KNOWLEDGE AUDIT AND CORPORATE MEMORY OF INDIGENOUS OIL AND GAS COMPANIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper is aimed at pointing out the relevance of knowledge audit and the phenomenon of corporate memory within the context of Oil and Gas companies in the South-South region of Nigeria. Knowledge audit involves the systematic assessments of an organization's knowledge assets with the aim of identifying, capturing, and leveraging knowledge to support innovation and decision-making. Corporate Memory is a generic concept used in describing the saving, representation, and sharing of organizational knowledge from an organizational history in order to revive present decisions, reduce cost, support cooperation among workers, the work, and the workplace both in multi-task and multiple-user environments, technically, functionally, and socially using the power (resources) within the organization. The reason for corporate memory is to cob organizational loss of memory through the development of memory bank. Organizational memory bank refers to the collective knowledge and experiences accumulated by an organization over time that encompasses information, data, processes, and practices that are stored and retained within an organization, serving as a valuable resource for organizational learning, decision-making, and performance.

Key words: Knowledge audit, corporate memory, memory bank.

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, organizations face an ever-increasing need to harness as well as leverage their internal valuable knowledge insights, expertise within their workforce (tacit knowledge), existing knowledge assets in form of explicit documentation, best practices, and intellectual properties. Audit or auditing is basically a change process calculated at bettering the performance of an organization and this word is rooted in the financial sector because it helps them to know the reality of their financial position at a particular moment, in order to understand how to propel their vision towards attaining set objectives. The dynamic nature of business organizations has endeared most organization to adopt this process, tailoring it to suit their organization in order to optimize performance. Knowledge is power as people usually say (Isah & Ibrahim, 2023) but most times managers of organizations do not bother to audit in order to know as well as understand the already available knowledge resources domiciled in their organizational repositories at various different locations, processes, individuals (employees) etc which has led to managers reinventing the wheels. The oil and gas industry is very huge in landscape. Sadly, due to the nature of its operations i.e. the organizations sought for oil and gas jobs or contracts, use their permanent workers and add more hands (employees) as needed to get the job executed, after which they retain some employees and others are relieved of their jobs depending on the situation while the organization remains with the few retained. The departing employees carry away a wealth of organizational knowledge, including expertise and skills. These constant workforce turnover, retirements, and migration of experienced personnel to other industries often lead to loss of organizational knowledge. Organizations no longer fully utilize the knowledge created in the course of carrying out a job, skills developed, competencies, and experiences acquired in the process of doing their works. Knowledge audit then becomes a strategy to reduce the loss of these organization memory and ensuring a smooth transition from those leaving to those succeeding them, identifying key result areas, and ensuring that firms' operations are properly understood, as well as building a tool kit approach that can be employed within groups, individuals and entire organizations thereby preventing loss of knowledge and intellectual capital as well as building corporate memory.

The decentralized nature of operations in the oil and gas sector has also created room for the creation of information silos within different departments, functions and geographical locations causing fragmentation as well as hindering collaboration, knowledge sharing, and dissemination of best practices across the organization. The adoption of advanced technologies such as IoT sensors, AI-driven analytics, and digital twins that generates vast amounts of data as well as their rapid pace of innovative evolution within the oil and gas operations has also not helped matters, as they have ended up making it difficult for a layman to comprehend when attempting to extract actionable insights from these big data as well as converting them to valuable knowledge for future use and this has led to the lack of consistent progress in terms of profitability in Nigeria oil and gas sector. This has regrettably spilled over to the economy which today has been a far cry from what it used to be in the 1970s and early 1980s. Then, every member of the organization contributed to the organization by sharing knowledge on a subject matter for strategic positioning of the organization.

Other scholars have investigated the impact of knowledge management strategies on organizational performance. Some have also highlighted how strategies like communities of practice, enterprise social networks or serious games as cited in Leon, Rodriguez-Rodriguez and Alfaro-Saiz (2023) has been used to evade loss of organizational memory but the study on knowledge audit and how it how it relates to corporate memory in indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria has not done. This study therefore, is targeted at discovering the relationship between knowledge audit and corporate memory in the indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria.

