THE ROLES OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING AND EXPLICIT KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TACIT KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION CAPABILITY FROM A PUBLIC SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: *Knowledge is a valuable resource with innovation potentials, yet studies have not fully presented how the tacit knowledge sharing affects the innovation capability of an organization, public organizations in particular. Due to this limited understanding, the study aimed to examine how tacit knowledge sharing affects organizational innovation capability, focusing on organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing as mediators. The study collected cross-sectional data from 178 employees of public hospitals in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria, using a structured questionnaire. The partial least squares technique was used to analyze the data. The study found that tacit knowledge significant and positive effect on innovation capability was fully and sequentially mediated by organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing. The study concluded that tacit knowledge sharing is important for innovation, but organizations, especially public service organizations, will yield better outcomes when they cultivate an environment that supports continuous learning to acquire practical insights. The creative tension between different knowledge bases enhances explicit knowledge as well as its sharing, which potentially contributes to improving the capacity to create something new and of public benefit. Practical implications were also discussed to improve the connections among the constructs.*

Keywords: Explicit knowledge, innovation, knowledge sharing, organizational learning, tacit knowledge, public service organization.

JEL classification: O310, M150, L320.

1. Introduction

The knowledge-driven era calls for the productive use of knowledge to improve and maintain an organization's competitive position with limited resources through innovation. Research on innovation acknowledges the significance of knowledge in creating and delivering value in highly competitive business environments. This knowledge often resides explicitly or tacitly within an organization. Explicit knowledge comprises actionable information expressed in numbers or words, codified in paper and electronic formats, and readily shared without the need for discussion. Tacit knowledge is defined as the subjective understanding and interpretation of information obtained from practical experiences and interactions at work (Santos and Lopes, 2014; Ondari-Okenwa and Smith, 2009). Public organizations

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today face numerous, evolving problems that they cannot fully comprehend due to limited explicit information. This necessitates that they extend their focus beyond their explicitly held knowledge to the context-specific knowledge embedded in the minds of employees. Studies (e.g., Polanyi, 2009; Souto, 2013; Chen and Mohamed, 2010) suggest that tacit knowledge can generate unprecedented value or transformative changes that could never be attained by combining explicit knowledge. This makes the sharing of this knowledge crucial for improving organizational capability to innovate.

Innovations happen when people with different knowledge bases interact with each other, especially when the problem context is not clearly defined. Employees possess a repertoire of hidden knowledge, and this knowledge constitutes an underutilized innovation resource in a bureaucratized setting. Public bureaucracy follows strict and complex procedures that prioritize the sharing of explicit knowledge above tacit knowledge (Yeboah, 2023). The high level of hierarchical coordination and formalization could make employees less motivated and impede their participation in some knowledge-based activities. Therefore, the benefits of tacit knowledge in knowledge work may not be fully realized because its share is highly limited and directed (Seidler-de Alwis, Hartmann and Germunden, 2004). Possibly, organizations grounded in public bureaucracy may want their operations to be more predictable, stable, and under control. But with the constantly evolving societal challenges and pressures, they need to leverage knowledge that transcends explicit knowledge to find context-specific knowledge for effective problem-solving. Therefore, the study contends that improving tacit knowledge sharing can improve the innovation capabilities of public organizations.

In knowledge management, organizational learning provides the means for the improvement of shared knowledge via knowledge creation and application. It enables the transformation of individual knowledge into organizational knowledge (Basten and Haamann, 2018). The development of organizational knowledge fosters a better understanding of a problem context for the purpose of maintaining superior performance. Public organizations must quickly learn and adapt, or they simply will not be responsive to the changing public expectations and demands. This shows that organizational learning makes strategic renewal possible. Therefore, organizational learning may require knowledge sharing and its management to impact performance. Reinforcing this statement, research shows that organizational learning mediates the relationship between knowledge sharing and other desirable firm-level outcomes, such as organizational effectiveness (Yang, 2007), organizational innovation (Rao, Yang and Yang, 2018), and employee performance (Meher and Mishra, 2022). Public organizations place more emphasis on using explicit knowledge to guide and support organizational activities.

