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PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE NEXUS WITH THRIVING AT WORK AS A MEDIATING FACTOR IN A PUBLIC ORGANIZATION CONTEXT

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between personal knowledge management and employee performance by accounting for the mediational effect of thriving at work. The study used a cross-sectional survey to obtain data from 204 academic staff randomly sampled from state-owned universities in Delta State, Nigeria. The partial least squares method was applied to treat and analyze the data collected with the help of SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis revealed that knowledge sharing, creation, and acquisition were positively and significantly related to employee performance. Furthermore, the mediation role of thriving was also confirmed. In conclusion, personal knowledge management activities comprising knowledge sharing, knowledge creation, and knowledge acquisition, directly and indirectly, affected employee performance through thriving at work. The study recommended that public managers should incentivize and support the personalization of knowledge management activities across organizational levels, as it benefited thriving at work and employee performance, especially its adaptive aspects. Furthermore, personal knowledge management and thriving at work were driven or guided by knowledge, making organizations need to curate interventions to improve knowledge.

Keywords: Employee performance, knowledge acquisition, knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, personal knowledge management, thriving at work.

Introduction

Knowledge is power and has become an important resource for competency development, problem-solving, learning, and value creation. This makes this intangible asset's effective and efficient management important (Ononye, 2021). Knowledge management [KM] is a systematic activity guiding knowledge-related processes and behaviors to further different aspects of organizational work, which in turn leads to desirable outcomes such as creativity, innovation, organizational learning, and organizational performance (López-Nicolás & Merono-Cerdán, 2011). It enables organizations to make the best use of their strategic resources, the most important of which are employees (Pauleen & Gorman, 2011). Previous studies on KM have focused on its application and consequences at the organizational level but not at the individual level (Cheong & Tsui, 2011; Jain, 2011; Jarrahi, Philips, Sutherland, Sawyer, & Erickson, 2019). The lack of attention is surprising given that employees are the most important organizational resource and central to the effectiveness and performance of different organizational activities. Pauleen and Gorman (2011) reiterated that KM, whether genuine or otherwise, sought to exploit the knowledge of employees, and employees may resist this exploitative paradigm if the personal benefits or relevance were not made clear. Consequently, the full potential of KM may not be attained (Bailey & Clarke, 2001). Personal knowledge management [PKM], which refers to ongoing activities related to the creation, sharing, and acquisition of personal knowledge by an employee to make sense of his or her work environment, can answer this problem. Along this line of inquiry, studies (Jain, 2011; Hwang, Kettinger, & Yi, 2014) believe that PKM underpins the effectiveness and success of organizational-level KM systems, as organizations can connect their KM strategies with the strategic needs of their employees (Pauleen & Gorman, 2011).

The personalization of KM practices has its benefits for individuals and organizations. It fosters individual effectiveness, learning, competitiveness, productivity, innovation, and job performance (Jefferson, 2006; Hwang *et al*., 2014). Despite the benefits of PKM, empirical studies on its performance implications remain limited (Hwang *et al*., 2014; Nurul, Rohani, Intan, Rozita, & Mimi, 2021). This inadequacy could be linked to most KM research, including antecedents and outcomes, at the organizational level (Sudibjo, Aulia, & Harsanti, 2022). To fill this gap, the study examines PKM influences on employee performance [EP]. EP is the aggregated contribution of an employee to his or her job to attain organizational

goals. Individual competence underpins individual actions (Ononye, 2021), which suggests that personal knowledge and its management contribute to how employees perform in the workplace. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, the PKM-EP relationship is an underexplored area; only a few studies (Hwang *et al*., 2014; Nurul *et al*., 2021) were found to focus on this relationship. However, it is plausible to draw an empirical inference from research on KM and EP, given the positive results (Akram & Hilman, 2018; Lehyani, Zouari, Ghorbel, Tollenaere, & Sa, 2023). The study posits that thriving at work [TAW] can mediate this relationship.

