

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Knowledge-sharing practices.	1						
Gender.	.013	1					
Age.	.084	-.076	1				
Marital status.	.066	.010	.641*	1			
Designation.	.165*	-.028	.591*	.409*	1		
Educational qualifications.	.048	.011	.720*	.513*	.591*	1	
Years of experience.	.012	-.071	.850*	.546*	.605*	.705*	1
Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	29.59	1.51	44.19	1.98	3.13	2.97	13.69
Standard Deviation (SD).	5.39	0.50	9.92	0.57	1.48	1.06	9.19

Correlation significant @  $p < 0.05$

Dependent variable: Knowledge-sharing practices

Table 3 indicates that there was a significant relationship between knowledge-sharing practice and demographic factor of designation ( $r = .165^*$ ,  $p (.027) < .05$ ) of the respondents. That is, designation correlated with knowledge-sharing practice. On the contrary, there was no significant relationship between the demographic factors of gender ( $r = .013$ ,  $p (.866) > .05$ ), age ( $r = .084$ ,  $p (.260) < .05$ ), marital status ( $r = .066$ ,  $p (.376) < .05$ ), educational qualifications ( $r = .048$ ,  $p (.519) > .05$ ), years of work experience ( $r = .012$ ,  $p (.873) > .05$ ) and knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents. That is, there was no correlation between demographic factors of gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, years of work experience and knowledge-sharing practices of academics in the University

of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Table 4 presents regression analysis on the relationship between personality traits, demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practice of the respondents.

Table 4. Regression analysis on the relationship between personality traits, demographic factors, and knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents

Variables	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.P
Regression	236.04	2	118.02	4.21	.016
Residual	4993.88	178	28.06		
Total	5229.92	180			

R = 0.212

R<sup>2</sup> = 0.045

Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .034

Standard Error of Estimate (SEE) = 5.30

As shown in Table 4, personality traits and demographic factors had significant multiple relationships with knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents (R = 0.212, p < 0.05). Also, personality traits and demographic factors jointly contributed to knowledge-sharing practice of the academics (F = 4.21, df = 2; 178, p < 0.05).

Table 5 presents the relative contribution of personality traits and demographic factors to knowledge-sharing practice of academics.

Table 5. Relative contribution of personality traits and demographic factors to knowledge-sharing practice of the respondents

Model Coefficient	Unstandardised B	Regression Std Error	Standardised $\beta$	Regression t	Coefficient P
(Constant).	35.41	3.02	---	11.71	.000
Personality traits.	-0.29	0.11	-.195	-2.64	.009
Demographic factors.	0.12	0.08	.116	1.56	.120

Table 5 reveals that personality traits ( $\beta = -.195$ , p < .05) and demographic factors ( $\beta = .116$ , p < .05) were significant. This implies that personality traits could significantly and independently influence knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents, but demographic factors could not.

#### 4.1 Discussion of the Findings

Personality is a mixture of the inner and external components that compel a person to act in a certain manner. The assumption of this study led to the prediction that there is no relationship between personality traits and knowledge-sharing practices of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. However, as revealed in Table 2, there was a significant relationship between conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and knowledge-sharing practices. These findings are in tandem with other studies. For example, Obrenovic et al. (2021) discovered that conscientiousness influenced

and had a positive impact on tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour of the respondents in their study. Farrukh et al. (2020) found a positive correlation between agreeableness, extraversion and knowledge-sharing behaviour among academic staff in Pakistani higher education institutions. Van Greunen et al. (2019) discovered that personality traits of extraversion, openness to experience and agreeableness were significantly related to the dependent variable knowledge-sharing intention of workers in knowledge-intensive organisations in South Africa. Rahman, Mannan, Hossain, Zaman, and Hassan (2018) studied tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour among the academic staff in Bangladesh. They reported that personality traits of agreeableness, extraversion, and neuroticism, affect tacit knowledge-sharing behaviour among the academic staff of higher learning institutions.

