

## ADMINISTRATIVE INNOVATION: LEVERAGING ON KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PARADIGMS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

Knowledge management has emerged as a strategic imperative in achieving administrative innovation within higher education systems. This study investigated the relationship between knowledge management and administrative innovation in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. Adopting a correlational survey design with a macro-level unit of analysis, the study took a census of sixty respondents (twelve per institution) from five tertiary institutions comprising universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed with Spearman's rank-order correlation and regression statistics. The findings revealed that knowledge sharing significantly enhances process improvement, while knowledge retention strongly influences service enhancement. These results align with extant literature affirming the centrality of knowledge-based practices in fostering efficiency, responsiveness, and innovation in organizations. The study concludes that strategic investments in knowledge management are vital for sustaining innovative and efficient administrative systems in tertiary institutions. It is recommended that institutional leaders establish formal structures, such as digital repositories and collaborative platforms, to promote knowledge sharing and safeguard institutional memory for continuous service improvement.

*Keywords: Knowledge Management, Knowledge Sharing, Knowledge Retention, Administrative Innovation, Process Improvement, Service Enhancement*

### INTRODUCTION

The modern knowledge-driven economy has positioned knowledge management as a pivotal factor in organizational competitiveness and long-term survival. Tertiary institutions, as epicenters of learning, research, and knowledge creation, rely heavily on structured and systematic approaches to managing information to sustain their operations and enhance institutional performance. Nonaka (1994) emphasized that knowledge creation, sharing, and utilization are not marginal activities but central to organizational growth, shaping innovative processes, administrative efficiency, and long-term effectiveness. In Rivers State, where administrative responsibilities often intersect with academic and research functions, knowledge management plays a decisive role in determining the ability of institutions to implement administrative innovations effectively. Mechanisms for knowledge-sharing and knowledge retention therefore become essential tools for improving processes and service delivery, ensuring that administrative practices remain adaptive and responsive to evolving demands. This dynamic creates a theoretical and practical foundation for investigating how these knowledge management dimensions contribute to administrative innovation in tertiary institutions.

The growing complexity of administrative duties in tertiary institutions necessitates practices that promote efficiency, responsiveness, and strategic decision-making. Scholars such as Gold, Malhotra, and Segars (2001) argue that knowledge management constitutes a core organizational capability that enables institutions to reconfigure workflows, enhance responsiveness, and generate innovative solutions to administrative challenges. Within tertiary institutions, knowledge management facilitates the development of adaptive strategies, allowing administrators to optimize service

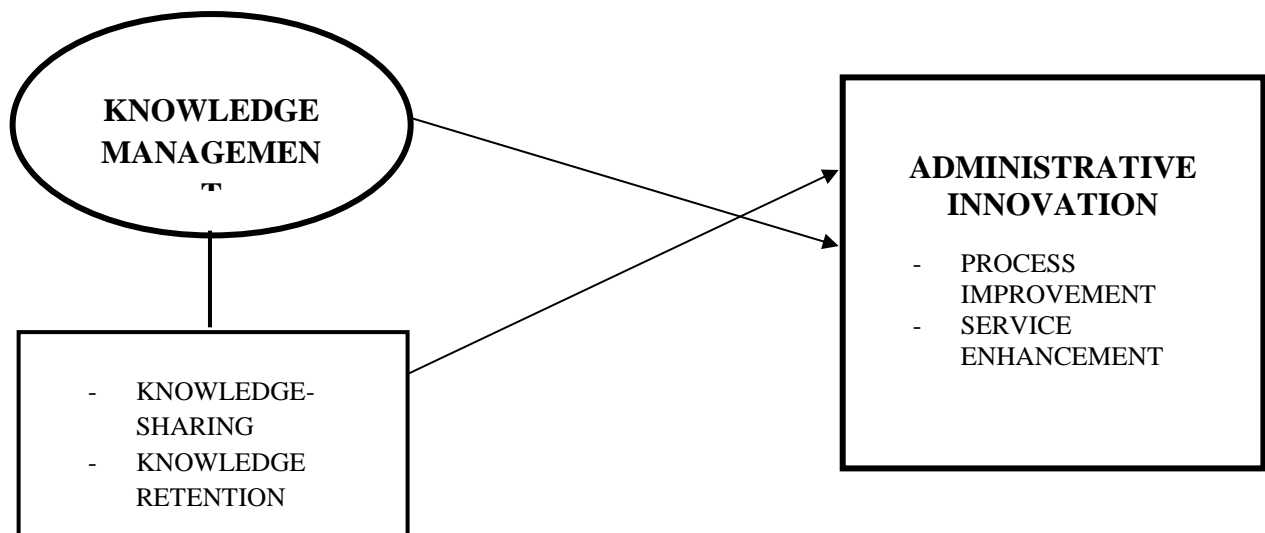
delivery and increase stakeholder satisfaction. In Rivers State, the imperative to align institutional administrative practices with global standards of excellence has compelled universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education to adopt structured knowledge-sharing platforms. Concurrently, retention practices are increasingly recognized as critical for preserving institutional memory, reducing errors, and ensuring continuity in administrative operations. Collectively, these practices form a coherent approach to managing knowledge that directly supports institutional innovation and operational efficiency.