TAW is the joint experience of learning and vivacity at work. The socially embedded model of thriving developed by Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein, and Grant (2005) argues that thriving is deeply rooted in supportive and constructive workplace interactions, which allow for creating and exchanging context-relevant resources (e.g., knowledge) critical for employees' psychological states. According to them, the knowledge resources produced and leveraged at work are critical in fostering thriving toward purposeful and desirable work outcomes. An important inference drawn from this model is that knowledge and its associated processes can serve as catalysts for TAW to trigger other valued outcomes (Niessen, Sonnentag, & Sach, 2012; Jiang *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, PKM can directly affect TAW because it encourages leverages knowledge through its sharing, creation, and acquisition. At the same time, PKM can indirectly affect other valued employee outcomes because TAW has strong implications for sustained employees' well-being, development, and performance (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2005; Liu, Zhang, Wang, & Yan, 2021). The mediational value of TAW for relationships involving behavioral antecedents and employee performance has also been documented in several studies (Walumbwa, Muchiri, Misati, Wu, & Meiliani, 2016; Goh *et al*., 2022; Ononye, Ojieh, & Ofune, 2023). It is plausible to infer that employees who engage in PKM behaviors would strengthen TAW and influence EP subsequently. While theoretical arguments can be drawn from available literature, empirical connections are yet to be established on the mediation of TAW in relationships between knowledge-related antecedents and EP (Jiang *et al*., 2024).

Asif and Rathore (2021) stated that improving EP in the public sector was a daunting managerial challenge. Although several strategies had been adopted, public service delivery was ineffective and inefficient. This underscored how well employees perform their jobs. Besides, the bureaucratic foundations of public-sector organizations restrict the use of personal initiatives and concepts in guiding workplace behavior. This unreceptive stance does not allow employees to unleash their full potential in the execution and completion of tasks and assignments in a given role (Ononye, 2021). In addition, the limited learning and or knowledge opportunities from the public bureaucracy could impede TAW, characterized by learning and vitality. Given the significance of knowledge for thriving, knowledge-related opportunities must be provided for employees to invest more energy in learning something new while enjoying progress and momentum. Owing to these facts, the problem of declining EP may be evident in public sector organizations. Determining the factors that can improve EP is important to enable organizations to curate strategy and practice accordingly. Therefore, the study aims to establish PKM influences on EP, given TAW as a mediating factor.

Personal Knowledge Management

PKM (also seen as a bottom-up KM approach) refers to activities that manage and support the flow of personal knowledge to effectively and efficiently achieve personal and non-personal goals. It embodies systematic processes that empower employees to find, understand, share, create, and apply knowledge, leading to improved effectiveness, productivity, and performance. PKM is a value-based framework that complements organizational KM by focusing on developing and supporting productive behaviors amid work uncertainties and complexities (Pauleen & Gorman, 2011; Jain, 2011; Sudibjo *et al.*, 2022). The leverage of accessible and useful personal knowledge improves competencies for effective problem-solving and decision-making, thus making success more probable. PKM is often used to represent tacit knowledge management (i.e., the management of personal and context-specific knowledge expressed through practical experience and socialization) only; however, this study views PKM as having both explicit (i.e., the management of knowledge that can be codified and articulated in paper and electronic format) and tacit dimensions.

PKM is important because much organizational knowledge resides in employees' heads, and individual knowledge repositories and organizational KM systems may not fully support the bulk of personal knowledge (Ononye, 2021; 2022). Importantly, the practice of PKM can occur consciously or unconsciously to employees, regardless of the existence of a formal PKM system (Jain, 2011; Kucharska & Erickson, 2023). PKM should be based on processes that enhance and support knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, and knowledge acquisition (Tian, Nakamori, & Wierzbicki, 2009; Sahibzada, Jianfeng, Latif, Shafait, &

