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# Intergroup Contact Theory: Examining Knowledge Sharing Among Individuals From Different Tribes

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## ABSTRACT

Several studies have been conducted to confirm the robustness of intergroup contact theory to reduce sentiments among people from different races, nationalities, and languages. However, reviews conducted show that none of these studies examined the applicability of the intergroup contact theory to reduce prejudice among people from a multiracial context where the people share similar characteristics, but have sentiments against each other due to tribalism. The study examines the applicability of intergroup contact theory to promote positive attitudes among individuals to share knowledge in a multiracial context. A quantitative approach was adopted using questionnaires collected from two hundred and ninety-three lecturers from ten polytechnics in Ghana. Multivariate analysis revealed that equal status, cooperativeness and common goals have positive influence on an individual's attitude to share knowledge in a multiracial context. However, the influence of institutional support was not supported. The results of the study suggest the applicability of the intergroup contact theory explains how to promote a positive attitude in a multiracial context.

## KEYWORDS

Common Goal, Cooperativeness, Equal Status, Institutional Support, Intergroup Contact Theory, Knowledge Sharing

## INTRODUCTION

The wealth of a nation does not only depend on their assets and other infrastructural development thus, effective acquisition, sharing and the utilisation of the country's knowledge would aid value creation (Noor and Salim, 2011). At the organizational level, knowledge is seen to be the facet of growth and it is the major resource that provides a competitive edge to the organization (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Therefore, managing organizational knowledge which could also be referred to as knowledge management is essential for organizations to sustain a competitive edge.

Knowledge sharing which is a major process of knowledge management (Gupta and Govindarajan, 2000) would help organisations to realise the benefits of knowledge when employees participate in

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knowledge sharing activities. Knowledge sharing is classified as one of the very important features that help in creating value and profit for an organization (Lahti and Beyerlein 2000). Human resource practitioners have placed much emphasis on how to attract, build and train employees to acquire knowledge, skills and ability since equipping individuals with knowledge is the only way that organizations can capture, share, discover and apply knowledge effectively. Firms such as Microsoft, Schlumberger and others have made a pragmatic strategy swing from hardware based to knowledge based (O'Dell et al., 2002). which is yielding them tremendous benefits.

In spite of the numerous benefits of knowledge, previous studies have unveiled that companies are finding it difficult to manage knowledge. Uncovering the black box of knowledge management, past studies have focused on Information Technology as the most important enabler of organisational knowledge management tool with 3 given reference to humans who are the repository, originators and the generators of knowledge. According to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), humans are the lead players in knowledge sharing activities. Employees would rather ask for detailed problem-solving solution from their colleague rather than relying on databases, the 35 ernet and other sources (Fong et al., 2011). This depicts the notion that individual attitude is very critical to the success 29 of knowledge management in the organisation. Undoubtedly, individual attitudes and interests play a key role in the knowledge sharing processes, however, several studies have found that the individual employee loathes to participate in the knowledge sharing activities. This could be attributed to the differences in individual characteristics or perhaps their cultural or tribal background 42. Differences among individuals have been determined to be barriers that prevents individuals to engage in knowledge sharing behaviour (Boh et al., 21 1; Schlup, 2013). In spite of this, a review conducted unveils that, 21 among the lots of studies that have been conducted to examine knowledge sharing, only a handful have been conducted to examine knowledge sharing among people from heterogenous contexts. Specifically, there have not been many studies that examine the factors that influence individuals' attitude to share knowledge among people of different race, difference 48 ationality, and different culture and tribes. Results from a literature review conducted reveal that, there have not been any empiric 24 studies examining knowledge sharing a multitribal context. Settings where the people are different in terms of their tribes. Understanding individuals' knowledge sharing in a multitribal context is crucial as tribalism could play a role in preventing knowledge exchange. Coincidentally, findings from meta-analysis conducted by Pettigrew et al., (1998) found that the theoretical framework i.e., intergroup contact theory has been used to examine the reduction of prejudice among individuals from different context 17 such as school children, white housewife's and black housewives, racial discrimination. This paper aims to provide an insight into the applicability of Allport's (1954) intergroup Contact Theory in predicting how individual share their knowledge in a multitribal context. A multitribal context is a society with several distinct tribes. The people of the tribes have different language, value, norm and orientation. Thus, the paper specifically attempts to examined knowledge sharing among University lecturers in Ghana where the citizens are of different tribes. Since the individual lecturers might emanate from different tribes as in Ghana thus, the researchers believe that, there is a possibility of the existence of tribalism which could prevent them from sharing their knowledge. Essentially, this 17 ly is mandated to investigate the applicability of intergroup contact theory to predict lecturers' intention to share knowledge in a multitribal context.