This study has the following research objectives:

1. To examine relationship between knowledge audit and corporate memory in indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria.
2. To examine the moderating role of leadership on corporate memory in indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria.

The study achieved this by answering the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between knowledge audit and corporate memory in indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between knowledge audit and memory bank in indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria?

To achieve the objective of this study, the following null hypotheses was adopted cautiously to answer the research questions on the topic "knowledge audit and corporate memory in indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria".

H_{01}: There is no relationship between knowledge audit and corporate memory of indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no relationship between knowledge audit and memory bank of indigenous oil and gas companies in south-south, Nigeria.
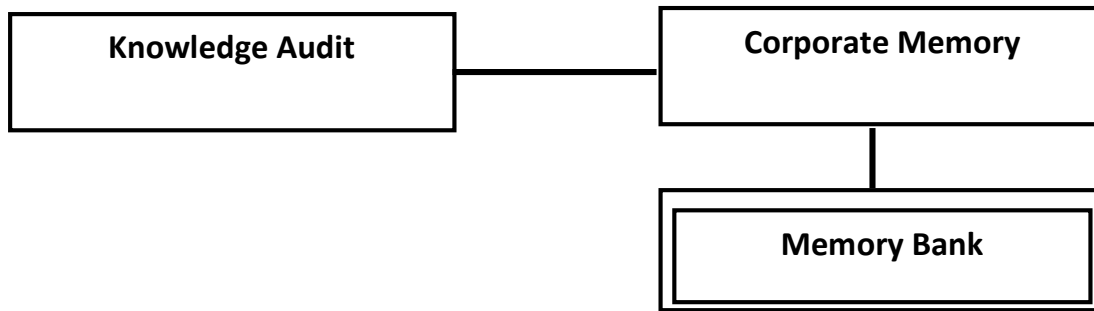
Conceptual Framework for the study

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│   Knowledge Audit    │──────────────│   Corporate Memory   │
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                                      │ ┌──────────────────┐ │
                                      │ │   Memory Bank    │ │
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Fig. 1: Knowledge audit and Corporate memory.
Source: Researcher's Conceptualization (2024)

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This study is hinged on Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory. According Jurevicius (2023), the theory was developed by scholars such as Wernerfelt (1984), Barney (1991), Peteraf (1993) and others. Penrose in 2009 as cited in Utami and Alamanos (2023) put forward the theory as an effective model for the management of firms' resources, diversification strategy, and productive opportunities. It's also a framework for analyzing the role of internal resources and capabilities in shaping a firm's performance, long-term sustainability, and competitiveness (Helfat & Peteraf, 2003 cited in Utami & Alamanos 2023). The theory also recognizes that firms are heterogeneous in terms of the resources they possess and the capabilities they develop (Barney, 1991). That sustainable competitive advantage is derived from resources and capabilities that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) (Barney, 1991) helping organizations to exploit opportunities or mitigate threats in its external environment, thereby creating value for customers and generating superior performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Knowledge, particularly tacit knowledge embedded in the experiences and expertise of employees, are valuable, rare, and difficult-to-imitate resource that contributes to organizational sustainability and competitive advantage (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Spender, 1996). Organizational loss of memory and reinventing the wheel is due to the fact that they (organizations) do not knowledge audit. For oil and gas companies in south-south Nigeria, knowledge-based capabilities could include domain-specific expertise in areas like exploration, drilling, and production techniques, as well as cross-functional capabilities in project management, risk assessment, and stakeholder engagement. It is also important to note that in the oil and gas sector, where technological advancements, regulatory changes, and market shifts are constant, the ability to acquire, assimilate, and apply both new as well as existing knowledge is critical for organizational survival and long-term sustainability.