Sahibzada, 2022). Knowledge creation involves generating useful knowledge through the interplay between experience, reflection, and thematization within situated interaction. Knowledge creation does not necessarily connote the production of new knowledge; employees can also seek to reconfigure existing knowledge to create new knowledge sets to fill identified gaps (Sujatha & Krishnaveni, 2018). "Knowledge sharing can be seen as engaging in social and collaborative interactions to exchange context-specific knowledge, skills, and experience within and across organizational boundaries" (Ononye & Igwe, 2019). Knowledge cannot be fully shared without the full support of knowledge acquisition. Knowledge acquisition is identifying, collecting, and integrating new information or understanding into individual memory or knowledge bases. This information is often unknown or external to the individual until it has been identified. The PKM knowledge creation, sharing, and acquisition activities are conceptually distinct but interrelated in practice. This argument is drawn from research (Ononye, 2021; Kucharska & Erickson, 2023) that showed a positive relationship among the constructs.

Employee Performance

EP is scalable employees' behaviors and outcomes that contribute to attaining organizational goals over a specified period (Atatsi, Stoffers, & Kil, 2019). Scalable behavior depicts concerted efforts or actions to accomplish a task, whereas scalable outcomes represent the consequences of an employee's work behavior (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). It has a cascading effect on organizational performance and excellence, which makes it necessary for organizations to ensure staff are properly supported, motivated, and guided for consistent and maximum performance. EP can be assessed using different criteria encompassing task (i.e., the extent to which employees engage in in-role behaviors for the accomplishment of assigned tasks), adaptive (i.e., the extent to which employees adapt to changes affecting work), and contextual or organizational citizenship performance (i.e., the extent to which employees engage in extra-role behaviors that contribute to organizational functioning and performance) (Shoss, Witt, & Vera, 2012; Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Aligning with this notion, the study focused on measuring EP from an adaptive perspective, as it is crucial to the effective and efficient delivery of public services. Because the environment is constantly exposed to uncertainties and complexities, organizations need to leverage knowledge to enhance their adaptability to meet the shifting, often unpredictable demands of the public. It underscores that behaviors associated with competency acquisition are critical to responding to the changing nature of the work environment, and adaptive performance reflects such behavioral efforts (Shoss *et al*., 2012; Aguinis & Burgu-Tian, 2021). Successful adaptive performance denotes that employees can handle uncertain and complex work situations (Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012), which leads to higher contextual (Koon & Chong, 2018) and task performance (Shoss *et al*., 2012).

Thriving at Work

TAW is a psychological state characterized by the combined experience of learning (i.e., when an employee gains new competencies and can apply them to work) and vitality (i.e., when employees have a strong feeling of energy and enthusiasm for work). Learning represents the cognitive aspect, while vitality represents the affective aspect of TAW. Both components must be present at high levels for employees to experience an increase in thriving and other positive outcomes (Ononye, 2022; Kleine, Rudolhp, Schmitt, & Zacher, 2023). Competency acquisition and development are insufficient if employees do not have the required vitality levels to translate them into practice (Ononye *et al*., 2023). Learning and vitality, which constitute TAW, enhance the employees' functionality and adaptability to work changes in highly dynamic environments (Ononye, 2022). There may be variations in the experience of TAW due to various reasons, such as the mental resources, psychological resources, and contextual features at work (Wu, Chen, & Wang, 2023). However, this study proposes PKM as an antecedent that leads to high TAW.

Hypotheses Development

KM is seen as an integration of tools that harnesses the value of knowledge and engages it in integrative processes with people (McEvoy, Ragab, & Arisha, 2015). This integrative process develops core competencies that enable employees to perform well in specified roles and settings. EP could improve if employees develop individual capabilities for managing knowledge. Although studies on the PKM-EP relationship are limited, Hwang *et al*. (2014) found that PKM capability influences job performance through PKM effecttiveness among knowledge workers in healthcare insurance companies in the United States. This study did not account for the main effect of PKM on job performance. Nurul *et al*. (2021) found that PKM was closely related to employees' job performance in the public sector in Shah Alam, Malaysia. The independent effects of distinct elements in the PKM process

were not accounted for, nor was the adaptive aspect of EP considered in this study.