### Knowledge Sharing in a Heterogenous Context

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To better understand individuals' attitude to share knowledge in a multitribal context 45, it is important to know and understand the nature of tribes. Ethnic diversity has been identified as important issue when it comes to knowledge sharing (Archivill et al., 2011). According to Bodenhausen (2009), heterogenous groups are effective than the homogenous groups. As such heterogenous groups are creative, interactive and provide low attrition rate that culminate to a higher productivity than groups that are similar in nature. According to Schlup (2013) diversity among individuals in an organisation could influence knowledge sharing. Review has shown that not much have been done

to examine knowledge sharing in a heterogeneous context. The review shows that most of the studies concentrated on individual knowledge sharing in the context of organisations such as health care industry, multinational companies, public and private companies (Tan and Nasurudin, 2011; Shih and Chiang, 2005; Mehrabani and Mohammed, 2011). In addition, the study found that most of the previous studies focus on academic institutions like high schools, polytechnics and universities (Jolaei et al., 2014; Boateng and Dzandu 2015). Moreover, the review shows that the previous researchers also delve into knowledge sharing in the social media context where computer users, Facebook users and internet users were mainly respondents for such studies (Kim and Stanton, 2015; Khe and Hew, 2007; Panahi et al., 2013; Kim, Lee and Elias, 2015). The discussion seems to show that the previous studies were not conducted in a heterogeneous context. To buttress on the lack of studies examining knowledge in heterogeneous contexts using the geographical location in which the previous studies were conducted, a review conducted on knowledge sharing researches understudied from 2005-2015 shows that most of the studies were conducted in Eastern part of Asia, (see Islam and Khan, 2015; Manaf and Muzuiki, 2013; Xiang et al., 2013; Ho and Kuo, 2013; Yasil and Hillak, 2013; Hau et al., 2013; Khalil and Shea, 2012; Keong and Subin, 2015; Ghadirian et al., 2014; Xiong et al., 2013; Rahman and Husain, 2013; Yun, 2013; Kwok et al., 2006; Lin, 2007; Yayha and Goh, 2006), Europe (see Zaffar and Ghazawneh, 2012; Ryann and Connor, 2013; Matzkas and Muller, 2011; Dokhtesmati and Zavei, 2013; Usoro et al., 2007; Gammerlgaard and Ritter, 2008; Fullwood et al., 2014; Schlup et al., 2013), and North America (see Brown et al., 2013; Evans et al., 2015; Han et al., 2008; Miranda et al., 2015; Shoemaker, 2011; Harden 2012; Topchan, 2013). Discussing from the specific country wise, the review also shows that most of the studies were conducted in a country where the population are homogenous in composition, for instance, most of the studies were conducted in China, Holland, Spain, Belgium, Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore whose population are homogenous in composition. There is a possibility that these studies were conducted among people with similar nationality, race, or language. Most of the studies been conducted in these countries implies that, the knowledge sharing repository is narrow and one sided with mostly studies conducted in a homogenous context.

Unfortunately, only a handful of the previous studies were ascertained to have examined knowledge sharing in a heterogeneous contexts. For instance, Boh et al. (2013) examine the effect of trust, culture alignment, openness to diversity and national culture on knowledge sharing among people from different nationality in an organization. In another study, Ayman et al., (2011) examine the influence of collectivism, power distance, individualism, openness to diversity among people from different nationality. Khatri, (2011), also examine the effect of individuals' national culture on knowledge sharing in an organization. Celestine and Perryer (2016) found that national culture values foster intrinsic motivation among multinational employees to share knowledge. In a similar study, Omar, Khalil and Saleem (2010) found that knowledge transfer capability correlates positively with gender egalitarianism values, uncertainty avoidance practices, and future orientation practices. Lastly, Schlup (2013) examine the effect of superiority and subordinate of nationality on knowledge sharing among employees in a multinational organisation.

### The Nature of Tribes

Tribes are denoted as socially oriented group of people who share common values, exchange, language, heritage, kinship and ancestral history. Corry (2011) describe a tribe as "those which have followed ways of life for many generations that are largely self-sufficient, and are clearly different from the mainstream and dominant society". Tribes have unique symbols that represent and differentiate them from others. Apart from holding on to history and ancestry dictions, tribes used their resemblance and the exchange of culture to clinch together which is termed as tribalism and see out-tribe members as competitors. The similarity in identity and the kinship relation edge them to altruistically help themselves when in need (James, 2006). Therefore, people from other tribes are seen as opponents and competitors since they hold diverse values and with different