The study argues that tacit knowledge sharing could improve innovation capabilities by encouraging organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing sequentially. This is because organizational learning facilitates the development and organization of unstructured knowledge around evolving organizational activities. By ensuring the well-articulated use of relevant knowledge, it instills a learning perspective in knowledge sharing, thereby enhancing the scope for change. The structuring of tacit knowledge improves the quality of explicit knowledge via its transfer and integration. The improvement in specific aspects of explicit knowledge to convey new understanding fosters its sharing for problem-solving. Explicit knowledge sharing may impact organizational effectiveness regarding their capacity for innovation (Zhimin and Choon, 2018; Meher et al., 2021).

Given the above, the mediational value of organizational learning has been tested in private organizations, but there is no single study that has confirmed its relevance to the public sector, particularly within an African country setting. There is also no existing research that connects tacit knowledge sharing, organizational learning, explicit knowledge sharing, and innovation abilities in public organizations in a single framework. Elliott (2022) asserts that it is important for research to consider whether knowledge sharing and organizational learning

influence change in public organizations for the following reasons. First, tacit knowledge forms a significant part of organizational knowledge, but it often goes unnoticed, even though it can advance innovation activities considerably. Usually, tacit knowledge maintains knowledge-based advantages because it possesses context-specific qualities and benefits that are not yet explicit (Ononye, 2023). Furthermore, public organizations face mounting pressures, stemming from the changing societal needs and expectations, to become more effective and efficient in value creation and delivery. This drives the need to learn via reflection and inquiry to develop a better understanding of the way forward. It also reinforces the need for innovation to effectively meet the changing externalities. Therefore, the study aimed to examine how tacit knowledge sharing affects organizational innovation capability, focusing on organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing as mediators.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Tacit Knowledge Sharing and Innovation Capability

The tacit knowledge-sharing process can be depicted in a saying: “If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it”—Margaret Fuller. It is the process of engaging in collaborative interactions to exchange context-specific knowledge, skills, and experience among employees. As such, employees are transferring their knowledge to others (i.e., knowledge donating) or consulting others for their know-how (i.e., knowledge collecting) (Yesil et al., 2013). The aim of knowledge sharing is to create a nexus between where knowledge is located and where it can be optimally utilized to attain value (Najla et al., 2017). This guarantees the effective utilization of tacit knowledge. Oneway organizations can leverage their knowledge resources is by improving their innovation capabilities. Innovation capability is the creative ability to transform knowledge into practical solutions that benefit both the organization and the public. By sharing tacit insights with one another, the capacity to define and solve problems is improved, thereby creating an organization prepared to effectively and efficiently meet changing public demands. Several studies (Asbari et al., 2019; Ononye and Igwe, 2019; Kucharska and Erickson, 2023) have provided evidence of the positive and significant effect of tacit knowledge sharing on innovation capability. Therefore, the first hypothesis was proposed:

H_1: Tacit knowledge sharing is significantly and positively related to innovation capability.

2.2. Organizational Learning and Innovation Capability

Organizational learning is a dynamic ability that fosters the coordinated use of knowledge through the process of sharing, creating, and integrating knowledge related to a given problem context for better organizational action and performance. The aim is to increase the value of organizational knowledge by facilitating the effective development and management of knowledge. The change in organizational knowledge develops an organizational ability to adapt to change. Furthermore, it offers insights that innovation processes can utilize to produce outcomes that are valuable and in line with evolving environmental conditions. Organizational learning and innovation capability are inextricably linked to cultivating new ways of managing change based on knowledge acquired from practical experiences and interactions. The creation of new knowledge through learning increases the capacity to understand and apply this knowledge for value creation. Empirical studies (Abdi et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2018; Asbari et al., 2019) show that organizational learning enhances innovation capability. Therefore, the study formulated the second hypothesis.

H_2: Organizational learning is significantly and positively related to innovation capability.

