

Original Research

The Moderating Effect of Transformational Leadership on Relationship between Organizational Silence and Knowledge Transfer among Librarians in Federal Universities in Southern Nigeria

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Received: 07 July 2020

Accepted: 04 December 2020

Abstract

This study was designed to investigate the mediating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between organizational silence and knowledge transfer among librarians in federal universities in southern Nigeria. The questionnaire was used to collect data from a population of 250 librarians, out of which 240 responded, yielding a response rate of 96 percent. The study found a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and knowledge transfer of the respondents. Organizational silence has a significant negative correlation with the respondents, and organizational silence has a significant negative correlation with transformational leadership. Nevertheless, the study revealed that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on knowledge transfer. Also, organizational silence has a significant negative effect on the knowledge transfer of the respondents. More importantly, transformational leadership has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between the respondents' organizational silence and knowledge transfer. It was recommended that the university librarians should adopt a transformational leadership style to facilitate knowledge transfer. The administrators and library managers in the federal university in southern Nigeria should reduce or eliminate organizational silence to promote knowledge transfer among the respondents.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Organisational silence, Knowledge transfer, University librarians

Biodata

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Introduction

Universities in Nigeria are set up to supply a high-level workforce to the Nigerian labor market through sound teaching, research, and community service. They are very central to the national development in Nigeria. It must be noted that no nation can rise above its university system. The reason being that the best brains in any nation are recruited to its university system, and they are expected to provide reasonable solutions to problems confronting that nation. In Nigeria, the university administrators realized that establishing functional libraries is indispensable in achieving their core mandate: teaching, research, community service, and a highly-skilled workforce for national development. The library human resources such as librarians, library officers, and library assistants are central to providing information resources and services supporting the core mandate of their universities. The librarians form the decision-making organ of the university library in Nigeria. They see to the smooth running of the libraries, particularly in the federal universities in Nigeria. They are expected to perform the following core duties: developing programs such as user education, library use instruction, information literacy, digital literacy skills, and ICT skills for library users (students, teaching staff, and non-teaching staff). Their jobs also include creating pathfinders, digitizing collections for online access, managing access to print and electronic information resources, building collections to respond to changing needs or demands of the users, providing reference/referral services to users. In addition, the library provides other services such as writing grants to gain funding for expanded programs and collections, conducting research, budgeting for library services and resources, developing a strategic plan, preserving and conserving library information resources.

The librarians in the federal universities in Nigeria are the knowledge assets that universities use to render effective information services. Knowledge is defined as a justified belief that increases an entity's capacity for effective action (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Nonaka, 1994). It may also be viewed as actionable information, insights, expertise, intuition, and lessons learned experiences and mental models which a person possesses. Tsoukas and Vladimirou (2001) averred that knowledge is the capability that members of an organization have developed to draw distinctions in the process of carrying out their work. In particular concrete contexts, by enacting generalizations (propositional statements) whose application depends on historically evolved collective understanding and experiences. An employee's knowledge, such as a librarian's in his/her brain and mind, cannot be disembodied from them or from the situations they engage in (Stephen & Clancey, 2017). It must be noted that librarians in a university have both tacit and codified knowledge to carry out their job functions. Knowledge which is the basis of all information, relies on individuals for its existence (Sun & Scott, 2005). Knowledge is information that has been interpreted (Tsoukas & Mylonopoulos, 2004) and is embedded within the beliefs and values of an individual (Tsoukas & Vladimirou, 2001; Hildreth & Kimble, 2002).

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) identified four categories of knowledge assets that exist in an organization. Namely experimental knowledge assets, tacit knowledge through common experiences such as skills and know-how of individuals; routine knowledge assets that tacit knowledge routinized and embedded in actions and practices such as organizational (library) routine and culture; know-how in daily operations. Others are conceptual knowledge assets: explicit knowledge articulated through images, symbols, and language such as product concepts, brand, design equity, systematic knowledge assets, systemized and packaged explicit

knowledge such as documents, manuals, specifications, database, patents, and licensing. The knowledge assets of any organization like the university library are expected to be managed, communicated, shared, transferred, and used to improve its business performance, that is, improved service delivery to users.