nature. Tribe members are socially altruistic towards other members in their tribe (Benvenistic, 1973), this is because resources are scarce and members need to struggle for resources with mistrust and hostility for their tribe to survive (Fadiman, 2000). Therefore, having their members in authoritarian position in government and organisations make life easy for them (Kuada, 1994). In fact, when it comes to African tribes, they even perceived out-tribe members to be something worse than competitors (Kragh, 2016). For example, in Ghana, social institutions like marriages, schools, mosques, churches and political affiliations are currently arranged based on tribes and spoken languages. For instance, people marry based on their tribal background and in politics, voting currently are cast based on the tribes and ethnicity of the party's flag bearer. They will vote for people from their tribe without considering any social or developmental issues. The person may be competent but since he or she is an out-tribe they will vote against the person. This means that the degree of sentiment is higher among individuals from different tribes as compared to people from other different groups. According to James (2006), tribe's is formed through existence of exchange, kinship relation and strong ties. This means that people leaving in a multi-tribal context where people are with different tribes, values and norms would have difficulty in having a healthy relationship among themselves. Because in a multitribal context, the individuals would only clinch with people of their kind and ostracised the other people. In a multitribal context like Ghana, as aforementioned even though, the tribes have lived together for a long time and even inter- marry at times, there is still significant differences in ideologies, political affiliations, educational functionalism that characterised these tribes. The country has been able to blend the people to live beyond tribes yet there are deep traces of tribalism among the people country. The differences in tribes and their culture is the source of the challenge.

### **Benefits of Intergroup Knowledge Sharing for Business Development**

According to Allport (1954), relationship between individuals from different groups would reduce prejudice to promote positive attitude. A 46 ch the positive attitude created would promote knowledge sharing. Essentially, the intergroup knowledge sharing will contribute tremendously to the growth of the organisation. Cabrera and Cabrera (2005) in their study posited that, knowledge sharing may provide lot of benefits to the organisation when the organisations decide to engage in it. According to Riege (2005), knowledge is the bedrock of every organisation, thus an organisation may fail if knowledge is not managed. In a study conducted by KPMG (2003) report that, about 80 percent of firms in Europe utilise knowledge sharing as a competitive advantage. In support of this report, Holmstrom (2014) depicted that the degree to which a firm may be 16 le to create quality goods and services faster than its competitors is normally based on the knowledge sharing culture in the organisation. In another view, knowledge sharing was denoted as a strategy to provide competitive advantage through organisational teams. This is the ability of the teams to perform productively through interactions among team members. Team members engaging in knowledge sharing practices can create a unique knowledge resource that would be difficult for competitors to imitate. Therefore, the sharing of knowledge among team members enhances organisational performance (Srivastava et al. 2006). In addition, Dess and Shaw, (2001) denote knowledge sharing to be a tool that reduces employee turnover. Thus, the constant interaction among employees creates organization citizenship behavior (OCB) which limits their intention to leave the job.

Therefore, taking into consideration of the benef 3 knowledge sharing to an organisations and the characteristics of multitribalism, we believe that it is necessary to find individual factors that could motivates individuals to share knowledge in a multitribal settings and as such there is a need for these individual factors to have grounded in a diversity theory. After a literature review, the study found intergroup contact theory to be a theory that could provide a guide on how to promote positive attitude among individuals from different tribes.

## THEORETHICAL FRAMEWORK

### Intergroup Contact Theory

According to Allport (1954) social categorisation is part of humans. Thus, humans enjoy identifying themselves with their kind. Individuals tend to believe that their group is superior and better than other groups. This unreasonable attitude is termed as prejudice. According to Allport (1954), prejudice is a “feeling, favorable or unfavorable, toward a person or thing, prior to, or not based on, actual experience”. As aforementioned, Allport (1954) argue that prejudice is inherent part of humans as social entities individuals would want to be engaged and accepted by its kind. According to Brewer (1999), prejudice “may develop not because outgroups are hated, but because positive emotions such as admiration, sympathy, and trust are reserved for the ingroup members. The members tend to perceive people from the outgroups to be secondly and if there is anything the ingroup member have to enjoy before the outgroup. Prejudice seems to be an issue when it comes interaction among individuals from different groups. In reducing prejudices, Golden Allport postulated intergroup Contact theory in a book entitled “The Nature of Prejudice”. According to Allport (1954), the situation which connects people together is the most influential factor that moderates the level of prejudice through attitude and behavioural change. Allport (1954) posit that, interaction among people from diverse groups decreases prejudice and stereotyping. The development of intimacy from interaction among people decreases any prior sentiment among people in contact situation.