2.3. Tacit Knowledge Sharing and Organizational learning

Knowledge sharing among employees enables organizations to learn something new and make sense of a given situation via its application. It is important to keep in mind that learning

emerges from collaborative and constructive interactions among employees (Ononye, 2022). Ample research (Yang, 2007; Liao & Wu, 2010; Abdi et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2018; Meher and Mishra, 2020) shows that knowledge sharing increases organizational learning. Therefore, the third hypothesis was suggested.

H_3: Tacit knowledge sharing is significantly and positively related to organizational learning.

2.4. Tacit Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, and Innovation Capability

The contextual utility of organizational learning is important in redefining or extending the practicality of tacit knowledge to support value creation in dynamic environments. Learning occurs through the dynamic interplay of shared knowledge, perceptions, and experiences. The insights gained from critical reflection and inquiry have the potential to be integrated and applied to accelerate innovative work. Studies (Liao and Wu, 2010; Abdi et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2018; Asbari et al., 2019) show that knowledge sharing enhances organizational learning to improve innovation. Although their focus was on general knowledge sharing within the knowledge management framework, this study examined the sharing of tacit knowledge. Consequently, the fourth hypothesis was put forward.

H_4: The significant and positive relationship between tacit knowledge sharing and innovation capability is mediated by organizational learning.

2.5. The Mediation of Organizational Learning and Explicit Knowledge Sharing

The objective of organizational learning based on the dynamic view of knowledge is to convert tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge and to retain this converted knowledge in organizational memory for access and use by others. Empirical research (e.g., Rao et al., 2018; Meher and Mishra, 2020) has shown that knowledge sharing enhances organizational learning. It has also revealed that organizational learning promotes knowledge sharing to influence firm-level capabilities (Meher et al., 2021). Asbari et al. (2019) found that both tacit and explicit knowledge sharing influence organizational learning to improve employees' innovation potentials. This study did not show how the knowledge-sharing mechanisms interact to influence innovation capabilities at the individual level. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) propose that the sharing of tacit knowledge triggers its codification. More so, organizational learning helps in this codification process, as it seeks to synthesize tacit knowledge explicitly for knowledge retention and use. This means that tacit knowledge sharing may directly or indirectly affect explicit knowledge sharing through organizational learning. Nevertheless, there is limited empirical information on the specific knowledge-sharing mechanism that influences and is influenced by organizational learning.

The study pointed out that organizational learning's ability to continuously improve organizational knowledge through the interplay of individual knowledge bases enhances innovation capabilities. This is especially true when the articulated individual knowledge is associated with creativity and discovery. According to the knowledge-based theory, knowledge is a valuable strategic asset that provides an edge to organizations operating in environments marked by high uncertainty and complexity. Organizations often encourage the sharing of this knowledge in both tacit and explicit forms, necessitating its complementary use to maintain superior performance. However, an organizational system that limits the use of any knowledge dimension may impede effective performance, as they have the roles that they play in enhancing it. For this reason, tacit knowledge sharing should occur within a formal learning process to ensure that it becomes embedded in an organizational knowledge system. The stimulation of organizational learning allows for the careful articulation of knowledge and the effectuation of change to existing knowledge. We anticipate that refining and sharing explicit knowledge will significantly enhance innovation capability. This relational sequence ensures tacit knowledge is utilized and explicit knowledge is enriched for innovation activities. The sequential mediation argument is presented as follows.

H_5: Explicit knowledge sharing is significantly and positively related to innovation capability.
H_6: Organizational learning is significantly and positively related to explicit knowledge sharing.
H_7: The significant and positive relationship between tacit knowledge sharing and innovation capability is sequentially mediated by organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing.