Knowledge transfer is one of the critical knowledge management processes in an organization. Liyange, Elhag, Ballal and Li (2009) noted that knowledge transfer is the conveyance of knowledge from one place, person, or ownership to another. Davenport and Prusak (1998) posited that knowledge transfer is the act of communication (sending), translation (absorption), and application (utilization) of knowledge in an organization. It must be emphasized that knowledge transfer is the act of freely or voluntarily donating the available knowledge by the owner of the knowledge to another person or group of persons. The receiver(s) must have the high absorptive capacity (cognitive ability) to assimilate it and utilize it to enhance their creativity and innovation as well as improved job performance. Knowledge transfer is a form of citizen behavior that management of university libraries expect their workforce, particularly libraries and library officers/assistants, to exhibit when performing their assigned job functions.

Alipour, Idris and Karimi (2011) opined that knowledge creation and transfer promote organizational learning among members of an organization. The tacit knowledge may be transferred in an organization like a university library through social contact such as discussions, sharing work experiences, simulation, practice, observation, and visitation, and so on among organizational members. Knowledge transfer aims to facilitate knowledge flows within and outside the organization (Bou-Llusar & Segarracipres, 2006). Social relationships provide how individuals can create, retain, and transfer knowledge to enhance work performance, creativity, and innovation in an organization like a university library.

The knowledge transfer practices in an organization include mentorship, coaching, guided experience, simulation, guided experimentation, paired work, and community practice. They also encompass narrative transfer, storytelling, work shadowing, induction, work orientation, job rotation, lecturing, visitation, and practices. The conditions for achieving effective knowledge transfer in an organization are identifying the owners of knowledge, motivating them to share and transfer knowledge. They also include designing a sharing mechanism to facilitate the knowledge transfer, executing the knowledge transfer plan, measuring to ensure the knowledge transfer, and utilizing the knowledge transferred. The nature of leadership style that library managers adopt to influence their subordinates to provide valuable information services to users has far-reaching implications for the survival of university libraries worldwide. Some authors have stressed the importance of transformational leadership style for improving employees' job performance in the university libraries (Solademi, 2018; Mohammed, 2019; Fatokun, Salaam & Ajegbomogun, 2010).

Transformational leadership may also reduce job stress experienced by individuals in an organization through its impact on mentoring functions (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). It must be pointed out, at this premise, that mentoring can be used as a mechanism by the library managers as leaders to transfer knowledge to their subordinates (librarians and library officers). It must be borne in mind that transformational leadership is a leadership style that makes subordinates aware of the importance of their jobs to the organization. Furthermore, how necessary it is for them to execute those jobs as best they can. So that the organization can achieve its stated goals; makes subordinates aware of their own needs for personal growth, development, and

accomplishment; and motivates employees to work for the common good of the organization, not just for their benefit. Transformational leadership is a style of leadership in which the leader empowers employees to achieve an articulated vision of the organization, leading to increases in productivity, employee morale and job satisfaction, and more remarkable personal and professional growth (Stephen, Roberts & Rao, 2011).

Transformational leadership style has four basic dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1998). Idealized influence occurs when the leader does the “right thing” and thereby engenders the trust and respect of their followers. Inspirationally motivating leaders hold high expectations and encourage followers to achieve more than they thought possible. Intellectual stimulation involves encouraging followers to challenge the status quo and to answer their questions. An individually considerate leader treats each worker as a person, spends time coaching employees, and demonstrates their achievements. A transformational leader must transfer knowledge that their followers need to enhance their job performance and be fully satisfied with their jobs. Library managers are expected to voluntarily transfer knowledge on job-related matters to their subordinates (librarians and library officers) and equally, encourage them to transfer knowledge among themselves. It has been noted that there have been applications of transformational leadership style to human services organizations to improve their business operations (Namusonge, Nyakomitta, K. & Amuhaya, 2018; Bass, 1985; Jing & Avery, 2008; Utami, 2013). Previous studies had established significant relationships of transformational leadership style with perceived leadership effectiveness, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and satisfaction with the leader (Kimento, K’Aol & Njenga, 2017; Ajani, 2016; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Raja & Polanichamy, 2011).