Knowledge Audit

Siyabonga (2020) described knowledge audit to be an in-depth analysis of an organization's information, knowledge requirements and delivery modes which proceeds from an intimate understanding of the organization's mission and goals as well as the determination to reach those organizational goals. It is conducted to determine what is known in the organization, where that knowledge is found, and in what format the knowledge is available thereby helping organizations to determine its information and knowledge needs by comparing what it needs to know with what it in-fact knows. It is also a formal determination and evaluation of how and

where knowledge is used in business processes, identifying the implicit and explicit information stores (Gartner Information Technology). Serrat (2017) defined knowledge audit as an investigation of the strengths and weakness of an organization's knowledge, and of the opportunities and threats that face it. That it works differently from the regular audit thereby calling for demystification differing in objects, breadth of coverage, and level of sophistication. Deer (2022) stated that knowledge audit is an examination of an organization's knowledge requirements and how its leadership, organization, technology, and learning can work together to meet those needs. Knowledge audit tries to discover what people in an organization know, how well they know it, and how they share that knowledge. Gourova, Antonowa & Goleminova (2009) stated that knowledge audit is a strategy in knowledge management that stresses the need for the developing and monitoring the knowledge management implementation. The purpose of knowledge audit is to show solid evidence of what knowledge an organization requires, the location of that knowledge (i.e the point where the knowledge is and the point where it is needed), how it is used, any challenges and obstacles that exist, and what can be done to improve the flow of things. This is achieved by examining the organization's knowledge requirements, the leadership, technology, and learning as well how these factors can work together to meet organizational needs. Knowledge audit is a chief subject in knowledge management (Noraini, Laleh, & Rusli, 2012), because it lays a concrete foundation for any knowledge management programe (Choy & Lee 2004). It explores and appraises the process of knowledge resources in the organization acknowledging the fact that knowledge has been described as a value-added and actionable information that paves ways for accurate forecasting and effective decision-making in an organization (Noraini, C. P., Laleh, T. & Rusli, A. 2012).

Knowledge audit is usually conducted in conjunction with the knowledge strategy. The essence is to allow the knowledge strategy to review the findings as well as the recommendations made during the audit and to determine which recommendations to implement. A knowledge audit can have multiple purpose, but the common is to provide tangible evidence of what knowledge an organization need, how it is being used, what problems and difficulties exist, and what improvements can be made (Serrat 2017). It also assists organizations in identifying their knowledge-based resources and develops strategies to manage them. Dante (2008) cited in Siyabonga (2020) stated that knowledge auditing are of two types which are k-audit (knowledge audit) and km-audit (knowledge management audit). The former identifies knowledge assets while the latter looks at the efficacy of the systems and techniques for leveraging those assets. Knowledge audit consists of three major tasks which are knowledge inventory, knowledge flows and knowledge mapping. But before delving into taking inventory, it is important to understand that something is the propeller to the need for the taking of inventory and that is the identification of knowledge need also known as knowledge gap. Once the knowledge need or gap is identified it automatically calls for inventory and other processes that follows. As such Serrat (2008) identified four tasks.

Knowledge Need
Organizations are an organic entity whose affairs are run by human beings using natural instincts. They are always saddled with diverse needs in a bit to survive as well as thrive and survival beyond today is an indispensable desire of each and every organization. According to Tieto (2013) cited in Ernest and Nwinyokpugi (2023) Information and by extension knowledge is now acknowledged as one of the most important asset in business can only be effectively determined by conducting information or knowledge audit as it helps to state the current information or knowledge within the organization. It is true that some of the knowledge required to surmount these needs may be embedded within the organization in various forms

without the consciousness of the organization. Conducting a knowledge need analysis according to Serrat (2008) will help to identify those tacit and explicit knowledge individuals, groups, and the organization possess, shines light on those activities that provides the major part of their income or most important to most persons, draws attention to staff skills and competency enhancement needs, provides opportunities for staff learning and development, improve on the organizational culture practices, improve on leadership collaboration and team work. It will also help to understand what knowledge the organization might require in the future to enhance strategy and performance, and rewards system, staff, peers, subordinates and management relationship.