In an attempt to reduce prejudice among inter groups Allport (1954) proposed eleven (11) conditions that could support the attitudinal change which are enumerated by Dovidio et al. (2001) as “...cooperative rather than competitive interactions; cooperative interactions involving similar levels of competence between groups; interactions among members who do not possess qualities stereotypically associated with their group membership; situations that provide strong normative and institutional support for the contact; similarity of beliefs and values between the groups; opportunities for intimate, self-revealing, personal contact; that has the potential to extend beyond the immediate situation; contact that is voluntary and extends over a lengthy period; contact that occurs in a variety of contexts with a variety of in-group and out-group members; and contact involving equal status both within and outside the initial contact situation...” (pp. 31-39) There are quite a number of researchers who have applied the influence of intergroup contact theory on intergroup conflict resolution in different context. In a study about the utility of the Intergroup contact theory, Wittig and Grant Thompson (1998) found that teachers’ theories of attitude change are aligned with Allport’s intergroup contact theory. In another study Marcus-Newhall & Heindl, (1998) examined Allport’s four criteria of the intergroup contact theory and respondents’ coping with interracial stress. The study found that, children’s’ self-esteem and self-reported academic performance has a positive influence on school interracial climate. Applying Allport’s (1954) intergroup contact theory, Walker and Crogan (1998) use the Jigsaw method which is a classroom teaching method based on Allport’s four key conditions. They found that increase of student liking of peers (both in-group and out-group) decrease stereotypes among students from different groups. Allport (1954) initially proposed eleven “positive factors” that can reduce prejudice among individuals from different groups, however, other researchers have reduced these factors to four (Brown, 2010; Dovidio et al., 2001). The four factors are equal status, common goal, cooperativeness and institutional support.

Acknowledging the importance of these factors in reducing prejudice among individuals from different group as suggested by Allport (1954), Brown (2010) and Dovidio et al., (2001), we found intergroup contact theory to be useful for this study as the theory emphasised on the reduction of prejudice among individuals from different groups and this current study also aimed to raise the factors that may reduce the effect of tribalism which has an element of prejudice on individual’s attitude towards their intention to share knowledge in a multiracial setting. We found it appropriate to use the Intergroup Contact Theory as an underpinning theory to support the derivation of the factors for the study. Using the intergroup Contact Theory, we found it prudent to adopt the conditional factors also

terms as positive factors i.e., equal status, cooperativeness and institutional support as the factors that may influence individuals to share knowledge in a multiracial setting. These factors were chosen because of their importance in reducing prejudice as posited by Allport (1954). The relationship of these factors (equal status, cooperativeness, common goal, institutional support) and the intergroup contact theory are discussed in the next paragraphs.

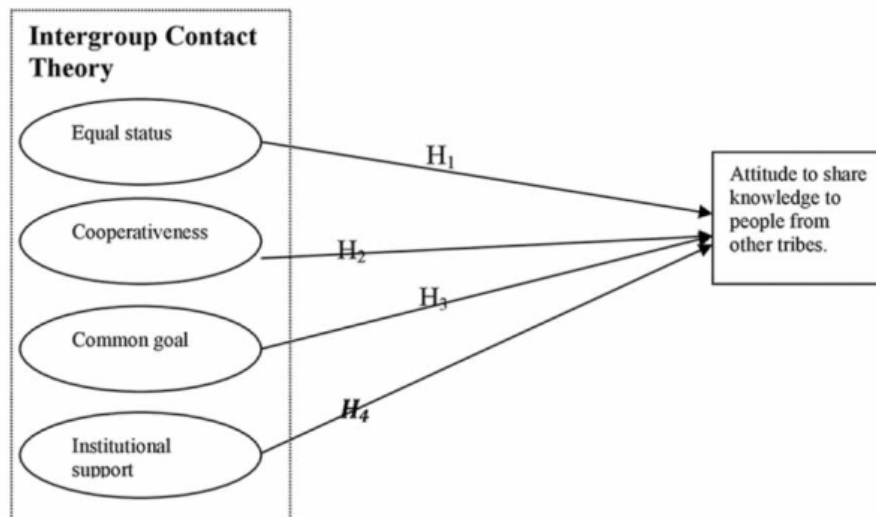
### Research Framework and Hypotheses Testing

The research framework in Figure 1 is formulated based on review of previous studies that portray these factors i.e., equal status, cooperativeness, common goal, institutional support to be critical predictors of individual attitude to share knowledge. These variables were tested among lecturers in academic institutions. The relationship between the four variables and attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes were chosen to represent the four hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, and H4) in the research model and empirically tested. The next paragraphs present discussion that supports the development of the hypotheses in the research model.