However, leadership and culture are positively related to knowledge transfer within organizations (Donate & Canals, 2012; McNichols, 2010; Soosay & Hyland, 2008). Transformational leaders encourage their subordinates to build social networks within and outside the organizations, leading to greater knowledge transfer and enhanced performance (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Inkpen & Tsang, 2005). Implementing a proactive knowledge transfer mechanism is consequent on the transformational leader’s actions. Leaders in organizations, particularly university libraries, may facilitate a community of practice for knowledge transfer and knowledge sharing to take place among the employees. Employees in university libraries are likely to share actionable information, best practices, experiences, insights, intuition, expertise, and ideas when leaders, particularly transformational leaders, allow the employees to voice their minds on matters concerning them. Unfortunately, the library business matters remain silent. Library managers are expected to prevent organizational silence and promote knowledge creation, sharing, and transfer among their employees, particularly librarians and library officers.

Van Dyne, Ang and Botero (2003) defined organizational silence as an employee’s motivation to withhold or express ideas, information, and opinions about work-related improvements in the organization. Pinder and Harlos (2001) viewed organizational silence as the intentional withholding of any form of genuine expression about the individuals' behavioral, cognitive and/or affective evaluations of their organizational circumstances to persons who are perceived to be capable of effecting change or redress. Morrison and Milliken (2000) defined organizational silence as a collective phenomenon where employees withhold their opinions and concerns about potential organizational problems. There are different forms of

organizational silence. The first is acquiescent silence, a state of passiveness where employees do not share their knowledge, ideas, and thoughts due to neglect or submission in an organization (Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Kahn, 1990). Second, defensive silence is a behavior of sparing employees' ideas, thoughts, and knowledge to themselves for self-protection. Finally, prosocial silence occurs when employees cooperate and refuse to share private information about the organization with unauthorized people, protect the confidentiality, and project the organization's good image to the outside world.

Organizational silence has serious consequences on organizational development and success. These include job dissatisfaction, sabotage, lateness to work, absenteeism, mistrust, ineffective information flow, poor information exchange, poor knowledge transfer, lack of knowledge sharing, incessant interpersonal conflicts, lack of teamwork, and low knowledge creation. Morrison and Milliken (2000) submitted that employee silence could result in low motivation, commitment, and job satisfaction. In addition, employee silence in an organization leads to feelings of worthlessness, loss of control, and cognitive dissonance, leading to low motivation and commitment (Maria & Borados, 2005). More so, organizational decisions suffer where employees withhold information and/or opinions capable of enhancing the quality of decisions and performance of the task at hand (Umar & Hassan, 2013).

However, Northouse (2007) defined leadership as a process by which individual influences a group of individuals to achieve common goals. Transformational leadership style, which is one of the variables of interest in this study, is significantly correlated and influenced job performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction of employees in salaried organizations (Collins, 2001; Bass, 1998; Fatokun, Salaam & Ajejbomogun, 2010; Yukl, 2006; Piccolo & Coloquit, 2006; Adekunle, 2017; Owolabi, 2019; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders can facilitate the community of practice in organizations to give room for knowledge transfer and sharing among the employees by eliminating or reducing employee silence. Samson (2014) reported a significant negative correlation between employee silence and transformational leadership among employees working in health, Banking, Finance, Education, manufacturing, and other services in selected African nations. Bolaji (2015) averred that transformational leadership style might negatively impact the organizational silence of employees in the universities. Davenport and Prusak (2000) opined that the most effective way to transfer organizational knowledge is to hire smart people and let them talk to another. A transformational leader is in the best position to facilitate knowledge transfer and sharing among subordinates through coaching, mentoring, socialization, storytelling, and induction. Transformational leaders can motivate their subordinates to transfer knowledge to each other to enhance their organizational commitment and job performance. Transformational leadership style (Boade, 2010) has been found to have a significant positive effect on the organizational climate needed for effective innovation through knowledge transfer. Transformational leaders may provide an organizational communication climate for knowledge transfer to thrive among his/her subordinates in an organization such as a university library. It must be pointed out that leadership and organizational culture have been reported to have a positive relationship and are both significantly related to the transfer of knowledge within organizations (Donate & Canales, 2012; McNicholas, 2010; Soosay & Hyland, 2008).