Abou-Shouk, Zoair, Aburumman, and Abdel-Jalil's (2022) study on the effect of personality traits and knowledge-sharing on employees' innovative performance: a comparative study of Egypt and Jordan revealed that positive personality traits significantly improve employees' knowledge-sharing behaviour and contribute to their innovative performance advancement. Matzler et al. (2008) studied personality traits and knowledge sharing within teams of an international engineering company in Austria. They discovered significant correlations between the personality traits and knowledge sharing of the respondents. They reported further that agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience influence knowledge sharing. Gupta (2008) established that individuals high in agreeableness and conscientiousness were more involved in knowledge-sharing activities than those low in agreeableness and conscientiousness.

This present study established that there was a significant relationship with conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness and knowledge-sharing practices. Conversely, there was no significant relationship between openness to experience and knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents. This result showed a consistency with the results obtained by Teh et al. (2011) that extraversion and neuroticism were positively related to the attitude of their respondents towards knowledge sharing, while openness had inverse relationship with attitude towards knowledge sharing; and Baig and Waheed (2016) who reported that openness to experience did not affect knowledge sharing in an online environment.

Another finding of this study is that designation has a positive relationship with knowledge-sharing practices of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. This finding corroborate Lawal, Oriogu, and Ogbuyi (2017), who discovered that there were significant relationships between knowledge sharing and gender and rank of researchers. Omar and Aduce (2017) assert that demographic variables of gender, age, organisational tenure, and designation all have key role in improving knowledge-sharing behaviour. Kuruppuge et al. (2018) discovered that age, level of education and job orientation have significant influence on the knowledge sharing intentions of employees in family businesses. Grubić-Nešić, Matić, and Mitrović (2015) found that gender, level of education, organisational tenure, and advance at work have significant impact on knowledge sharing. More importantly, this study showed that personality traits and demographic factors had relative influence on knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents. In addition, personality traits could significantly and independently influence knowledge-sharing practices of the respondents, but demographic factors could not. In line with this finding, Shaukat et al. (2023) reported a statistically significant and positive correlation between personality traits and knowledge-sharing behaviour of academics in the University of Sargodha,

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Punjab, Pakistan. Pangil, and Nasuridin (2008) surveyed demographic factors and knowledge-sharing behaviour among Research & Development employees in Malaysia. They discovered that demographic factors did not play a major role in the knowledge-sharing behaviour of the respondents.

## 5. Conclusion

Knowledge sharing is a core component of all knowledge management (KM) processes in organisations such as universities, whose growth is determined by the knowledge produced by its academics. This study has established the relationship between personality traits, demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practices of academics in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. This research has contributed to the existing knowledge by examining personality traits, demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practices among academics. It has generated insights that might help university administrators develop and initiate programmes that could promote knowledge sharing in universities. This would assist them to improve collaborative learning and research in universities, and contribute to organisational effectiveness, performance, innovativeness, capability, global ranking and visibility.

Knowledge-sharing practices can only be promoted through motivation and encouragement. University administrators should design training programmes to help develop conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism among the academic staff to encourage knowledge sharing. Also, some socio-economic reward systems that would motivate academics to share their knowledge with others should be introduced.

These results would also help the Human Resource department during the recruitment of academics. Exposing applicants to personality test would help university administrators identify the personality traits that might impact knowledge sharing. This, in the long run, would translate to improvement in the nature and quality of research outputs and the global ranking of the institution.

## 6. Implications of the Findings

This study is one of the few that have focused on how personality traits and demographic factors would influence knowledge-sharing practices of academics in Nigeria. Thus, contributing to the literature from academics' perspective, thereby enriching personality cum knowledge sharing literature in general and Library and Information Science in particular. Other researchers are encouraged to beam their research light on personality traits of whichever study population they wish to study. This goes a long way to extend the frontiers of knowledge in this area. The study highlighted the importance of personality traits and demographic factors' contribution towards knowledge-sharing practices. Such understanding would be helpful for Human Resources managers, university administrators and policy makers in the education sector to improve on the recruitment procedures of employees and new graduates to fit into career jobs; ensure a diverse range of skills and attributes in the university settings as well as carrying out various organisational activities, and to promote knowledge-sharing practices among lecturers. Above all, to promote knowledge-sharing practices

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effectively, the university management ought to provide academics based on observed personality traits.