Knowledge Inventory

Inventory is the accounting of items, component parts and raw materials that a company either uses in production or sells (Jenkins, 2023). Knowledge inventory is that stock-taking that enables the identification, location and documentation of all knowledge assets in and around the organization (Arjun 2009). It lays the groundwork for effective knowledge sharing, collaboration, and innovation. It entails counting, indexing, and categorizing tacit and explicit knowledge (Serrat 2008). A typical knowledge inventory includes:

i. Identification of knowledge sources: This involves where knowledge resides within the organization, including the databases, documents, individual expertise, and informal networks.

ii. Documentation: Once any knowledge asset is identified, it should be documented in a structured manner which involves creating inventories, databases or repositories to store and organize that knowledge asset.

iii. Categorization: This includes categorizing knowledge assets based on their type, relevance, and importance to the organizational goals and objectives. Examples includes technical knowledge, procedural knowledge, customer knowledge, etc.

iv. Assessment: Identified knowledge assets should be evaluated to determine their quality, accuracy, relevance, and currency. The essence is to help prioritize which knowledge asset are more valuable to the organization.

v. Accessibility and Retrieval: This entails implementing search tools, knowledge sharing platforms, or other systems to facilitate access to knowledge.

vi. Maintenance and Update: Knowledge assets need to be regularly maintained and updated to ensure their accuracy and relevance over time. This involves periodic reviews, revisions, or additions to the knowledge inventory.

Knowledge Flows

In knowledge audit, knowledge flow refers to the movement or transfer of knowledge within an organization. It aids organizations to identify strengths and weaknesses in their management processes and develop strategies to enhance the flow of knowledge in order to support organizational goals and objectives. Braksiek (2023) identified seven processes in knowledge flow. They are knowledge creation, identification, collection, review, share, access, and use. Knowledge flow may also involve the implementation of new technologies, improving communication and collaboration practices, or fostering a culture that values knowledge sharing and learning. This may also include:

i. Knowledge creation: This has to do with identifying how new knowledge is generated within the organization, whether through research and development activities, innovation processes, or experiential learning.

ii. Knowledge capture: That is how knowldge is documented within the organization i.e. formal documentation such as reports, manuals, and databases, or informal documentation e.g minds of the employees or through interpersonal interactions.

iii. Knowledge sharing: This has to do with how knowledge is disseminated and exchanged among people, teams, and departments within the organization. This can be through formal channels such as meetings, training sessions, and knowledge-sharing platforms. It can also be informal such as conversations, mentorship, or communities of practice.

iv. Knowledge Utilization: Knowledge utilization refers to how effectively knowledge is applied to support decision-making, problem-solving, and innovation within the organization. Ensuring that knowledge is used to its full potential as well as identifying any barriers or challenges to its effective utilization.

v. Knowledge transfer: This focuses on how knowledge is transferred from one individual or team to another, particularly in the context of succession planning, onboarding of new employees, or knowledge transfer during organizational changes such as mergers or acquisitions.

Knowledge mapping

Knowledge mapping is one of the knowledge management approaches (Boyes, 2022). In knowledge audit, it refers to the process of virtually representing the knowledge assets, flows, and connections within an organization i.e graphical representations or diagrams that illustrates how knowledge is distributed, accessed, and utilized across different individuals, teams, and departments. Knowledge mapping is a valuable tool in knowledge audit because it provides a visual representation of the organization's knowledge ecosystem, enabling stakeholders to better understand how knowledge is created, shared, and utilized as well identify opportunities for improvement. The entails:

i. Identifying knowledge sources: Graphically identifying the sources of knowledge within the organization.

ii. Mapping knowledge flows: Showing knowledge flows i.e from creation, captured, shared and utilized. This may also involve tracing knowledge through formal channels as well as informal channels.

iii. Visual representation: This has to do with visual representations such as diagrams, charts, or maps to illustrate relationships and connections between different knowledge assets and stakeholders within the organization.

iv. Identifying knowledge gaps and redundancies: This involves mapping out existing knowledge landscape in other to identify areas where knowledge is abundant or lacking and areas where there may be redundancies or duplication of efforts.

v. Facilitating Decision Making: Knowledge mapping helps organizations to make informed decisions about knowledge management strategies, resource allocation, and organizational restructuring by providing a clear understanding of the organization's knowledge assets and capabilities.