The researcher has observed that rapid changes have taken place in the mode of service delivery of the university libraries in Nigeria, particularly federal university libraries. Electronic information services are being delivered to users to meet their ever-increasing information

needs. This could not have occurred without adopting the transformational leadership style of the library managers and the libraries. The management of the federal university libraries in Nigeria does not have a formalized knowledge transfer program, but the employees, particularly librarians, share and transfer knowledge to improve the information services provided to users. The culture of silence appears to be rampant among employees, particularly libraries in the federal universities in Nigeria. It has also been noticed that previous studies in the field of knowledge management and library management seem to have failed to examine the knowledge transfer practices among employees in libraries. The effects of leadership styles and organizational silence on knowledge transfer of the employees in Southern Nigerian university libraries have also not been considered in the library and information science discipline. The scholars in knowledge management appear not to have beamed their search light on the effect of transformational leadership style on organizational silence and knowledge transfer of library employees, specifically librarians, in the federal universities in Southern Nigeria. It is against this back drop that this study examines the moderating effect of transformational leadership style on organizational silence and knowledge transfer of the librarians in federal university libraries in Southern Nigeria.

The study is anchored on House and Mitchell (1994) path-goal theory of leadership. The theory states that effective leaders can motivate subordinates to achieve goals by clearly identifying the outcomes that subordinates are trying to obtain from their jobs. Rewarding subordinates with these outcomes for high performance and attainment of work goals and clarifying the paths leading to attaining work goals. This theory is relevant to this study because transformational leaders in the university library setting are expected to set goals: knowledge transfer and reward library employees/personnel, particularly librarians, to transfer knowledge among themselves for improved library information services to users. The university system's transformational leaders (library managers) will also expect that the university system's transformational leaders will suppress or reduce organizational silence among their subordinates (library officers/librarians). The second theory is based on the Resource-based view of the organization by Barney (1991), which states that knowledge of human resources in an organization is an asset and economic resource that must be harnessed and used to gain competitive advantage and improve performance. The library personnel, specifically librarians in a university system, possessed knowledge that must be made available through transfer among themselves to provide effective information services to users.

Figure I is a developed conceptual model which is a graphical illustration of the proposed relationships among our variables of interest: organizational silence (OS), transformation leadership (TL), and knowledge transfer (KT) of librarians in federal universities in southern Nigeria. This model is constructed based on the relevant literature reviewed

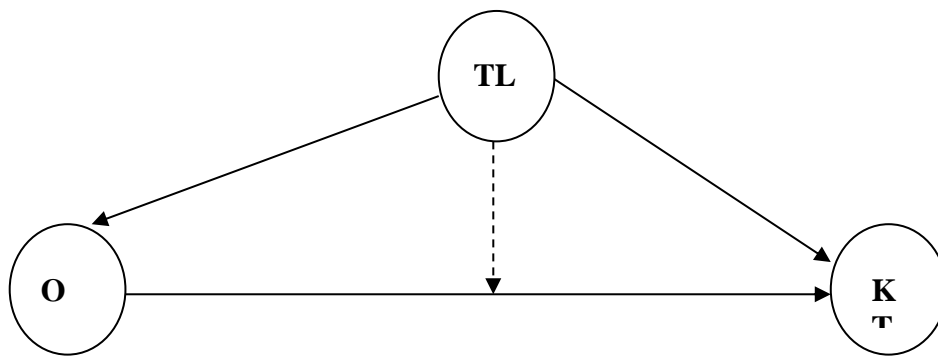


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Knowledge Transfer of Library Personnel

Purpose of the Study

This study investigates the moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between librarians' organizational silence and knowledge transfer in the federal universities in southern Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at $\alpha = 0.01$ level of significance to guide the conduct of this study.

There are no significant correlations among organizational silence, transformational leadership, and knowledge transfer among librarians in the federal universities in southern Nigeria.

There is no significant effect of organizational silence on knowledge transfer of the librarians in the federal universities in southern Nigeria.

There is no significant effect of transformational leadership on the knowledge transfer of librarians in the federal universities in southern Nigeria.

There is no significant effect of organizational silence on transformational leadership among librarians in the federal universities in southern Nigeria.

Transformational leadership will not significantly moderate the relationship between organizational silence and knowledge transfer among librarians in the federal universities in southern Nigeria.