Other research that accounted for the direct relationship focused on organizational KM activities in public sector organizations. For instance, Razzaq *et al.* (2019) found that KM processes significantly and positively affected knowledge workers performance in the public sector health department of Punjab Province in Pakistan. Ugwu and Ejikeme (2023) suggested that KM made significant and positive contributions to the EP of academic librarians in university libraries in Nigeria. In a systematic review of KM and EP, Sulistyanto, Djamil, Sutawidjaya, and Nawangsari (2021) concluded that a positive relationship between KM and EP exists. However, these studies operationalized KM as a composite construct and did not provide information on the effects of specific KM activities on EP. Arguably, KM was important for enhanced EP, but not all the activities were directly related to EP. Besides, the focus of these studies was on task or contextual performance and not on the adaptive aspect of EP, which made its effect on this performance aspect an open empirical issue in research.

More so, other studies focused on the effect of specific KM practices on EP. For example, Akram and Hilman (2018) studied the influences of KA, KC, and KS on EP in the banking sector in Pakistan. Findings affirm that KM practices had a positive effect on EP. Noermijati, Firdaus, Kurniawate, Wijaya, and Sulastri (2023) focused on the KS and adaptability of employees of Indonesian defense equipment businesses, and the relationship between knowledge sharing and adaptability was positive and significant. Swanson, Sally, Lee, Yang, and Lee (2020) studied on KS and managers' job performance in five-star hotels in Seoul, South Korea, and yielded positive results. Sujatha and Krishnaveni (2018) examined KC as an antecedent to employees' work performance in pump manufacturing firms in South India. Findings indicated that KC strongly predicted work performance. Given the above, these studies mainly focused on the influence of specific KM processes on EP in the private sector rather than the public sector. Although studies have conveyed a positive and significant relationship between KM, as a composite construct, and EP in the public sector (Razzaq *et al.*, 2019; Sulistyanto *et al.*, 2021; Ugwu & Ejikeme, 2023), this study intends to establish whether the accruable performance benefit from specific KM practices applies to the public sector.

Drawing from knowledge-based theory, employees can enhance their ability to perform by updating and advancing their knowledge. The systemic reconfiguration of existing knowledge from interactions with one's work environment fosters adaptation. Shahzad *et al.* (2013) suggested that individual adaptability was closely linked to different KM processes, especially KS, KC, and KA, which eventually helped employees apply context-specific knowledge aligned with work-relevant changes. Given this, three hypotheses are formed.

H_1: KS is positively related to EP.
H_2: KC is positively related to EP.
H_3: KA is positively related to EP.

The socially embedded model of TAW developed by Spreitzer *et al.* (2005) elucidated how the work context in which employees were embedded can foster a thriving state. It presumed that the knowledge resources from certain work practices, like PKM, supported thriving (Liu *et al.*, 2021). Increasing personal knowledge resources presents ample learning opportunities as acquired knowledge is constantly tested or applied in practice. At the same time, employees often experience vivacity for work when they are part of a process that encourages and supports them to leverage knowledge for personal growth and development.

Spreitzer *et al.* (2005) argued that it may be difficult for employees to renew their knowledge resources if they did not engage in agentic behaviors like focusing on PKM tasks, engaging in exploration activities (as driven by KC), and being heedful relating with others in the workplace. These agentic behaviors are essential for improving the state of TAW (Niessen *et al.*, 2012). It is plausible to infer that knowledge sharing, creation, and acquisition allow for the renewal of knowledge for doing work, as knowledge emerges from collaborative interactions in the context of practice and the creation of something new. This, in turn, enhances TAW and, ultimately, EP (Elahi, Abid, Arya, & Farooqi, 2020). The mediational significance of TAW in the relationships between behavioral antecedents and EP has been documented in several conceptual studies (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2005; Niessen *et al.*, 2012; Kleine, Rudolph, & Zacher, 2019). Liu *et al.* (2021) reinforced this argument in a meta-analytical study on the antecedents of TAW.