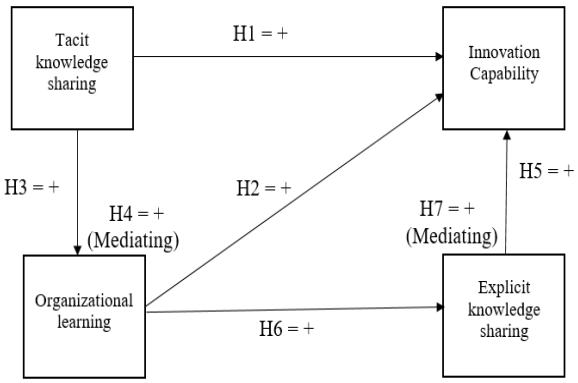

Figure 1: Research Framework
Source: Author's Own (2024)

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample and Data Collection Procedure

This study conducted a cross-sectional survey by obtaining data from employees in the public hospitals in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria. When selecting the sample frame for research of this nature, it is apt to choose organizations that are close to and have ongoing interactions with customers because they are likely sites for innovations. Additionally, it is necessary to include participants from knowledge-intensive organizations because they leverage knowledge to manage different and evolving health challenges. Therefore, knowledge-based activities, such as knowledge sharing, learning, and innovation, may be observable in this setting. A questionnaire based on related studies provided the data for analysis. Given the busy work schedule and limited manpower in the target organizations, the convenient sampling was adopted to select participants who had time to participate in the survey.

The researcher requested the respondents go through the cover letter and read their rights as participants, which included anonymity of response, freedom to exit the survey at any time, and the right to see the results upon request. Before fully administering the questionnaire, the researcher sought consent for voluntary participation. The questionnaire was self-administered and retrieved from November 2024. We received 181 returned questionnaires, with 3 deemed unusable due to missing values. The demographic characteristics of the respondents showed that 112 were males and 66 were females with a mean age and tenure of 39.5 and 15.5 years, respectively. The respondents had at least a graduate degree qualification. The professional background of the respondents revealed that 63 were medical doctors, 77 were nurses, 4 were medical laboratory scientists, 2 were pharmacists, and 32 were in allied health fields.

3.2. Measures

The measurement items were taken from the validated scales of previous investigations and were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The eight questions for tacit knowledge sharing (4 items) and explicit knowledge sharing (4 items) were taken from Wang and Wang (2012). A sample item for tacit knowledge sharing is, “I interact with people in my organization to create a shared or common understanding of a problem.” A sample question for explicit knowledge sharing is, “People in my organization often share existing reports and official documents with members of my organization.” Thomas et al. (2017) provided the four measures for organizational learning. A sample item is, “There is free, open, and constructive communication in my organization.” Grawe, Chen and Daugherty (2009) provided the four measures for innovation capability. One of the sample measures is, "My organization often evaluates and uses ideas that arise from stakeholders' interactions to develop itself."

The questionnaire was pre-tested before its full application to ascertain the ability of scales to capture consistent and desired information. Two management professors and three directors from the target organization ensured the face validity of the questionnaire. Fifteen participants were approached using convenient sampling to complete the questionnaire for the purpose of ascertaining the construct reliability. The results of the Cronbach's alpha test, analyzed using SPSS 20.0 software, showed the following scores: tacit knowledge sharing was 0.897, explicit knowledge sharing was 0.721, organizational learning was 0.836, and innovation quality was 0.880. These scores suggest that the internal consistency among the constructs was acceptable.

3.3. Data Analysis

This study selected the partial least square (PLS) path modeling as the analytical method for hypothesis testing. This approach to structural equation modeling aims to elucidate variance and predict relationships among constructs, especially when there are mediators. It also does not impose any stringent data assumptions and makes use of small sample sizes to achieve stable estimations. This study adhered to the two-step estimation procedure to explain the psychometric properties of the measurement model and simultaneously assess the parameters of the structural model for causal relationships (Yesil et al., 2013). This procedure ensured the constructs’ reliability and validity prior to establishing the linkages among the constructs. The analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4 software. The PLS guidelines suggested in Hair et al. (2022) were applied for data interpretation.