Methodology

The study population consisted of 250 librarians working in the 13 federal universities in southern Nigeria. The total enumeration technique (census method) was used to cover all the 250 librarians in the 13 federal universities in southern Nigeria. The questionnaire titled Transformational Leadership, Organizational Silence, and Knowledge Transfer of Librarians (TLOSKT) was used for data collection. It was divided into four main parts. Part 1 deals with the personal factors of the respondents, such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification, and years of work experience in the library. Part 2 measures the Transformational Leadership of the Library Managers (University Librarians) in the surveyed federal universities in southern Nigeria. It is an eight-item scale developed by Avolio, Bass and Jung (1999). The typical examples of the items are our university librarian: Displays power, confidence, and ethics arouse subordinates' awareness about what is important, etc. The response format ranged

from Not at all (NA) = 1 to 7 = frequently, if not always (FIA). The reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.95, using Cronbach-alpha.

When it was revalidated, it has a reliability coefficient of 0.96, using the Cronbach-alpha method. Parts 3 measures the organizational silence of the respondents. It is a 25-item organizational silence (OS) scale developed by Dyne, Ang and Batero (2003). The typical examples are: Employee passively withholds ideas based on resignation; Employee does not speak up and suggest ideas for change, based on fear, etc. The response format ranged from 1 = Strong Disagree (SD) to 7 = Strongly Agree (SA). When validated, the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.78, using the Cronbach-alpha method. Part 4 measures the knowledge transfer of the respondents. It is a 10-item knowledge transfer scale developed by the researcher. The typical example of the items is: the management in our library has a mechanism for making the lessons learned from the service development available for the use of all categories of personnel; most frequently, I participate in project development, and the experiences gained from that place are used for similar work, etc. The response format ranged from Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 to 4 = Strongly Agree (SA). It has a reliability coefficient of 0.82, using the Cronbach-alpha method.

The copies of the TLOSKT Questionnaire were administered to 250 librarians in the 13 federal universities in southern Nigeria. From these 250 librarians, 240 responded, and copies of their questionnaire were found valid for analysis, giving a response rate of 96 percent. The questionnaire administration and retrieval are presented in Table 1. The data collected were analyzed using percentages, mean and standard deviation, simple correlation analysis (Pearson's product-moment correlation method), and Hierarchical regression analysis.

Table 1

Questionnaire Administration and Retrieval

	University	Population	Questionnaire Administered	Questionnaire Retrieved	Response rate (%)
1	Federal University of Ebonyi, Ndiru Alike	13	13	13	100
2.	Nnamdi Azikwe University, Akwa	19	19	16	84.2
3.	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	41	41	39	95.1
4.	Federal University of Balyelsa, Otuoke	11	11	11	100
5.	University of Benin, Benin	17	17	17	100
6.	University of Calabar, Calabar	12	12	12	100
7.	University of Port-Harcourt, Port-Harcourt	23	23	20	87.0
8.	University of Uyo, Uyo.	20	20	20	100
9.	Federal University, Oye-Ekiti	9	9	9	100
10.	Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife	24	24	24	100

	University	Population	Questionnaire Administered	Questionnaire Retrieved	Response rate (%)
11.	University of Ibadan, Ibadan	30	30	28	93.3
12.	University of Lagos, Lagos	20	20	20	100
13.	Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun	9	9	9	100
	Total	250	250	240	96.0

Of the 240 respondents, 132 (55%) were males, while 102 (45%) were females. Their age distribution ranged between 29 and 64 years, with a mean ($\bar{x} = 39.78$; $SD = 8.72$) years. Out of the 240 respondents, 150 (62.5%) were married, and 90 (37.5%) were single. Their educational qualification revealed that 180 (75%) possessed a master's degree in library and information science, and 60 (35%) possessed a doctor of philosophy certificate in Library and Information Science. Their years of work experience in the library varied between 8 and 27 years, with the mean ($\bar{x} = 10.62$; $SD = 3.72$) years.

Results

Table 2 presents Pearson’s zero-order correlations matrix among Transformational Leadership (TL), Organisational Silence (OS), and knowledge transfer of the respondents.