Henczel (2001) cited in Ernest and Nwinyokpugi (2023) had outlined seven stage model for such audits. Stage 1 is planning, stage 2 is data collection, stage 3 is data analysis, stage 4 is data evaluation, stage 5 is communicating recommendations, stage 6 is implementing recommendations, stage 7 is the continuum. The essence of knowledge audits to an organization can never be over-emphasized because they are the important processes through which organizations can understand what knowledge is needed, available and used for their current activities. They can also identify what knowledge is missing and how this omission restricts organizational activities. Hence, knowledge audits can suffice initiatives to improve the knowledge management (KM) processes of an organization and, in turn, improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Corporate memory

Corporate memory has been around since early 1965 (Crossan, Lane & White, 1999) and it has been defined as that generic concept used in describing the saving, representation, and sharing of organizational knowledge (Croasdell, 2001; Walsh and Ungson, 1991 as cited in Lai, 2020) from an organizational history in order to revive present decisions, reduce transaction cost, support cooperation among workers, the work, and the workplace both in multi-task and multiple-user environments, technically, functionally, and socially using the power (resources) within the organization. However, it is in the recent decades that the concept got more attention as researchers seek to understand and develop theoretical models on how to increase organizational tranquility. It is evident that organizations can only adapt as speedily as they can learn though what they learnt yesterday or today does mean that it has stamped tomorrow's success because each day comes with its own challenges. Therefore, an organization's ability to learn faster than its competitor becomes its weapon of survival and continued success. The essence of corporate memory was as a result of corporate amnesia also known as organizational loss of memory i.e the loss of valuable knowledge and expertise within an organization when employees leave and take their accumulated knowledge with them. This phenomenon is comparable to individual memory, as it hampers the organization's ability to access and utilize crucial information and the consequences can be significant, impacting on employee productivity and efficiency. The information economy has brought about a new wave of opportunities and challenges that have the potential to give organizations competitive edge over their market rivals. And building corporate memory is one of such potential opportunity. Although the grouping of such terminology is relatively recent, its concepts and methods have been in existence since time immemorial. At a conceptual level, the management of knowledge is represented differently by academics and industrialists. However, it is generally well-agreed that fundamentally corporate memory can deliver operational efficiency resulting in financial benefits to commercial activities.

Today, corporate memory is generally accepted to be represented by a cycle, with iterations commencing with the identification of existing knowledge, and subsequently followed with planning the knowledge to collect, processing of the actual selected knowledge collected, distribution of new knowledge to where it is required, fostering the usage within the organization, controlling and maintaining its use and finally disposing of it when it is no longer required. When employees depart, they carry away a wealth of organizational knowledge, including expertise and skills. This loss of knowledge makes it difficult for new hires that fill the vacant positions, leading to a scarcity of critical information. The absence of corporate memory can be detrimental to a company's growth and retention of talent and internal knowledge.

To facilitate corporate memory, organizations must employ various knowledge management practices. These may include creating repositories for storing and organizing corporate-specific knowledge, implementing knowledge-sharing platforms and tools, encouraging documentation of processes and procedures, conducting post-project reviews to capture lessons learned, fostering a culture of learning and knowledge sharing, and promoting collaboration and communication within and across departments in 8the corporation. It is crucial to recognize that the commitment to documentation transcends mere bureaucratic obligations; it is, in fact, a strategic investment in the longevity and resilience of the corporation. This commitment reflects a profound understanding that institutional memory is not a disposable commodity but a precious asset that must be cherished, nurtured, and vigilantly safeguarded for the greater benefit of the entire organization. By meticulously documenting our processes, experiences, and accumulated knowledge, we weave a tapestry of institutional memory that transcends the