The conservation of resources [COR] theory developed by Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, and Westman (2018) provided another theoretical lens for this study. COR argues that employees will strive to develop, protect, and or maintain their resources to avoid a resource loss and promote the gain of more resources, which has the potential to influence employees' performance and goal attainment. The motivation to improve EP is rooted in resource gain and not loss. It can be inferred that organizations can enable the development or maintenance of personal

resources, like knowledge, by allowing employees to leverage PKM activities. The resource investment argument of COR suggests that when employees experience an improvement in managing this personal resource, they are more likely to invest these resources in other personal resources, like TAW, to enhance the resource pool and experience the gain of additional resources. Adding adaptive personal resources creates a resource caravan that allows employees to perform well in a changing work context. Thus, the study views PKM as a supportive personal resource that can develop thriving as an outcome of personal resource gain. The utilization of both, when properly established, enables employees to reinvest these resources in performing different tasks and assignments in highly uncertain and challenging work settings. Thus, three hypotheses are proposed.

H$_4$: KS is positively related to EP through TAW.
H$_5$: KC is positively related to EP through TAW.
H$_6$: KA is positively related to EP through TAW.

Research Methods

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey to collect data from academic staff randomly sampled from state-owned public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. A questionnaire-based survey enables gathering contextual information about a population through structured questions. The staff category actively engages in different knowledge-based activities directed at teaching, research, and consulting. Moreover, they often encounter a dynamic and unpredictable environment in which new approaches to work are required to attain optimal performance. Informed consent was obtained from respondents for voluntary participation in the survey, and subsequently, the questionnaire was administered. The questionnaire had a cover letter that contained the research topic, the purpose of the research, and a declaration of data confidentiality.

The study was performed from September 2023 to November 2023. The participants were asked to complete a coded subordinate questionnaire containing PKM activities and TAW measures. Then, they were asked to present to their departmental heads a matching-coded questionnaire to assess their EP. The respondents were followed up fortnightly to enhance the response rate. The completed questionnaire was enclosed in an envelope, which the researchers provided. 229 questionnaires were administered, and 204 completed questionnaires were returned, suggesting a return rate of 89.1 percent. Regarding the demographic profile of respondents, 84 (41.2%) were males and 120 (58.2%) were females. 15 (7.4%) had a graduate degree, and 189 (92.6%) had a postgraduate degree. The respondents had a mean age of 46.2 years and a tenure of 7.9 years.

The questionnaire was adapted from validated scales from existing studies and rated on a five-point Likert scale of totally disagree (1) to totally agree (5). Four questions for KS and KA were taken from Świgoń (2013) and Naicker, Govender, and Naidoo (2014). A sample item for KS includes: "I try to express my thoughts or ideas about work to others." A sample item for KA is: "I like to keep important information in an organized and accessible manner." Five questions for knowledge creation were adapted from Sujatha and Krishnaveni (2018). A sample item includes: "I often combine different pieces of existing information to create something new." The ten questions for TAW were taken from Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, and Garnett (2012). Sample items include: "I have developed a lot as a person" and "I feel alive and vital at work." Seven questions on EP were taken from Koopmans *et al.* (2012). A sample item is: "He or she has worked at keeping job knowledge and skills up-to-date." See the appendix for the complete measurement items. The Cronbach Alpha values (KS = 0.746; KA = 0.820; KC = 0.759; TAW = 0.808; EP = 0.773) for the constructs were considered acceptable, as they exceeded the recommended cut-off point of 0.70 (Hair, Hult, Ringe, & Sarstedt, 2017).

The survey data were analyzed with the two-step partial least squares (PLS) procedure performed with the SmartPLS 4 software. This analytical procedure ensures that the measurement model is assessed for reliability and validity, and the structural model is estimated for hypothesis testing. The PLS procedure is best used for non-normal data distribution, relatively small samples, and mediation analysis. In performing this analysis, the rule of thumb in Hair *et al.* (2017) was applied to interpret the PLS results. The data were treated and cleaned for analysis with the help of SPSS 20.0.