Table 2

Pearson’s Zero Order Correlation Matrix of the Variables of Interest of the Respondents

Variable	\bar{x}	SD	1	2	3
Transformational Leadership (TL)	52.85	9.26	1.000		
Organisational Silence (OS)	165.80	16.34	r=-0.421 Sig. P = 0.008	1.000	
Knowledge Transfer (KT)	38.22	4.22	r=0.432 Sig. P = 0.026	r=-0.418 Sig. P = 0.007	1.000

Table 2 shows that transformational leadership positively correlates with the respondents' knowledge transfer ($r=0.432$, $p<0.01$). On the other hand, organizational silence has a significant negative correlation with knowledge transfer of the respondents ($r=-0.418$; $p<0.01$), and similarly, organizational silence has a significant negative correlation with transformational leadership of the respondents ($r=-0.421$; $p<0.01$). Therefore, the hierarchical regression analysis was resorted to investigating the moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between the respondents' organizational silence and knowledge transfer. Table 3 presents the result of data analysis on the knowledge transfer of the respondents.

Table 3

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of the Knowledge Transfer of the Respondent

Step	Variable	Beta	t	Sig. P	Adj R-square	R-square change	F	Sig. P
1.	Organisational Silence (OS)	-0.218	6.21	0.003	0.108	0.108	4.18	0.004
2.	Transformational Leadership (TL)	0.222	4.82	0.005	0.211	0.103	5.11	0.002
3.	Organisational Silence (OS) X Transformational Leadership (TL)	-0.331	5.34	0.006	0.338	0.127	3.26	0.001

In the first step, organizational silence was entered into the regression model. Organizational silence has significant negative effect on knowledge transfer of the respondents (Beta = -0.218; $t=6.21$; adjusted R square = 0.108, $F=4.18$, $P<0.05$).

In the second step, transformational leadership was entered into the regression model. Transformational leadership has significant positive effect on knowledge transfer of the respondents (Beta = 0.222; $t=4.82$, adjusted R square = 0.211; adjusted R square change of 0.103; $F=5.11$; $P<0.05$).

In the third step, the product of organizational silence and transformational leadership was entered into the regression. It was noticed that organizational silence and transformational leadership had significant negative interaction effect on knowledge transfer of the respondents (Beta = -0.331; $t = 5.34$; adjusted R squared = 0.338; adjusted R square change = 0.127; $F = 3.26$; $P<0.05$). In line with Hayes (2013) and Baron and Kenney (1986), one can deduce that transformational leadership moderates the relationship between the respondents' organizational silence and knowledge transfer.

Discussion

Knowledge is a vital economic resource and asset that organizations like university libraries must acknowledge, manage, and integrate into their work processes to provide value-added information services to users. Knowledge transfer is crucial to the work performance of personnel in university libraries. The essence of knowledge transfer in an organization like a university library is to enhance the employees' capability, that is, knowledge and skills for creative and innovative behavior and library performance.

However, this study found that transformational leadership has a significant positive correlation with the knowledge transfer of the respondents. Some scholars similarly noted that transformational leadership style could have a strong association and positive effect on knowledge transfer of employees in any organization (Adeleke, 2018; Stephen, 2019; Donate & Canales, 2012; McNicholas, 2010).

Transformational leaders may encourage employees to voluntarily transfer their knowledge to their workmates, thereby promoting organizational learning. For example, they can cause knowledge within an organization like a university library to be transferred among employees through regular meetings, on-the-job training, mentorship relationship, experimentation, and coaching. Thomas and Raheem (2019) opined that tacit and explicit knowledge could be transferred within an organization. This can occur if the transformational leaders (managers)

encourage that tacit knowledge is transferred through personnel movement and collaboration, while explicit knowledge is shared through reports, databases, archives, and bulletins.

This study also found that organizational silence has a significant negative correlation with the knowledge transfer of the respondents. In the same vein, Şehitoğlu (2014) reported a significant negative correlation between employee silence and transformational leadership among employees working in health, banking, finance, education, manufacturing, and other services. Bolaji (2015) averred that transformational leadership style might negatively impact on organizational silence of employees in universities. Transformational leaders may prevent organizational silence in the university libraries by providing an organizational communication climate so that knowledge transfer could thrive among employees.