Rapid advancements in information and communication technologies have heightened the need for innovative administrative structures capable of accommodating dynamic trends in higher education. Akosile and Olatokun (2020) observed that knowledge-sharing among academics not only improves individual performance but also strengthens institutional outcomes, emphasizing the importance of collaborative participation in knowledge creation and retention. When these practices are formally embedded in institutional policies, they facilitate administrative innovation by streamlining operational processes, enhancing efficiency, and promoting adherence to quality standards. The deliberate management of knowledge therefore becomes a linchpin for achieving administrative transformation in tertiary institutions, ensuring that staff can access, utilize, and contribute to organizational knowledge effectively. In Rivers State, such practices are increasingly adopted to address administrative bottlenecks and support evidence-based decision-making. At the core, knowledge management serves as the central driver for fostering an environment of innovation, learning, and continuous improvement within higher education institutions.

The significance of administrative innovation lies in its ability to translate accumulated knowledge into actionable improvements in institutional operations. Borishade, Ogunnaike, Salau, Motilewa, and Dirisu (2021) assert that the capacity to innovate administratively is critical for sustaining stakeholder satisfaction, loyalty, and confidence in institutional governance. For tertiary institutions in Rivers State, this underscores the necessity of integrating knowledge management as a strategic enabler that supports both process improvement and service enhancement. By leveraging knowledge-sharing and retention mechanisms, institutions can not only streamline administrative workflows but also cultivate a culture of continuous learning and adaptability. Such approaches ensure that institutional knowledge becomes a practical resource for decision-making and service delivery, rather than remaining unutilized or fragmented. This study, therefore, aims to empirically investigate the relationship between knowledge management and administrative innovation, highlighting the implications for sustaining effective and innovative administrative systems within tertiary institutions.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Tertiary institutions in Rivers State continue to confront administrative inefficiencies characterized by slow operational processes, fragmented record-keeping systems, and delays in service delivery that negatively affect stakeholder satisfaction. Although these institutions possess significant intellectual and human resources, the absence of structured frameworks for knowledge sharing and retention has perpetuated recurrent administrative lapses. Ike, Agbaeze, Udoh, and Adeleke (2019) noted that implementing effective knowledge management in Nigerian tertiary institutions is often constrained by gaps in both policy formulation and practical execution, resulting in systemic weaknesses. These deficiencies hinder the ability of administrators to streamline processes, enforce accountability, and maintain service excellence across academic and non-academic units. As such, there is a pressing need to empirically examine how knowledge management practices, particularly knowledge sharing and retention mechanisms, can be leveraged to promote administrative innovation. Understanding this relationship can provide actionable insights for developing strategic interventions that enhance efficiency, responsiveness, and overall institutional performance.