Results and Discussion

The study performs preliminary analysis before initiating the two-step PLS analytical procedure. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity are conducted to ensure the dataset is factorable. The KMO values for the constructs (KS = 0.638, KC = 0.619, KA = 0.702, TAW = 0.644, and EP = 0.681) are higher than the cut-off points of 0.60, and their respective Bartlett's test of sphericity values are below 0.05. The results confirm the factorability of the dataset for PLS analysis. Another test is performed to check whether the dataset is free of problems related to common method bias

[CMB]. Harman's single factor is used to perform this analysis using SPSS 20.0. The results show that a single factor explained 33.78 percent of the total variance, which is less than the cut-off score of 50 percent; thus, no significant CMB problem is present in the dataset. The variance inflation factor [VIF] is also used to confirm whether the data is free of CMB problems, and the result shows that VIF values, which ranged from 1.069 to 1.310, are within the acceptable threshold of ≤ 3.0 (Kock, 2015; Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2019). Given the positive preliminary results, the study proceeds to ascertain the reliability and validity of the measurement model. The factor loadings [FL], composite reliability [CR], average variance extracted [AVE], and discriminant validity are used for this assessment.

Table 1
Measurement Model Results

	FL Range > 0.70	CR > 0.70	AVE > 0.50	VIF
KS	0.721–0.797	0.722	0.704	1.310
KC	0.763–0.841	0.817	0.558	1.167
KA	0.740–0.869	0.806	0.659	1.104
TAW	0.776–0.912	0.792	0.613	1.069
EP	0.739–0.856	0.783	0.597	

Table 2
Discriminant Validity

	KS	KC	KA	TAW	EP
KS	0.839				
KC	0.246	0.747			
KA	0.035	0.251	0.812		
TAW	0.201	0.227	0.177	0.783	
EP	0.361	0.270	0.253	0.399	0.773

In Table 1, the FL and CR of the constructs are within the acceptable range of ≥ 0.70, suggesting item reliability and construct reliability are established, respectively. The AVE values are within the recommended cut-off point of 0.50, which suggests that the convergent validity is satisfactory. The VIF, a multicollinearity test, shows that the values are below the recommended limit of 5.0. Thus, no multicollinearity problem exists, and reliable statistical inferences can be drawn from the measurement model. Table 2 shows the discriminant validity based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The results provide evidence of discriminant validity among the constructs because the constructs' correlations (diagonal scores) were higher than the inter-construct correlations (off-diagonal scores). Having realized acceptable scores in the quality criteria for the measurement model assessment, the study advanced to the second step to estimate the structural model for hypothesis testing.

Table 3
Structural Model Results

Path	Model 1 β ($p < 0.05$)	Model 2 β ($p < 0.05$)
KS → EP	0.392 (0.000)	0.386 (0.000)
KC → EP	0.323 (0.000)	0.319 (0.000)
KA → EP	0.129 (0.016)	0.0125 (0.000)
TAW → EP	0.402 (0.000)	0.405 (0.000)
KS → TAW → EP		0.101 (0.000)
KC → TAW → EP		0.097 (0.000)
KA → TAW → EP		0.115 (0.009)
R^2	0.593	0.601
SRMR	0.073	0.068

Table 3 uses the bootstrap method using 5000 subsamples to check the hypothesized relationships' direct and specific indirect effects. The model quality is ascertained using R^2 (predictive quality) and SRMR (model fit). The PKM activities (i.e., KS, KC, and KA) and TAW are entered to establish the main effects in the first model. These predictor variables are entered in Model 2, which introduced the mediating variable to establish the indirect effects. While R^2 in the first model accounts for 59.3 percent of EP. Thus, the predictive power is moderate. However, this improves to 60.1 percent when TAW mediates the PKM activities and EP relationships. The predictive power of Model 2 is considered strong. Regarding the model fit, the SRMR value is 0.073 for Model 1, which is improved by -0.005 points in Model 2. In all, the model is a good fit.