### Equal Status

Allport (1954) denoted equal status as the degree to which individuals are of equal social stand. Individuals feel comfortable when they perceive they are of equal status with another person. Contrastingly, they would develop sentiment against the other person when they perceived inequality in social status. This can be explained to the fact that many prejudiced beliefs are about the inferior ability of others to perform various tasks in society. People tend to stereotype other people due to the inferiority complex or the inability to do something. In the situation where the person from the out-group belief is of similar status as the in-group person, the existing stereotype or prejudice are more likely to be weakened rather than strengthen. This means that prejudice will decrease when individuals' belief that they are of equal social status with other person. People feel free when they perceived themselves to be equal as others as they find it easy to interact without any prejudice. The Allport (1954) hypothesis emphasised that the perception of people perceiving themselves to be of same status with others will weaken or eliminate any prejudice as the individuals of similar social status feel limitless and less constrain to discuss issues among themselves. Hence, knowing the person is of

Figure 1. Research model





similar status as him or herself will lead to a positive attitude towards the other person. Equal status may lessen any prejudice and eventually influence the attitude of the individual towards the other person. Therefore, in the context of this study, equal status may reduce sentiment and influence the attitude of the individual to share knowledge to people from other tribes. The first hypothesis is stated.

**Hypothesis 1:** Equal status has a positive significant influence on individuals' attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes.

### Cooperativeness

Allport (1954) intergroup contact theory also mentioned cooperativeness as a factor that help to reduce prejudice among people of diverse groups. Cooperativeness is the degree to which an individual attempt to satisfy other person's interest or concerns. This means that a high cooperative person will collaborate with other people easily. Based on the personality of a cooperative person as agreeable, selfless and easy going, a cooperative person would work with other people without considering any prejudice. Therefore, cooperativeness will reduce prejudice which would lead to a positive attitude towards certain behaviour. This is congruent to the premise of the hypothesis of intergroup contact theory which state that cooperativeness will reduce prejudice among people of different groups. Therefore, in the context of this study, one can postulate that cooperativeness lead to positive attitude towards individuals' intention to share knowledge to people from other tribes; sentiment of that person to the other person from different tribes is lessen. This leads to the next hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 2:** Cooperativeness has a positive significant influence on individuals' attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes.

### Common Goal

Common goal is defined as a situation where individuals shared similar organisational desired goals. Allport (1954) denoted common goal as the degree to which two or more people work towards the achievement of shared goals. According to Allport (1954), prejudice will be reduced when individuals share similar desired goals. For instance, footballers turn to interact and play as a team because they shared a common goal of winning the game. Thus, the players rely and play with the other team members from different positions to win the game. In this case, even though players may come from diverse groups with sentiments and prejudice for the other team members. However, the prejudice would be weakened as they all foc<sup>20</sup> on the achieving the common desired goal i.e., winning the game. Brown (2005) posited that effective contact usually involves an active effort toward a goal that the groups share. The shared goal would reduce any sentiment which would lead a positive attitude towards the group members. The belief of having a common goal will supersede any sentiments which will lead to positive attitude towards the other person. According to Allport (1954), people from diverse groups in an organisation should be given a common goal as this will make the goal of the organisation superordinate which would decrease any prejudice formulated among them. Therefore, in the context of this study, it can be inferred that common goal would promote positive attitude among people from multitribal group which would decrease any existing prejudice. Therefore, common goal would reduce prejudice which leads to positive attitude towards individuals' intention to share knowledge to people from other tribes. The third hypothesis is stated:

**Hypothesis 3:** Common goal has a positive significant influence on individuals' attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes.



## Institutional Support

Institutional support can be defined as the degree to which an institution provides support for an individual to engage in a behaviour. Allport (1954) denoted institutional support as the degree to which an organisation provides norms, laws and other logistics to enhance social contact. According to Allport (1954), prejudice will be reduced when institutions provide the necessary interventions that support the reduction of segregation. For instance, the establishment of the 'Satu Malaysia project in Malaysia'. This initiative may reduce the intergroup prejudice among individuals from the three main racial groups i.e., Malay, Chinese and India. Thus, the law would prohibit and reduce the tendency of individuals stereotyping people from other races. According to Pettigrew and Tropp (2006), institutional support is a very important facilitator for reducing stereotype and prejudice among people of diverse groups. Resolved support from the institution would prevent individuals from stereotyping others which will lead to the formulation of positive attitude towards the other person. According to Allport (1954), institutions should enact laws and norms that promotes the reduction of social segregation. This would weaken prejudice and promote positive attitude among individuals from diverse groups. Therefore, this study argue that institutional support would promote positive attitude among people from multitribal group which would decrease prejudice. Therefore, institutional support would reduce prejudice which leads to positive attitude towards individuals' intention to share knowledge to people from other tribes. The last hypothesis is stated:

**Hypothesis 4:** Institutional support has a positive significant influence on individuals' attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes.