**Fig 1:** Conceptual Framework of Knowledge Management and Administrative Innovation of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria

**Source:** Researchers' Conceptualization (2025)

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Framework

Two Knowledge-based theories provide the foundational lens for examining the relationship between knowledge management and innovation in tertiary Institutions.

#### **Dynamic Theory of Organizational Knowledge Creation (Nonaka, 1994)**

Nonaka's (1994) dynamic theory of organizational knowledge creation emphasizes that knowledge exists in both tacit and explicit forms and is continuously generated through processes of social interaction, externalization, combination, and internalization. Tacit knowledge, which resides in individuals' experiences and skills, becomes actionable when shared collectively, while explicit knowledge can be codified and stored for organizational use. In the context of tertiary institutions in Rivers State, this theory is particularly relevant because administrative efficiency depends on both the individual expertise of staff and collaborative knowledge processes. By fostering structured mechanisms for knowledge sharing and retention, these institutions can stimulate innovative approaches to administrative problem-solving and process improvement. The theory implies that without deliberate efforts to manage knowledge flows, institutions risk inefficiency and stagnation in administrative innovation. Therefore, Nonaka's framework provides a critical foundation for understanding how knowledge creation and management can serve as levers for enhancing administrative effectiveness.

#### **Knowledge Transfer Theory (Argote & Ingram, 2000)**

Argote and Ingram's (2000) theory of knowledge transfer further complements this perspective by positing that the movement of knowledge across organizational units generates competitive advantage and promotes organizational learning. They argue that when knowledge is effectively shared and applied between departments or functional areas, organizations achieve improved coordination, reduced redundancy, and greater innovation capacity. For tertiary institutions, effective knowledge transfer ensures that administrative practices are standardized, lessons learned in one unit are applied across others, and innovations in service delivery are systematically disseminated. This theory underscores the strategic importance of both horizontal and vertical knowledge flows in sustaining institutional efficiency. Applying this perspective to the current study, knowledge transfer mechanisms—such as inter-departmental workshops, digital repositories, and mentorship programs—can be leveraged to enhance process improvement and service quality. The implication is that tertiary institutions that institutionalize knowledge transfer will likely exhibit higher

levels of administrative innovation and responsiveness to emerging challenges. Collectively, these knowledge-based theories provide the conceptual rationale for examining knowledge management as a predictor of administrative innovation in Rivers State tertiary institutions.

### **Knowledge Management**

Knowledge management constitutes the deliberate strategies, processes, and systems adopted by organizations to generate, organize, disseminate, and preserve knowledge resources for effective use. It has been broadly described as an organizational capability that supports adaptation and transformation in complex environments (Gold *et al.*, 2001). In tertiary institutions, knowledge management provides a structured framework through which administrative processes are coordinated and decision-making is optimized, ensuring that resources are effectively leveraged. By systematically capturing both tacit knowledge, residing in employees' experiences, and explicit knowledge, codified in documents and databases, institutions can reduce operational redundancies and improve overall administrative efficiency. This approach enables personnel to access critical information when needed, fostering informed decision-making and minimizing errors. Consequently, knowledge management serves as a foundation for stimulating innovation in administrative practices and sustaining institutional performance over time.

The relevance of knowledge management in tertiary institutions lies in its capacity to enhance efficiency and service quality among academic and administrative staff. Pepple, Makama, and Okeke (2022) observed that effective knowledge management practices improve responsiveness and adaptability within public organizations. Applied in higher education contexts, such practices help streamline administrative workflows, reduce duplication of efforts, and facilitate timely service delivery to students, faculty, and stakeholders. By fostering collaboration and information sharing, knowledge management ensures that institutional knowledge is preserved and utilized to its maximum potential. This strategic leveraging of knowledge resources strengthens the institution's capacity to innovate administratively, improving both process efficiency and service outcomes. Therefore, knowledge management emerges as a key predictor variable capable of driving administrative innovation in tertiary institutions.