4. Results

Following the procedure previously described in the methodology, the data analysis began with the evaluation of the measurement model. A confirmatory factor analysis was done to find out how tacit knowledge sharing, explicit knowledge sharing, organizational learning, and innovation capability are related to each other and to their specific indicators. This study conducted a preliminary test using SPSS 20 software to assess the data's suitability for factor analysis. This test included the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure (KMO) and Bartlett's test for sphericity (BTS). Tacit knowledge sharing, explicit knowledge sharing, organizational learning, and innovation capability had KMO scores of 0.663, 0.638, 0.760, and 0.705, respectively. These scores exceeded the permissible limit of 0.60, suggesting the adequacy of the sample for factor analysis. Furthermore, their BTS scores were all statistically significant at $p < 0.05$, suggesting that the distribution of the multivariate data is normal and acceptable for factor analysis. Given the KMO and BTS results, the data was considered factorable, allowing for confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 1: Measurement Model Estimations

Latent Constructs		**FL**	**T-Stat**	**CR**	**AVE**	**VIF**
Tacit Knowledge Sharing				0.836	0.651	1.089
1	People in my organization often share their experience, skills, or insights with me when I ask them to.	0.884	75.103			
2	I share my experience, skills, or insights with people in my organization when they ask for it.	0.884	68.116			
3	People in my organization will share lessons from past failures when they feel necessary.	0.917	90.415			
4	I interact with people in my organization to create a shared or common understanding of a problem.	0.862	53.883			
Explicit Knowledge Sharing				0.823	0.685	1.301
6	People in my organization often share existing reports and official documents with members of my organization.	0.861	55.546			
7	People in my organization often share reports and official documents that they prepare by themselves with members of my organization.	0.848	54.291			
8	People in my organization often collect reports and official documents from others in their work.	0.871	61.969			
9	People in my organization are facilitated by IT systems invested for knowledge sharing.	0.887	68.864			

Note: FL = Factor loading, CR = Composite reliability, AVE = Average variance extracted, VIF = Variance inflation factor, $p < 0.05$

Source: Researcher's PLS Computation output (2024).

Table 2: Measurement Model Estimations Cont'd.

Latent Constructs		**FL**	**T-Stat**	**CR**	**AVE**	**VIF**
Organizational Learning				0.796	0.624	1.272
10	My organization encourages and supports creativity and innovation.	0.845	61.113			
11	People in my organization are known for taking risks in the development of new practices, processes, and/or products.	0.837	51.972			
12	We interact with our external environment to collect, disseminate, and use crucial information.	0.813	40.115			
13	There is free, open, and constructive communication in my organization.	0.770	22.250			

Innovation Capability				0.879	0.708	
14	We constantly seek new ways to develop organizational practices, processes, and products	0.747	19.161			
15	Our organization is able to change current practices, processes, and services to adapt to changes in the external environment.	0.717	18.594			
16	Our organization is quick to develop and integrate new ideas into practices, processes, and services.	0.781	25.688			
17	My organization often evaluates and uses ideas that arise from stakeholders' interactions to develop itself.	0.761	23.981			

Note: FL = Factor loading, CR = Composite reliability, AVE = Average variance extracted, VIF = Variance inflation factor, $p < 0.05$

Source: Researcher's PLS Computation output (2024).

Table 1 and 2 presents the results of the measurement model. The factor loadings of the indicators vary from 0.717 to 0.917, which is above the acceptable level of 0.707 for adequate item reliability. Therefore, the indicators related well with the respective latent constructs. Furthermore, the t-values of the indicators revealed that all of them were statistically significant to their respective constructs, as they (t-statistics) exceeded 1.96 (t-table) at a confidence level of 95%. Therefore, the indicators had practical importance to their underlying constructs. The composite reliability scores were above the recommended limit of 0.70 for attaining adequate construct reliability. Satisfactory convergent validity was attained, as the average variance extracted values were above 0.50. This indicates that the constructs' own indicators can explain at least 50% of their variability. The variance inflation factor is a test for multicollinearity. The results show that the values were not above 5.0, which suggests the absence of a significant multicollinearity problem due to highly correlated constructs.

Table 3: Fornell-Larcker criterion

Latent Constructs	**Discriminant Validity**			
	1	2	3	4
1. Explicit knowledge sharing	**0.772**			
2. Innovation capability	0.136	**0.783**		
3. Organizational learning	0.293	0.285	**0.745**	
4. Tacit knowledge sharing	0.170	0.226	0.301	**0.756**

Source: Researcher's PLS Computation output (2024).