transient nature of individual employees. We fortify corporate memory's foundation, ensuring that the valuable insights gained from our collective endeavors will not be lost in the ebb and flow of personnel changes. As the baton is passed to future employees, the repository of departmental memory serves as a guiding light thereby illuminating the path forward and equipping new team members with the tools they need to hit the ground running. They build upon the foundations laid before them, and propel the organization towards greater heights. In addition to these comprehensive platforms, integrating knowledge base (KB) modules of your service desk software can be particularly valuable for client-facing documentation. Ultimately, the choice of corporate memory tools depends on specific requirements, team preferences, integration needs and collaboration needs of the organization.

In the words of Brayn (2024), corporate memory is vital to organizations in figuring out its real value in their long-term growth and success. It excels in providing general-purpose structural documentation capabilities, while integrated knowledge base modules of service desk software cater specifically to client-facing documentation needs (Conklin 2001 cited in Sadat & Lin, 2018). It's important to evaluate the features, scalability, and compatibility with existing workflows to ensure the selected tools align with the organization's documentation strategy and objectives. Only through collective efforts and unwavering dedication to meticulous documentation can a corporate organization successfully safeguard their precious departmental memory from the clutches of forgetfulness. Each carefully crafted document serves as a vital piece of the puzzle, contributing to a comprehensive repository that holds the entirety of the department's knowledge and expertise. This repository stands as a beacon of wisdom, a valuable resource for future employees, ensuring a seamless transition of knowledge and empowering them to build upon the successes of the past.

In spite of the strong need to develop corporate memory, studies have shown that organizations do not always learn easily. Conklin (2001) in Sadat et.al (2018) argues that organizations have a natural tendency to forget. Kransdorff (1998) as cited in Sadat et.al (2018) cited a number of studies that found corporations to be quite capable of forgetting. A Warwick University study lead by Rosenfeld found that many companies repeat their blunders on a regular basis. This study also found that managers have little awareness of past actions or rationales. Lessons learnt earlier were not used to reduce the time and effort needed to solve recurring problems. This is more acute in project development where a US study found that projects from the same company tend to suffer from the same mistakes. Another US study undertaken by McKinsey Consulting found that many companies continually reinvent solution even though the solution could be found from past experience. Even academia is not spared from the failure to learn from lessons from the past. Some of us have probably gone through the experience of our faculty developing strategic plans that came to naught. Yet the faculty will keep on having retreats and internal seminars to develop strategies every few years without in the first place assessing the lessons that have been learned or should have been learned from earlier strategy plans. It seems that organizations are quite vulnerable to memory loss. One notable work on corporate memory is the book by Kransdorff's (1998) titled Corporate Amnesia. He defines corporate amnesia as losing organizational memory. This happens through short and selective memory recall and when employees leave an organization. Kransdorff's defines this situation as basically the failure to benefit from an organization's history. However, the Warwick study cited by Kransdorff (1998) shows that organizations keep on repeating their mistakes and blunders for two reasons.

i.) The first is the inability to draw from past experiences. These organizations have either lost their corporate memory or are incapable of recalling their corporate history.

ii.) The second reason is the inability to communicate lessons from one part of the organization to another in a timely manner.

This is more related to problems in diffusing the learning that has taken place and not just merely a failure to tap into corporate history. We propose that corporate amnesia is basically the failure to use learning to make the necessary adaptation or create value. It should be noted here that organizational loss of memory is not the same as the inability to learn or organizational dumbness. A person cannot forget something he or she never knew in the first place. Corporate memory provides the opportunity to benefit from the learning that has taken place in organizations. This can happen because the lesson is not lost in history or because of the fact that it was transferred from the learning to the points within the organization where the lessons learnt can be used for adaptation or creating value. From the above definition, we can deduce that are two basic types of organizational memory loss. The first is time based. This relates to the inability to benefit from past experience. The second is space-based and it is related to the inability to move or diffuse lessons learned at one point in the organization to other points in the organization. As a result, the necessary adaptation does not take place and the opportunity to create more value is missed.