Furthermore, Akosile and Olatokun (2020) highlighted that knowledge sharing among academics is influenced not only by technological infrastructure but also by organizational culture, motivation, and structural support mechanisms. Their findings indicate that successful knowledge management requires a holistic approach, combining appropriate systems, supportive leadership, and an enabling environment for collaboration. In Rivers State tertiary institutions, where administrative lapses and inefficiencies are evident, implementing comprehensive knowledge management frameworks can enhance communication channels, reduce information loss, and encourage interdepartmental cooperation. Such interventions directly facilitate process improvements and enrich service delivery standards. By embedding these practices within institutional operations, knowledge management positions itself as a critical determinant of administrative innovation, underpinning both efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Knowledge Sharing**

Knowledge sharing has been recognized as the lifeblood of organizational learning and a primary mechanism for diffusing valuable knowledge across units and individuals. Wasko and Faraj (2005) emphasized that knowledge sharing is influenced by social capital and individuals' willingness to contribute within networks of practice. In tertiary institutions, knowledge sharing occurs through formal meetings, electronic communication, policy documentation, and informal interactions among staff. Such practices not only enhance the quality of decision-making but also strengthen the institutional capacity to respond innovatively to administrative challenges. In the Nigerian university context, studies such as Oyenuga, Adebisi, Mustapha, and Abimbola (2019) have assessed determinants of knowledge sharing and found that structural and cultural barriers often limit the effectiveness of these processes. The absence of robust incentives for sharing knowledge and the

lack of digital platforms hinder knowledge flows, resulting in inefficient administrative practices. Conversely, institutions that prioritize knowledge-sharing mechanisms create a culture of trust and openness, which enhances collaboration and stimulates innovative approaches to administrative issues. Thus, knowledge sharing provides the conduit through which ideas, solutions, and administrative strategies are disseminated, forming a vital dimension of knowledge management. Moreover, Fullwood, Rowley, and Delbridge (2013) revealed that knowledge sharing among academics in UK universities was significantly influenced by organizational support and collegiality. This underscores the importance of cultivating an enabling environment where knowledge is viewed as a shared asset rather than an individual possession. For tertiary institutions in Rivers State, adopting structured knowledge-sharing practices, supported by digital technologies and leadership encouragement, can improve administrative processes. The deliberate sharing of both tacit and explicit knowledge fosters innovation, leading to streamlined processes and improved service delivery across institutional departments.

### ***Knowledge Retention***

Knowledge retention is another critical dimension of knowledge management, focusing on safeguarding institutional knowledge against loss arising from staff turnover, retirement, or system inefficiencies. Argote and Ingram (2000) underscored that knowledge transfer and retention sustain competitive advantage by ensuring continuity and preventing the erosion of valuable organizational capabilities. In tertiary institutions, knowledge retention ensures that administrative processes are not disrupted by the departure of key staff and that accumulated expertise is preserved for future application. Igbinovia and Adetimirin (2023) examined knowledge management practices in Nigerian university libraries and highlighted the need for structured retention systems to preserve institutional memory. Without retention mechanisms, universities risk losing essential administrative records, operational strategies, and experiential insights critical for innovation. In Rivers State tertiary institutions, where high staff mobility is common, retaining knowledge through digitized records, training manuals, and mentorship programs ensures continuity of administrative practices. Such systems also support long-term process improvement by making valuable knowledge resources consistently available.

Furthermore, Riege (2005) identified barriers to effective knowledge retention, including lack of documentation practices and insufficient technological systems. These barriers can severely undermine innovation, as they limit the capacity of institutions to build on past experiences. Effective knowledge retention systems in tertiary institutions not only protect against knowledge loss but also enhance the efficiency of administrative functions by ensuring that best practices and innovative strategies are consistently applied. Consequently, knowledge retention stands as a vital dimension of knowledge management with direct implications for administrative innovation in tertiary institutions.