## METHODOLOGY

### Instrumentation

A questionnaire was used as the instrument to collect the data. The questionnaire consists of part A and part B. Part A solicits the demographic characteristics of the respondents, which includes: age, gender, tenure, level of education, status and their tribes. Part B consists of 24 Likert scale items that measure the study's variables. Five items were used to measure attitude to share knowledge, equal status and institutional support while four items were used to measure cooperativeness and common goal. In this study, attitude to share knowledge was operationalised as the favourable or unfavourable feelings that individuals have on sharing knowledge to people from other tribes. Equal status the degree to which individuals perceived they have equal social stand. Cooperativeness was operationalised as the extent at which a person attempts to satisfy other persons' interest or concern without competition. Common goal was operationalised as the degree to which individuals shared similar/common desirable goals in the organisation. Finally, institutional support is the degree of support that an institution provides to support knowledge sharing activities. The items used in measuring the constructs were adapted and modified from Ryu et al. (2003), Yilmaz and Hunt (2001), Chiu et al. (2006) and Jolaei et al. (2014). A pilot study was conducted to sanction the items used in the survey. About six (6) questionnaires were given to lecturers from Universities to check for consistency and ambiguity. About thirty questionnaires were given to selected lecturers and later collected to check for reliability of the items. All Cronbach alpha coefficients of the items were above 0.70 indicating the questionnaire was reliable. The questionnaire was Three hundred and seventeen (317) questionnaires were distributed to lecturers in ten (10) polytechnics in Ghana. After screening the returned questionnaire with outliers and missing values, twenty-four data in the dataset were excluded for further analysis. Therefore, the remaining two hundred and ninety-three (293) were used for further analysis. Respondents' demographic were aged between 20 to 39 years. The educational background of respondent as depicted in Table 1 consists of 21.8 percent with a bachelor's degree, 65.9 percent are master's degree holders, and 12.3 percent were PhD holders. With regards to rank

**Table 1. Demographic profiles (N = 293)**

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	184	62.8
	Female	109	37.2
Age	20-29	73	24.9
	30-39	136	46.4
	40-49	58	19.8
	50-59	26	8.9
Education	Bachelors	64	21.8
	Masters	193	65.9
	PhD	36	12.3
Rank	Instructor	57	19.5
	Senior Instructor	70	23.9
	Lecturer	135	46.1
	Senior Lecturer	30	10.2
	Assoc. Prof	1	3.0
Tenure	0-2	89	30.4
	3-5	119	40.6
	6-8	48	16.4
	9 yrs. and Abo.ve	37	12.6
Tribe	Akan	114	38.9
	Ga-Adangbe	45	15.4
	Ewe	61	20.8
	Hausa	15	5.1
	Guan	33	11.3
	Other Ethnic	25	8.5

19.5 percent were instructors, 23.9 are senior instructors, 46.1 are lecturers, 10.2 are senior lecturers and 3 percent are Associate Professors. Finally, in relation to the length of service, about 23.8 percent had served 1-2 years, 36.2 percent 2-3 years, 20 percent 4-6 years, and 20 percent 7 years and above. A total of 16.4 percent fall within the categories of 6-8 years of work experience and 12.6% of the participants have worked for 9 years and above. Finally, in relation to the tribes of the respondents, majority of them are Akan with about 38.9 percent, with only 5.1 percent are Hausa, 11.3 percent are Guans while 8.5 percent are from other tribes/ethnicities. This percentage distribution of tribes in this study represent the actual percentage of tribes in Ghana.

## DATA ANALYSIS

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A factor analysis was performed using the principal component analysis (PCA) extraction to identify patterns and to reduce the dimensionality of the items used in the research instrument. The use of the orthogonally rotated method (or the varimax method) ensured that the dimensions were uncorrelated, to improve the interpretation of the results. To test the significance of the factor loadings, several authors such as Hair et al. (1998) and Field (2000) have suggested that in the interpretation of the factor matrix, factor loadings greater than + or -0.40 are significant predictors. Norusis (1993) also indicates that factor loadings greater than or equal to + or - 0.50 are very significant predictors. This met the criteria for factor loadings, all factors having loadings above + or - 0.60 (see table 2). A correlation matrix from the factor analysis was used to check for patterns of relationships. Variables were examined by the significance values and searching for the majority of values greater than 0.05. For this study, the majority of correlations were greater than 0.6. These loadings indicate the underlying constructs loaded well on each other. The factor analysis resulted in extraction of five

factors where the results indicated that the Kaiser Meyer-Okin value was 3.216 which is higher than the recommended minimum of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant indicating a good factorability of the correlation matrix. Table 2 indicated that all the items loaded well on their factors with Cronbach Alpha values well above 0.80 (refer to Table 2).