Table 3 presents the discriminant validity results using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The results show that the correlations of each construct (the diagonal scores) were greater than their inter-construct correlations (the off-diagonal scores). Thus, the constructs were unrelated to each other. The results from the measurement model in Tables 1 and 2 showed acceptable scores, meeting the quality criteria for validity and reliability. Therefore, the statistical inferences made can be considered reliable and valid.

Table 4: Structural Model Results

Paths	β (*p*-value) Model 1	β (*p*-value) Model 2	β (*p*-value) Model 3	Remark
1. TKS→IC	0.107 (0.048)	0.105 (0.067)	0.105 (0.067)	Accept
2. OL →IC	0.434 (0.000)	0.434 (0.000)	0.434 (0.000)	Accept
3. TKS→OL		0.283 (0.000)	0.283 (0.000)	Accept
4. TKS→ OL →IC		0.103 (0.014)	0.102 (0.039)	Accept
5. EKS →IC			0.227 (0.000)	Accept
6. OL →EKS			0.250 (0.000)	Accept
7. TKS→ OL →EKS →IC			0.097 (0.038)	Accept
R^2	0.432	0.494	0.506	Moderate
SRMR	0.075	0.073	0.070	Good fit

Note. TKS = Tacit knowledge sharing; OL = Organizational learnng; IC = Innovation capability; EKS = Explicit knowledge sharing; $p < 0.05$
Source: Researcher's PLS Computation output (2024).

Table 4 shows the structural model results based on the path coefficients and p-values. The study applied the bootstrapping technique using 5000 subsamples to determine the significance of the path coefficients. The PLS results showed that both tacit knowledge sharing (β = 0.107, p < 0.05) and organizational learning (β = 0.434, p < 0.05) were significantly and positively related to innovation capability, which supports H_1 and H_2. Furthermore, tacit knowledge sharing was found to be positively and significantly related to organizational learning (β = 0.283, p < 0.05), lending support to H_3. The role of organizational learning as a mediator was examined, and the results showed that it significantly and positively mediated the relationship between tacit knowledge sharing and innovation capability (β = 0.103, p < 0.05), which validates H_4. The mediation type was deemed to be full because the relationship between tacit knowledge sharing and innovation capability became insignificant (β = 0.105, p > 0.05). The model incorporated explicit knowledge sharing to determine the causal sequence by which tacit knowledge sharing affects innovation capability through multiple intervening factors. In this sequential mediation framework, organizational learning acts as a precursor of explicit knowledge sharing. The results indicated that explicit knowledge sharing had a significant and positive relationship with organizational learning (β = 0.250, p < 0.05) and innovation capability (β = 0.227, p < 0.05), validating the acceptance of H_5 and H_6. The sequential mediation estimates (β = 0.097, p < 0.05) demonstrated support for H_7, which states that the significant and positive relationship between tacit knowledge sharing and innovation capability is sequentially mediated by organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing.

The predictive quality of the model was assessed based on the R^2 and standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR). The R^2 result showed that the link between tacit knowledge sharing, organizational learning, and explicit knowledge sharing accounted for 50.6% of the changes in innovation capability, suggesting a moderate explanatory power (Chin, Peterson and Brown, 2008). The introduction of a mediating pathways improved the predictive power of tacit knowledge sharing on innovation by 0.062 points in model 2. This was improved further by 0.012 points in model 3. The SRMR assesses the model fitness, with values below 0.08 denoting a good fit. An SRMR value of 0.065 indicates that the model fit is satisfactory.