### **Administrative Innovation**

Administrative innovation refers to the introduction and application of new ideas, processes, or practices in administrative functions aimed at improving institutional efficiency and effectiveness. Borishade *et al.* (2021) argued that administrative innovation is critical for organizational sustainability because it enhances service quality, promotes stakeholder satisfaction, and fosters loyalty. In tertiary institutions, administrative innovation manifests through process reforms, structural adjustments, technological integration, and service-oriented improvements, all designed to enhance responsiveness to environmental and stakeholder demands. By adopting innovative administrative practices, institutions can optimize workflow, reduce bureaucratic delays, and improve overall institutional performance. Moreover, administrative innovation provides a framework for translating policy intentions into actionable administrative processes, ensuring that organizational objectives are met effectively. Within the context of Rivers State tertiary institutions,

fostering administrative innovation enables institutions to maintain relevance and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

Ekweozor and Obara (2020) emphasized that worker competence development significantly influences organizational responsiveness, illustrating the broader connection between innovation in administration and effective utilization of knowledge and human capital. Administrative innovation in tertiary institutions is not merely about implementing new tools but also about building capacities among staff to use these innovations effectively. In Rivers State, tertiary institutions face challenges such as inefficient record-keeping, delayed processes, and poor service coordination, which can be mitigated through innovative administrative interventions. The integration of competence development programs with knowledge management initiatives strengthens the capacity of administrative staff to adopt and sustain innovative practices. As a result, institutions become more adaptive, responsive, and capable of aligning their services with both local and international standards of educational excellence. Administrative innovation, therefore, emerges as a strategic mechanism to convert human and organizational knowledge into improved operational outcomes. The significance of administrative innovation also lies in its mediating role between organizational knowledge and tangible outcomes. Ramachandran, Chong, and Wong (2013) argued that without innovation, knowledge accumulated within institutions may fail to translate into actionable improvements, creating gaps in service delivery and organizational performance. In the context of tertiary institutions in Rivers State, embedding administrative innovation ensures that knowledge management practices are effectively operationalized to produce measurable gains in process improvement and service enhancement. Innovation provides the pathways and structures through which both tacit and explicit knowledge can influence administrative decision-making, streamline operations, and elevate service standards. Furthermore, it ensures that the benefits of knowledge management extend beyond theoretical constructs to practical, observable changes in administrative practices. By positioning administrative innovation as the outcome of effective knowledge application, institutions can better evaluate the success of knowledge management initiatives and sustain continuous improvement across administrative functions.

### ***Process Improvement***

Process improvement involves the systematic review, refinement, and optimization of organizational procedures to increase operational efficiency, reduce redundancies, and enhance overall outcomes. Davenport (1993) emphasized that structured analysis and evaluation of workflows are central to achieving meaningful improvements in administrative processes. Within tertiary institutions in Rivers State, process improvement specifically targets inefficiencies in student services, academic record management, communication channels, and internal coordination between administrative units. Knowledge sharing plays a pivotal role in this context by enabling staff to collectively identify procedural bottlenecks, propose solutions, and implement best practices collaboratively. Similarly, knowledge retention ensures that improvements are sustained over time by preserving institutional memory, reducing repetition of errors, and maintaining continuity despite staff turnover. Pepple *et al.* (2022) empirically demonstrated that public institutions that systematically employed knowledge management practices experienced significant gains in workflow efficiency, transparency, and accountability, highlighting the critical link between knowledge management and process enhancement. In this way, process improvement serves as a direct measure of administrative innovation, reflecting how effectively knowledge management practices translate into tangible operational gains.