Once construct validity was achieved, the data were further analyzed using multiple regression. The results of the multiple regression model are depicted in Table 3.

**Table 2. Rotational component matrix**

Items	1	2	3	4	5
AT1	.605				
AT2	.861				
AT3	.880				
AT4	.863				
AT5	.762				
CO1		.807			
CO2		.880			
CO3		.900			
CG2			.878		
CG3			.798		
CG4			.890		
IS1				.844	
IS2				.925	
IS3				.893	
IS4				.899	
ES1					.834
ES2					.850
ES3					.852
ES4					.841
ES5					.842

Notes: Only loading>0.4 are shown; Extraction method: Principal Components Analysis; Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

**Table 3. Regression results**

Variable	Beta	T	Sig.
Equal Status	0.107	1.984	0.048
Cooperativeness	0.383	6.854	0.000
Common goal	0.118	2.026	0.044
Institutional support	0.073	1.390	0.166
R = 0.495 R square = 0.245 Adjusted R square = 0.235 Standard error = 0.365001			

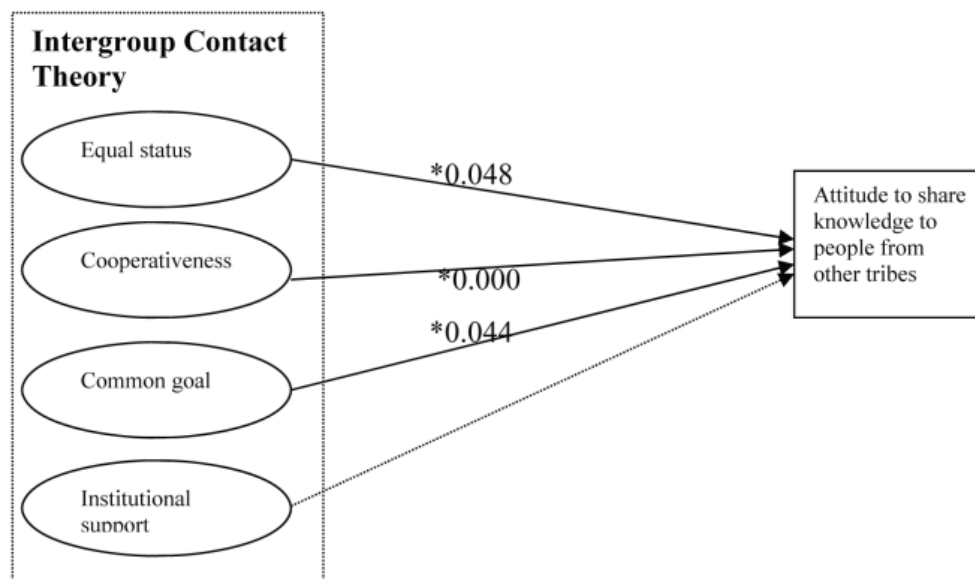


The results show an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value of 24.5% indicating that the four factors namely equal status, cooperativeness, common goal, and institutional support explain 24.5% variance of attitude to share knowledge. Based on the analysis, equal status has a positive significant effect on attitude to share knowledge with a p-value of 0.048; hence, supporting Hypothesis 1. In addition, the results show that cooperativeness and common goal have positive significant effect on knowledge sharing with a p-value of 0.000 and 0.044, respectively. Thus, hypothesis 2 and 3 are supported. However, the effect of institutional support on attitude to share knowledge was not supported. Figure 2 shows the final research model.

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigates the extent to which equal status, cooperativeness, common goal and institutional support influence individuals' attitude to share knowledge in a multitribal context. The study found equal status, cooperativeness, common goal to have a positive significant influence on individual's attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes. These results are congruent to the results of prior studies (see, Haesabroack et al., 2011; Lin, 2007; Chiu et al., 2006) but these studies were conducted in homogenous contexts. The respondents used for their studies were similar in terms of their culture, language and colour. These results suggest that equal status, common goal and cooperativeness are not only important factors that influence knowledge sharing among individuals in a homogenous context where the individuals are similar in terms of their culture, belief and language but also in a heterogeneous context where the individuals are different in terms of culture, belief and other physical characteristics. In addition, the results have also laid much emphasis on the assertion that Allport intergroup contact theory is applicable to be used as a guide to reduce prejudice to promote positive attitude among individual from different groups. This implies that the use of the three (3) factors i.e., (equal status, cooperativeness and common goal) conditional factors of Allports (1954) intergroup contact theory could reduce tribalism among individuals in a multitribal context. This means that the intergroup contact theory is applicable in reducing tribalism among individuals from different tribes. Thus, the implementation these conditional factors would