This study also established a significant negative correlation between organizational silence and knowledge transfer among respondents. Employee silence is characterized as a deliberate holding of relevant and crucial work-related information for an organization's progress (Bogosian, 2011). Organizational silence is damaging to the growth and survival of an organization like a university library because it discourages employees from transferring their tacit knowledge for improved, innovative work behavior. Employees who remain silent about relevant work issues that could inform their managers, that is, university librarians, are, in effect, preventing the transfer of potentially valuable information and knowledge. In addition, employees who exhibit silence about information crucial to rational management decision making and organizational development is, in consequence, suppressing the flow of new information, reducing organizational learning caused by knowledge transfer.

More importantly, this study found that organizational silence has a significant negative effect on the knowledge transfer of the respondents. In support of this finding, Blackman and Sadler-Smith (2009) asserted that knowledge is primarily contained among individuals and transmitted via paper, electronic devices, or discourse. This means that there is a vast amount of latent knowledge waiting to be voiced and transferred. They argued that if individuals remain silent about work issues, knowledge transfer is negatively affected. Organizational silence can stifle knowledge transfer by constraining the amount and flow of knowledge and information that could affect decision-making, problem-solving, and innovation. Szulanski (2000) posited that knowledge transfer and organizational silence of any workforce are inversely related. Carlile (2004) opined that employee silence in an organization might become a barrier to knowledge transfer for better work performance.

Nonetheless, this study also showed a significant positive effect of transformational leadership on the knowledge transfer of the respondents. Moreover, some scholars equally noted that transformational leadership style could have a strong association and positive effect on knowledge transfer of employees in an organization (Adeleke, 2018; Stephen, 2019; Boade, 2010). Indeed, transformational leaders can promote idea generation among employees and provide incentives for them to transfer their personal knowledge for organizational survival and competitive advantage.

This study revealed a significant negative interaction effect of organizational silence and transformational leadership on the knowledge transfer of the respondents. Both organizational silence and transformational leadership have a significant severe effect on knowledge transfer of the work done in any organization. Tepper (2007) supported this assertion by submitting that transformation leadership facilitates knowledge transfer among workers in an organization while organizational silence hinders it. Generally, it is argued that transformational leadership

style moderates the relationship between organizational silence and knowledge transfer among respondents, as evidenced by the data analysis carried out in this study. This result implies that when employees exhibited high organizational silence in the university library setting, the transformational leadership style should be employed to reduce the level of organizational silence or wholly removed it to stimulate knowledge transfer among employees.

However, this study is limited in scope to librarians in federal universities in southern Nigeria, not the entire workforce. Therefore, the results obtained could not be generalized to the whole personnel in the studied libraries.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The knowledge resides in employees' minds and those buried in documents such as annual reports, minutes, electronic mails, online databases, webpages, CR-ROM databases, archives, project files, etc. These are significant assets that organizations like university libraries need to harness and transfer among employees to provide value-added services to users. Creative and innovative work behavior cannot take place in a university library without knowledge transfer among employees. Transformational leaders can motivate employees by giving incentives such as promotion, pay rise, praise and commendations to library workers that voluntarily engage in knowledge transfer. In addition, transformational leadership style could give room for performance feedback, employee voice, social interaction, ombudsman, suggestion box, and staff-leaders occasional meetings to prevent organizational silence and stimulating knowledge transfer among employees in a university library. This study established significant correlations among organizational silence, transformation leadership, and knowledge transfer among the respondents. In addition, transformation leadership had a significant positive effect on the knowledge transfer of the respondents. Organizational silence had a significant negative effect on the knowledge transfer of the respondents, while organizational silence and leadership style had a significant negative interaction effect on the knowledge transfer of the respondents. Consequently, transformational leadership style has a moderating effect on the relationship between the respondents' organizational silence and knowledge transfer.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that the library managers (university librarians) and university administrators in the studied institutions pay much attention to the organizational silence of the librarians by reducing or eliminating it to promote knowledge transfer among them. Furthermore, library managers should adopt a transformational leadership style to facilitate knowledge transfer among librarians. Furthermore, the library managers must endeavor to prevent organizational silence by encouraging librarians to speak out on issues affecting them and the library services to enhance knowledge transfer.

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