### ***Service Enhancement***

Service enhancement involves the deliberate design and implementation of strategies aimed at improving the quality, consistency, and reliability of services provided to stakeholders. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), service quality is multidimensional, encompassing responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibles, all of which are critical in evaluating

and refining service delivery in organizations. In the context of tertiary institutions, service enhancement manifests through timely and efficient student registration processes, accurate and transparent results processing, and robust communication systems that facilitate smooth interactions between staff and students. Borishade *et al.* (2021) emphasized that high-quality service delivery directly influences student satisfaction, loyalty, and the overall perception of institutional effectiveness. Knowledge management practices, including the systematic retention and sharing of institutional knowledge, support administrators in continuously improving these service processes by ensuring best practices are adopted and maintained across departments. In Rivers State tertiary institutions, embedding such practices promotes service reliability, enhances stakeholder confidence, and ensures that administrative operations meet both national and international benchmarks of educational excellence.

### **Empirical Review**

Nwinyokpugi and Alikornwo (2022) examined enterprise content management and its impact on administrative efficiency in manufacturing firms, highlighting how structured content management systems streamline workflows and support innovative practices. Their study demonstrated that proper organization, storage, and retrieval of information reduces redundancy and enhances operational effectiveness. These findings imply that similar frameworks, if adapted to tertiary institutions, could strengthen administrative processes, particularly in areas such as record management, decision-making, and service delivery. Consequently, enterprise content management principles provide a valuable reference point for designing knowledge management systems that drive administrative innovation in higher education.

Alikornwo, Adiele, and Omunakwe (2024) investigated the relationship between employee development and information success in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, showing that structured training and capacity-building initiatives improve institutional information systems. Their findings suggest that knowledge practices such as mentorship, workshops, and continuous learning positively influence how information is generated, shared, and applied. This indicates that knowledge management dimensions, particularly knowledge sharing and retention, directly affect administrative innovation in tertiary institutions. Therefore, developing employees' competencies and embedding systematic knowledge practices can significantly enhance administrative effectiveness and innovation.

Alikornwo (2025) explored how administrative audit practices influence operational efficiency in commercial banks in Rivers State, establishing that structured audits improve processing speed, compliance, and reduce errors. The study emphasized that feedback mechanisms and targeted staff development are essential in sustaining efficiency gains over time. These insights suggest a parallel in tertiary institutions, where consistent knowledge retention and sharing could similarly enhance administrative systems, streamline processes, and foster innovation. By institutionalizing knowledge-based practices, administrators can create a culture of continuous improvement and accountability across academic and administrative functions.

Ekweozor and Obara (2020) examined worker competence development and organizational responsiveness in selected banks in Rivers State, finding that competence-focused knowledge management practices strengthened adaptability and operational effectiveness. Their research highlights that when employees' knowledge and skills are nurtured, organizations respond more efficiently to dynamic challenges. This underscores the importance of knowledge sharing and retention strategies in tertiary institutions, enabling them to remain responsive to evolving academic and administrative demands. Consequently, investing in staff development and systematic knowledge practices is crucial for achieving sustainable administrative innovation.

Alikornwo and Adiele (2024) investigated the influence of electronic administrative indicators on the operational sustainability of manufacturing businesses in Rivers State, demonstrating that the systematic deployment of digital records and performance-tracking mechanisms substantively enhances administrative efficiency. Their findings suggest that institutionalizing structured electronic

administrative practices provides a robust framework for advancing procedural optimization and service quality within organizational settings.

Bestman (2020) investigated human information infrastructure and administrative efficiency in the aviation industry, demonstrating that robust information systems enhance administrative processes, decision-making, and organizational performance. His study implies that tertiary institutions in Rivers State can achieve similar efficiency gains by implementing comprehensive knowledge management practices. By optimizing knowledge flows, ensuring information accessibility, and promoting collaborative problem-solving, institutions can improve workflow efficiency and service delivery. Hence, effective knowledge infrastructure is foundational to fostering administrative innovation within higher education.