4. Discussion

The study found tacit knowledge sharing enhances the innovation capability of these public organizations. This finding agrees with earlier research that reported a positive and significant association between both concepts. Because the problem context facing these organizations could be evolving in an unpredictable manner, personal experiences,

observations, and insights as one interacts in the workplace may prove useful in generating practical solutions. It is important that organizations incorporate tacit knowledge to improve their capabilities for solving problems that are not yet comprehensively understood or explicitly defined. Some public organizations do provide opportunities for the sharing of tacit insight for collective and effective action. This often occurs through certain socialization processes, such as meetings, face-to-face discussions, public forums, training, seminars, conferences, and workshops (Ononye, 2022). However, for shared tacit knowledge to generate more value, organizations should set up learning mechanisms to acquire, integrate, and retain this knowledge in organizational memory for use by others in the future. This is important for organizations that prioritize the use of explicit knowledge to facilitate innovative work. By making unknown (or hidden) knowledge known, they can achieve some form of stability, predictability, and control. The study found that the innovation benefit or potential of tacit knowledge sharing is fully activated when organizational learning is taking place. This finding aligns with previous research (Liao and Wu, 2010; Abdi et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2018; Asbari et al., 2019) that found knowledge sharing enhances organizational learning to improve innovation. It equally extends this research by focusing on the share of a specific dimension of knowledge—tacit knowledge.

The research also found that explicit knowledge sharing and organizational learning mediated the link between tacit knowledge sharing and innovation capability. Previous research (e.g., Rao et al., 2018; Asbari et al., 2019; Meher & Mishra, 2022; Meher et al., 2022) has shown that there is a significant and positive relationship among the constructs, but no study has demonstrated the relational sequence in a sequential mediation framework. This represents an original contribution to existing knowledge. These organizations significantly benefit from tacit knowledge sharing when they articulate and codify relevant and useful tacit particulars through learning. Tacit knowledge sharing should be situated within a formal learning context to foster its retention, transfer, and application. By codifying the tacit insights that come with discovery and creativity, these organizations are better able to come up with new ways to meet changing needs and expectations of the public. In this organizational setting, tacit knowledge sharing enriches the explicit knowledge shared among employees for problem-solving. Based on the arguments in the knowledge-based theory, this makes sure that knowledge is used in the best way possible to gain innovation and performance advantages in environments that are always changing and becoming more complex.

5. Conclusion, Recommendations, and Areas for Further Research

This study examined tacit knowledge sharing's direct and indirect relationships with innovation capability, focusing on organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing as mediating factors in a sequential framework. The study collected cross-sectional data from 178 employees of public hospitals in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria, using a structured questionnaire. The partial least squares technique was used to analyze the data. The study found that tacit knowledge sharing is significantly and positively related to innovation capability. However, organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing fully and sequentially mediate this relationship. In conclusion, tacit knowledge sharing is important for innovation, but organizations, especially those rooted in public bureaucracy, will benefit more when they create an environment that encourages continuous learning. The acquisition of practical insights from the creative tension of individual knowledge bases enhances explicit knowledge. The sharing of this explicit knowledge conveys a new understanding, which improves organizational capacity to come up with something new and of public value.

The study recommends that public organizations can enhance innovation capability by leveraging the tacit knowledge of employees via its sharing. However, to optimize the use

of this valuable knowledge resource, they need to activate organizational learning processes to facilitate the codification, transfer, retention, and application of tacit knowledge. This integration can improve explicit knowledge sharing, as explicit knowledge evolves to support new and expansive thinking patterns for effective action. The centrality of organizational learning and explicit knowledge sharing is crucial because this organization utilizes structured knowledge to get things done. Thus, their development can help in the structuring of tacit knowledge for use across the organization.

Future research may extend the applicability of this study to other public service organizations, as the study concentrated on public hospitals. Studies should also expand the geographic regions to improve the generality of the results. Although the use of convenient sampling may be justified due to the tight work schedule of employees in public hospitals, it is important to extend this research for more reliable and representative insights. The study observed that the framework comprising tacit knowledge sharing, organizational learning, and explicit knowledge sharing moderately explained the variations in innovation capability. This means that there are other factors not included in this study that could improve its predictive power. It would be worthwhile for future research to identify and evaluate these factors. In this context, we should take into account the concept of knowledge management and its related activities. The study made use of cross-sectional data, which can be flawed with the issue of common method bias; future studies can examine the causality better when they make use of longitudinal data.

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