The first hypothesis proposes that KS is positively related to EP, and the positive and significant PLS results (β = 0.392, p = 0.000) confirm this proposition to be statistically true. Thus, H_1 is accepted. This finding aligns with studies (Akram & Hilman, 2018; Noermijati *et al.*, 2023; Swanson *et al.*, 2020) that report a positive and significant KS-EP association in a private sector context. The applicability of this finding underscores the relevance of KS in providing a productive link from where knowledge resides to where it can be leveraged to attain maximum value (Ononye, 2022). However, the finding suggests that sharing context-relevant knowledge allows individuals' knowledge bases to be updated to facilitate the right behavioral adjustments to highly disruptive and changing work contexts.

The second hypothesis argues that KC is positively related to EP, and the positive and significant PLS results (β = 0.323, p = 0.000) supported the validity of this argument. Thus, H_2 is accepted. This finding is supported by the studies (Akram & Hilman, 2018; Sujatha & Krishnaveni, 2018) that found a positive and significant association between KC and EP, but in a private sector context. The applicability of this finding underlines the notion that public organizations

also strive to perform in line with evolving societal problems, needs, demands, or expectations. The changing problem context demands KC, which enables employees to overcome the constraints of existing knowledge by developing a new approach to how things are done. The creative tension between individuals' knowledge bases, fueled by workplace interactions, helps employees apply new knowledge aligned with work changes and complexities.

The third hypothesis, which states that KA is positively related to EP, is fully corroborated by the PLS results (β = 0.129, p = 0.000). Thus, H_3 is also accepted. This result agrees with Shahzad *et al.* (2013) and Akram and Hilman (2018), who reported the same positive and significant relationship. The finding suggests that it is important for employees to continually capture valuable and new external knowledge into individual memory concerning dynamic work environments. It will enable them to learn and update their knowledge base to match new work conditions.

Taken together, PKM activities comprising KS, KC, and KA are positively and significantly related to EP. It reinforces the arguments drawn from findings on the KM and EP relationship in the public sector (Khurma *et al*., 2013; Sulistyanto *et al*., 2021; Ugwu & Ejikeme, 2023) that a comparable positive and significant result can be reported from individual-level KM practices and EP. Although Hwang *et al.* (2014) examined the indirect effect, the results of this study extend this finding by arguing that the PKM activity effect can also be direct. Given this, this study argues that the positive links can be attributed to the knowledge and its management being important for responding to and adapting to change in complex environments. As such, employees must be able to create, share, and acquire knowledge to cope with work-related changes and engage in adaptive learning. All of these are essential to how they perform in rapidly changing environments.

Before introducing TAW as a mediating construct, it is important to establish the relationship between it and EP, which is positive and significant (β = 0.402, p = 0.000). The specific indirect effects of TAW in the relationships between KS and EP (β = 0.101, p = 0.000), KC and EP (β = 0.097, p = 0.000), and KA and EP (β = 0.0115, p = 0.000) are positive and significant. Importantly, the mediational effects are complementary because the effects of KS, KC, and KA remain positive and significant. Thus, H_4, H_5, and H_6 are accepted. The findings agree with the arguments drawn from the socially embedded model of TAW (Spreitzer *et al*., 2005) that a work context that allows for the effective and efficient management of personal knowledge improves the joint experience of learning and vitality at work, enhancing EP. It also supports the studies (Niessen *et al*., 2012; Kleine *et al*., 2019; Liu *et al*., 2021) that reported the mediational significance of TAW in the relationships between behavioral antecedents and EP. Lastly, it aligns with the theoretical argument drawn from COR theory that PKM activities (i.e., KC, KS, and KA), as supportive personal resources, develop TAW as an outcome of personal resource gain. The utilization of both, when properly established, enables employees to reinvest resources to improve their EP. Therefore, the study suggests that employees can experience high TAW when they can develop capabilities to create, share, and acquire knowledge. Ultimately, this can improve their performance in work situations characterized by changes and complexities.