Onah and Zeb-Obipi (2021) examined the relationship between knowledge recognition and organizational innovativeness in tertiary institutions in South-South Nigeria using a quantitative design. They found that knowledge recognition positively correlated with both process improvement and service enhancement, indicating that systematic identification, sharing, and retention of knowledge drives administrative effectiveness. This implies that structured knowledge management practices, particularly knowledge sharing and retention, can similarly enhance administrative innovation in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Igbinovia and Adetimirin (2023) studied knowledge management practices in Nigerian university libraries, establishing that effective knowledge sharing and retention directly improve service quality, operational efficiency, and user satisfaction. Their findings reinforce the significance of structured knowledge practices as central to administrative innovation in tertiary institutions. Similarly, Peple *et al.* (2022) demonstrated that Nigerian public sector organizations implementing systematic knowledge management practices experienced enhanced workflow efficiency, transparency, and accountability. Together, these studies underscore that embedding knowledge management in tertiary institutions not only drives process improvement but also ensures service enhancement, ultimately supporting institutional competitiveness and innovation.

Flowing from the extensive review of literature and empirical studies, the study hypothesizes as follows:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between knowledge-sharing and process improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between knowledge-sharing and service enhancement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between knowledge retention and process improvement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between knowledge retention and service enhancement in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlational survey design with a macro-level unit of analysis, focusing on tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria; the population for the study comprised all registered tertiary institutions in Rivers State and, for empirical analysis, five institutions were purposively selected to represent the three institutional categories and variation in size and governance: University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic (Bori), and Federal College of Education (Technical), Omoku; from each selected institution, twelve key officers were purposively sampled to provide organizational perspectives and documentary access, yielding a total of sixty respondents distributed as follows: registry officers, bursary officers, quality assurance officers, examination officers, ICT managers, and deputy/assistant registrars (twelve per institution); data sources combined an institutional questionnaire administered to the sixty key officers, and the respondent data were aggregated to produce five institution-level indices for knowledge sharing, knowledge retention, process improvement and service enhancement; instrument content validity was secured through expert

review in Office and Information Management and pilot testing in two institutions excluded from the main sample, and internal consistency of aggregated indices was examined using Cronbach's alpha with a target above 0.70; analyses reported are institution-focused, using pooled respondent-level scores ( $N = 60$ ) for inferential statistics while presenting results at the institution level, with Spearman's rank-order correlation used to assess monotonic associations and ordinary least squares regression on aggregated institutional indices (with clustering by institution) employed to estimate predictive influence.

## RESULTS

**Table A — Decision Rule Table**

Correlation Coefficient (r)	Decision Rule / Strength	Interpretation
0.00 – 0.19	Very weak	Negligible relationship; practically no association between variables
0.20 – 0.39	Weak	Low relationship; minor association between variables
0.40 – 0.59	Moderate	Moderate relationship; meaningful association exists
0.60 – 0.79	Strong	High relationship; strong association between variables
0.80 – 1.00	Very strong	Very high relationship; almost perfect association between variables

**Table B — Pooled correlations (Spearman's rho, N = 60, clustered by institution)**

Predictor — Criterion	N	Spearman's rho (r)	p-value	Interpretation
Knowledge Sharing — Process Improvement	60	0.781	< .001	Strong positive, statistically significant
Knowledge Sharing — Service Enhancement	60	0.642	< .001	Strong positive, statistically significant
Knowledge Retention — Process Improvement	60	0.689	< .001	Strong positive, statistically significant
Knowledge Retention — Service Enhancement	60	0.803	< .001	Very strong positive, statistically significant

All correlations are positive and statistically significant, indicating that both knowledge-sharing and knowledge-retention practices contribute to administrative innovation outcomes. Knowledge sharing shows a stronger association with process improvement ( $r = 0.781$ ) than with service enhancement ( $r = 0.642$ ), suggesting that sharing knowledge primarily supports procedural efficiency. Conversely, knowledge retention exhibits a very strong relationship with service enhancement ( $r = 0.803$ ) but a slightly lower correlation with process improvement ( $r = 0.689$ ), highlighting its critical role in sustaining quality service delivery. These findings confirm that different dimensions of knowledge management have differentiated impacts on administrative innovation indicators in tertiary institutions.