Kransdorff (1998) cites a number of examples of organizations that suffered from time-based corporate amnesia. One such example was the situation faced by the Halifax Building Society at the beginning of the housing market collapse in the UK in 1989-90. The organization found that it did not have any branch manager who could remember how the organization handled the previous market downturn. Likewise, when there was an upturn in the housing market very few in Halifax could recall how the company faced the previous upturn. As a result it took longer for it to develop an effective response. Another example mentioned is the case of an automotive parts supplier (Kransdorff 1998). A study conducted by a consultant found that 40% of the problems encountered in the development of a product had actually been resolved in prior programmes.

Memory Bank
Memory bank refers to the collective knowledge and experiences accumulated by an organization over time. It encompasses the information, data, processes, and practices that are stored and retained within an organization, serving as a valuable resource for organizational learning, decision-making, and performance. Cegara and Martelo (2020) stated that what employees know and the agility to search and retrieve knowledge enables the use of good knowledge and mitigate counter knowledge. These continuous learning process means continuous information acquisition, dissemination and exploitation (Joel, O. O., Chinoyen, L. M., Ebeguki, E. I., Maxwell, A. O., Odunayo, P. S., Oluwatunmise, O., & Olunfunke P. A. 2023). Again organizations can rely on organizational memory to enact over unprecedented scenarios, support various functions, such as customer relationship management, risk assessment, and prevent disruptions just as we had during the COVID-19 (Alvarenga, Sincora, Valadares de Oliveira, Fantinel, & Lobler (2023). Stein and Zwass as cited Shonubi, Ogundare and Oluleti (2021) define memory bank as "the means by which knowledge from the past is brought to bear on present activities, thus resulting in higher or lower levels of organizational effectiveness." Applying this definition to oil and gas sector, memory bank encompasses the mechanisms and processes that allow organizations to leverage their accumulated knowledge and experiences to improve decision-making, enhance operational efficiency, and provide better services to customers.

METHODOLOGY

The philosophical foundation adopted for this study is the positivism and its essence of this choice is to give a perfect understanding of social phenomenon. This study utilized the survey, non-contrived cross sectional correlation and hypothesis testing. The quasi-experimental survey design approach which do not subject research variables to laboratory test but measured by the researcher's interaction and experience was adopted. The non-contrive studies are normally conducted in the natural and normal work environment. The study also adopted the quantitative approach and method. The population of the study is the thirty (30) Indigenous Oil and Gas Companies operating within the South-South states of Nigeria (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States). The entire population were also sampled and the sampling elements comprise three (3) senior management staff across the thirty (30) Indigenous Oil and Gas Companies in South-South, Nigeria. They are the Administrative Manager (Personnel), Manager Research and Development and Manager Government and Community Affairs, making the study sampling elements to be Ninety (90). Since the study is an institutional level study with smaller population, the census approach will be adopted. The study also made use of primary data with the questionnaire as instrument of data collection. Analysis was done using the tables, mean and standard deviations. The study adopted Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient aided by the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The relationship between variables was based on 95% confidence interval and 0.05 level of significance. The Cronbach reliability benchmark of 0.70 was adopted as substantial evidence of reliability for the study.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient of the variable measures

S/N	Dimensions/Measures/Moderating variable	Number of Items	Number of Case	Cronbach Alpha (a)
1	Knowledge audit	4	60	.870
2	Memory Bank	4	60	.848

Source: SPSS Result (Version 20.0)

Data Analysis and Results

A total of ninety (90) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the target respondents representing 100% of the distributed questionnaires. Seventy two (72) copies of the questionnaire representing 80% of the distributed questionnaire were retrieved from the respondents, while Eighteen (18) copies of the questionnaire representing 20% were returned but were not properly filled and so were not suitable for the analysis.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Knowledge Audit