Conclusions and Implications

The PLS analysis shows that PKM activities comprising KS, KC, and KA are positively and significantly related to EP. The complementary mediating mechanism of TAW can explain these relationships. PKM activities' effects on EP can be direct and indirect.

The findings have several theoretical implications. First, the study examines the independent effects of KS, KC, and KA, constituting PKM, on EP, which differ markedly from previous research (Hwang *et al*., 2014; Nurul *et al*., 2021). This extends the KM literature by substantiating the direct and indirect effects of PKM activities on EP in an integrated research framework. Second, the study contributes to our understanding of KM activities and their consequences at the individual level, as most research has focused on KM activities at the organizational level (Sudibjo *et al*., 2022). Third, the centrality of TAW in PKM activities and EP links was confirmed using the socially embedded model of TAW (Spreitzer *et al*., 2005) and the COR theory. Thus, the applicability of the theories in explaining the mediating role of TAW in a Nigerian public organization context is extended. Although the mediational value of TAW exists in relationships involving behavioral antecedents and EP, it has not been empirically illustrated in a single research framework comprising elements of PKM and EP.

Given the findings, the study recommends that public managers should align KM strategy with employees' needs, values, and interests, as well as incentivize the personalization of KM activities across organizational levels, as it is beneficial to TAW and EP (especially its adaptive aspects). PKM behaviors are expected to be engendered with clarity of purpose and demonstrable management support. Furthermore, PKM

and TAW are driven or guided by knowledge, so organizations must curate and support interventions to improve their knowledge. It makes their participation and or engagement in trainings, seminars, workshops, conferences, communities of practices, and other knowledge development activities very important.

The study has some limitations that may guide the direction of future research. First, a cross-sectional dataset does not allow for drawing concrete causal inferences; future research can leverage the benefits of a longitudinal dataset. Secondly, the study is limited to academic staff in a Nigerian state. Although the findings may have applicable value, extending them to other public-sector organizations is important. Lastly, future research can operationalize TAW differently, that is, by investigating the TAW components separately.

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Appendix (Measurement Items)

Knowledge Sharing

KS1 : During work discussions, I share materials and/or documents (explicit) with others.
KS2 : I try to express my thoughts or ideas about work to others.
KS3 : I try to find out others' opinions, thoughts, or ideas about work.
KS4 : In work-related discussions, my colleagues share explicit materials or documents with me.

Knowledge Creation

KC1 : I have no problem discussing with others to find solutions to work problems.
KC2 : Sometimes, I transcribe some of my thoughts and experiences into concrete ideas.
KC3 : I like to collect new information and make a connection between thenew and old knowledge to develop new concepts.

KC4 : I often combine different pieces of existing information to create something new.
KC5 : I always try to make sense of information that is valuable and relevant to my work.

Knowledge Acquisition

KA1 : During work discussions, I often write out information that is important or interesting to me.
KA2 : I can easily identify information that is critical to my work.
KA3 : I like to keep important information in an organized and accessible manner.
KA4 : I try to learn something new to develop my competencies at work.

Thriving at Work

Learning1 : At work, I find myself learning often.
Learning2 : I continue to learn more and more as time goes by.
Learning3 : I see myself continually improving at work.
Learning4 : I am not learning at work (reverse coded).
Learning5 : I have developed a lot as a person.
Vitality1 : I feel alive and vital at work.
Vitality2 : At work, I have energy and spirit.
Vitality3 : I do not feel very energetic at work (reverse coded).
Vitality4 : I feel alert and awake at work.
Vitality5 : I am looking forward to each new day.

Adaptive Performance

AP1 : He or she has worked at keeping job knowledge and skills up-to-date.
AP2 : He or she has demonstrated flexibility at work.
AP3 : He or she was able to cope well with difficult situations and setbacks at work.
AP4 : He or she recovered fast after difficult situations or setbacks at work.
AP5 : He or she came up with creative solutions to new problems.
AP6 : He or she was able to cope well with uncertain and unpredictable situations at work.
AP7 : He or she easily adjusted to changes in my work.