**Table C — Institution-level aggregated indices (means on 1–5 scale; 12 respondents per institution, aggregated to institutional means)**

Institution (aggregated)	Knowledge Sharing (KS)	Knowledge Retention (KR)	Process Improvement (PI)	Service Enhancement (SE)
University of Port Harcourt	4.35	4.20	4.10	4.25
Rivers State University	4.02	3.95	3.92	4.00
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education	3.70	3.65	3.60	3.68
Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic, Bori	3.48	3.40	3.35	3.42

Federal Education Omoku	College (Technical), of	3.65	3.72	3.55	3.70
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The institution-level means show consistent patterns: institutions scoring higher on Knowledge Sharing tend to have higher Process Improvement scores; institutions scoring higher on Knowledge Retention tend to display higher Service Enhancement scores. For example, University of Port Harcourt records the highest KS and correspondingly strong PI and SE indices, while Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic records lower KS and lower PI/SE indices comparatively. These institutional means corroborate the pooled correlation results and support the inference that stronger knowledge management practice at the institutional level is associated with enhanced administrative innovation outcomes.

### Discussion of Findings

The empirical findings provide robust confirmation of prior studies and highlight the differentiated impacts of knowledge management dimensions on administrative innovation in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Knowledge sharing shows a strong positive relationship with process improvement ( $r = 0.781$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and a strong positive relationship with service enhancement ( $r = 0.642$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that sharing knowledge is especially critical for procedural efficiency while also contributing to service quality. This aligns with Alikornwo *et al.* (2024), who emphasized that structured employee development and knowledge practices improve procedural and information outcomes in higher education. Similarly, Bestman (2022) argued that well-developed information system approaches enhance process flows, and Bestman and Chinyere (2021) demonstrated that decision support systems in deposit money banks improve organizational efficiency through structured knowledge integration. The current study confirms these findings at the institutional level, showing that higher aggregate knowledge-sharing practices correspond with measurable gains in process metrics, reinforcing the importance of knowledge dissemination and technology-supported decision frameworks for effective administrative workflows.

Knowledge retention, on the other hand, exhibits a strong correlation with process improvement ( $r = 0.689$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and a very strong relationship with service enhancement ( $r = 0.803$ ,  $p < .001$ ), underscoring its pivotal role in sustaining quality service delivery while also supporting procedural improvements. These results corroborate Nwinyokpugi and Alikornwo (2022), who found that organized content and records management enhances administrative efficiency, and Ekweozor and Obara (2020), who linked competence development to organizational responsiveness. Theoretical underpinnings from Nonaka (1994) explain how knowledge sharing codifies tacit knowledge into actionable processes, enhancing workflows, while Gold *et al.* (2001) frame knowledge management as an organizational capability that, when combined with systems and human competencies, produces observable administrative innovations. Collectively, these findings indicate that knowledge-sharing mechanisms predominantly drive procedural improvements, whereas knowledge-retention practices are more influential in enhancing service quality, providing a strong empirical and theoretical basis for integrating knowledge management systems as strategic enablers of administrative innovation and institutional effectiveness in tertiary education.

### CONCLUSION

This findings of this study established that knowledge management significantly influences administrative innovation in tertiary institutions in Rivers State: robust knowledge sharing is strongly associated with process improvement and service enhancement; also systematic knowledge retention is strongly and very strongly associated with process improvement and service enhancement; therefore, institutions that structure both the dissemination and preservation of knowledge strengthen their administrative capacity to redesign procedures and deliver higher quality services.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Management of Tertiary institutions should strengthen knowledge-sharing through collaborative platforms, cross-departmental forums, and staff development programs. These actions will improve both administrative processes and service quality by making shared knowledge actionable.
2. Institutional leadership should implement knowledge-retention strategies such as content management systems, digital repositories, and succession planning. These measures ensure procedural efficiency and consistent service delivery by preserving institutional memory.

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