Moreso, in terms of knowledge-sharing practices, the individual with the personality traits of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientious and neuroticism are ready and willing to share knowledge more than 'openness to experience' personality. It is therefore necessary to place more priority on individuals that exhibit 'openness to experience' personality trait when assigning responsibility for them to perform because occasion will arise for them to share knowledge in form of contributing their personal knowledge and gather knowledge from colleagues.

The findings of the study provide significant implications for Human Resources managers in education organisations and university education policymakers to improve their recruitment procedures of employees and new education entrants (future graduates) to fit academic career jobs and university duties.

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[ About the authors ]

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## [ Appendix ]

Questionnaire on personality traits, demographic factors and knowledge-sharing practice of Academics in a university. You are expected to be as honest as you can by responding to the items. Be assured that your responses will be treated with strict confidence. You reserve the right to take part in this exercise. Thank you for your participation.

### Part A1: Demographic factors

1. Gender: Male [ ]; Female [ ]
2. Age range: 25-34 years [ ]; 35-44 years [ ]; 45-54 years [ ]; 55 years and above [ ]
3. Marital status: Single [ ]; Married [ ]  
Others, please specify .....
4. Designation: Graduate Assistant / Assistant Lecturer [ ]; Lecturer II [ ]; Lecturer I [ ];  
Senior Lecturer [ ]; Associate Professor / Professor [ ]
5. Educational qualification: B. Sc / B. A / B.Tech / B.Ed [ ]; P.G.D.E [ ]  
M.A. / M.Sc / M.Ed [ ]; Ph.D [ ]
6. Years of work experience: 1-5 years [ ]; 6-10 years [ ]; 11-15 years [ ];  
16-20 years [ ]; 21-25 years [ ]; 26-30 years [ ];  
31 years and above [ ]

### Part A2: Personality traits statements

S/N. Personality traits statements    SA    A    D    SD

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1. I see myself as extraverted, enthusiastic.
  2. I see myself as critical, quarrelsome.
  3. I see myself as dependable, self-disciplined.
  4. I see myself as anxious, easily upset.
  5. I see myself as open to new experiences, complex.
  6. I see myself as reserved, quiet.
  7. I see myself as sympathetic, warm.
  8. I see myself as disorganized, careless.
  9. I see myself as calm, emotionally stable.
  10. I see myself as conventional, uncreative.
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### **Part A3: Types of Knowledge**

**S/No. Types of knowledge SA A D SD**

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1. Knowledge/skills/ expertise/ experience.
  2. Information / data on research.
  3. Research outcome.
  4. Lecture notes.
  5. Intelligence.
  6. Understanding / Insight.
  7. Information/data.
  8. Technical knowhow.
  9. Exchange program on staff and students
  10. Information on Sports / Politics
  11. Information on conferences.
  12. Journal publications, proceedings, and Books.
  13. Information on scholarship /fellowships/ grants.
  14. Social knowledge / Job opportunities.
  15. Information of exchange programmes.
  16. Health information.
  17. Religion / Cultural information.
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### **Part A4: Knowledge-sharing practice**

**S/No. Knowledge-sharing practice SA A D SD**

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1. Willingness to share my knowledge freely with colleagues.
  2. I attend and contribute to different knowledge-sharing activities.
  3. I use available channels to share my knowledge with colleagues.
  4. I accomplish tasks through teamwork with other colleagues.
  5. I exchange knowledge and experience when working with other colleagues.
  6. Whenever I need certain knowledge, I ask colleagues.
  7. I collaborate with colleagues to promote knowledge sharing.
  8. Whenever I learn something new, I inform my colleagues about it.
  9. I into tap my colleagues' experience whenever I need to learn something.
  10. I am always willing to share my class note/ideas/publications with colleagues.
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Thank you for taking out time to fill this questionnaire...

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