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Identified knowledge within the organization enhances organization corporate memory	72	1	4	3.36	.924
Recovered knowledge through knowledge audit increases organization knowledgebase.	72	1	4	3.40	.974
Poor knowledge organization creates difficulty in knowledge retrieval	72	1	4	3.28	.892
Storing the right knowledge in the organization's repositories enhances effective workplace collaboration.	72	1	4	3.46	.838
Valid N (listwise)	72				

Source: SPSS Output 2024 version 20.0

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Memory bank

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge audit can help your organization identify where knowledge gap exists within the organization memory bank.	72	1	4	3.13	.948
Standard operating procedures contributes to the efficiency and reliability of your organization's memory bank.	72	1	4	3.40	.883
Proper documentation positively affects the formation, storage and retrieval of knowledge from the organization's memory bank.	72	1	4	3.43	.885
Memory bank is an essential component for every organization that wishes to increase its organization corporate memory.	72	1	4	3.50	.787
Valid N (listwise)	72				

Source: SPSS Output 2024 version 20.0

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Corporate Memory

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Memory Bank	72	1.75	4.00	3.3646	.71692
Valid N (listwise)	72				

Source: SPSS Output 2024 version 20.0

Table 5: Correlation matrix for Knowledge Audit and Corporate Memory

		Knowledge Audit	Memory Bank
Knowledge Audit	Pearson Correlation	1	.952**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	72	72
Memory Bank	Pearson Correlation	.952**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	72	72

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Knowledge Audit and Corporate Memory

Table 5 shows the result of correlation matrix obtained for knowledge audit and corporate memory. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes us to provide answer to our research question and generalize our findings to the study population.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated the relationship of Knowledge audit and corporate memory in the oil and gas sector in South-South region of Nigeria. This is as a result of the fact that knowledge audit is necessary in building organizational memory as such organizational memory bank needs to be existed to enable the organization draw from it when necessary rather than reinventing the wheel. The finding agrees with the position of Siyabonga (2020) who described knowledge audit as an in-depth analysis of an organization's information, knowledge requirements and delivery modes with the view to understanding what is known in the organization, where the knowledge can be found, in what format is it available in order to help the organization access them for future reuse. The test of hypothesis as evidence above supports that relationship exist between knowledge audit and corporate memory. The empirical findings also supports that knowledge audit has a strong relationship with organizational memory bank and this testing was achieved using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that knowledge audit significantly and positively relates to corporate memory and that knowledge audit helps in building memory bank in oil and gas companies in South-South, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION

i. To facilitate corporate memory, organizations needs to engage in knowledge audit. These includes identifying the organizational knowledge needs, creating repositories for storing the knowledge assets and organizing corporate-specific knowledge, implementing knowledge-sharing platforms and tools, encouraging documentation of processes and procedures, conducting post-project reviews to capture lessons learned, fostering a culture of learning and knowledge sharing, as well as promoting collaboration and communication within and across departments in the organization.

ii.   Organizations need to recognize that the commitment to documentation transcends mere bureaucratic obligations; it is, in fact, a strategic investment in the longevity and resilience of that organization reflecting a profound understanding that institutional memory is not a disposable commodity but a precious asset that must be cherished, nurtured, and vigilantly safeguarded in the memory bank for the greater benefit of the entire organization.

iii. They need to also know that by meticulously documenting our processes, experiences, and accumulated knowledge, we weave a tapestry of institutional memory that transcends the transient nature of individual employees. We fortify corporate memory's foundation, ensuring that the valuable insights gained from our collective endeavors will not be lost in the ebb and flow of personnel changes. As the baton is passed to future employees, the repository of departmental memory bank becomes as a guiding light in mitigating organizational loss of memory thereby illuminating the path forward and equipping new team members with the tools they need to hit the ground running by building upon the foundations laid before them and propelling the organization towards greater heights. Knowledge audit remains the right approach to achieving all the above.

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