Figure 2. Final research model (Note: Sig at 0.05)



promote posit attitude to reduce prejudice among individuals from different tribes. Therefore, this confirm the hypotheses proposed by Allport in 1954. Surprisingly, the result shows that institutional support was not significant in influencing the lecturer's attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes. This result is unexpected because, it is a general knowledge that employees would share their knowledge when their organisation or institution support knowledge sharing activities. Ideally, one would expect that the support of an institution on activities would trigger a positive attitude. The possible explanation that can be given to this result is that most employees perceived their knowledge as the reason their recruitment into the organisation. They see knowledge sharing as part of their obligation as lecturer, therefore the institution supporting knowledge sharing would also create awareness but not really influence their attitude to share knowledge. Bennett, Chiabenu, Li, and Shapiro (2013) argue that, institutions attempting to influence certain common behaviour may not hold as the needed behaviour is already normal to the employee. The institutional support tends not to influence the attitude of the employees. **3**

The findings of the study show that equal status ha **9** influence on individual's attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes. This implies that individual's attitude to share knowledge would be positive when they perceive they have equal status with recipient of their knowledge. Therefore, we suggest that academic managers should consider equal status in the formulation of their policies to create positive attitude among the academic staff. This can be achieved by sharing available resources equitably to employees. For instance, a situation where offices are allocated to some employees' while neglecting others would lead to stereotype where the Have-Not's may feel not equal with those who have the offices. In addition, the study found cooperativeness to have influence on individuals' attitude to share **3** knowledge to people from other tribes. This suggests that a highly cooperative employee would have a positive attitude to share knowledge without considering the tribe of the recipient. This means that, the cooperativeness would reduce the existing prejudice to promote positive attitude of the individual. We further suggest that govern **44** and academic managers should create cooperative culture which could promote positive attitude for the employees to share their knowledge without any prejudice. The institutions can achieve this through the establishment of collective interventions such as team building, task force, and other group functionaries. These activities would promote cooperative behaviour that could create a positive attitude among employees to share their knowledge to people from other tribes. Lastly, the study found common goal to have influence on individuals' attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes. This result implies that common goal would influence an individual's attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes. Practically, this suggests that managers should attempt to set a shared vision for the employees to work towards it. Working towards same goal would influence their attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes.

Strategically, the encouragement of multitribal knowledge sharing could foster organisational innovation. As such individuals from different groups would have different ideol **19**s, insight and orientation which could help to generate new ideas for innovation. According to (Storey and Kelly, 2002; Lin, 2007; Tsai, 2001), knowledge is the most important element in **8** innovation. The interplay of knowledge brings out new products and services in the organisations. There are existing studies (Kang and Kim, 2013; Zamora and Senoo, 2013) which suggests that firms that effectively manage their organizational knowledge develops a higher level of innovation and competitive advantage. Relating innovation and knowledge sharing among people from multitribal context, the differences among the tribes could be an advantage to harness social innovation. Accordingly, individuals from different tribes might possess different knowledge and understanding of issues, thus the contact between these individuals would promote knowledge exchange within an organisation which could result in product or knowledge that can increase productivity. Importantly within the context of the study i.e., among university lecturers the promotion of knowledge sharing among lecturers from different tribes could result in new knowledge resource. Collaborative research and intergroup teaching adoptive curricular could be adopted to generate this novel knowledge for creating new product and services to solve pressing societal needs.

## CONCLUSION

The study has achieved its main objectives of examining the effects of equal status, cooperativeness, common goal and institutional support on individual attitude to share knowledge to people from other tribes. The results indicated that these factors could promote positive attitude among people from different tribes to exchange knowledge among themselves. Thus, having positive attitude knowledge among lecturers from different tribes could spark up new knowledge for social innovation. In addition, deriving these four factors that is equal status, cooperativeness, common goal and institutional support from Allport's (1954) hypothesis have confirm the robustness of Allport's (1954) theory to be use as a guide to reduce prejudice among individuals from different groups. Allport's hypothesis specified four conditions for positive attitude. The situation must allow equal group status within the situation, common goals, cooperativeness, and institutional support. Thus, the present results having three of the conditional factors i.e., equal status, cooperativeness and common goal suggest that Allport's conditional factors are is have the capability to reduce prejudice and promote positive attitudes among people from different tribes perhaps it could a sure way of preventing and settling tribal conflicts in the war-torn zones in Africa. Based on the findings, implications for practice and theory, limitation, and future research were presented.

### Limitation and Future Research

Similar to other studies, this study is not without limitations. The major limitation is the generalization of the findings due to the use of only one country. Although the sample frame used for this study may be unique but using tribes in one country is not enough to be generalised how all tribes in Africa share knowledge. Hence, future studies may consider collecting data from other countries with multitribal settings.

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