The Use of Social Media in Knowledge Sharing Case Study Undergraduate Students in Major British Universities

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate how the social media tools can help the exchange of knowledge between university students to build a knowledge sharing culture. The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of individual and organizational factors, social media technologies (SMT) and knowledge sharing factors, thus predicting the online user behavior towards social media knowledge-sharing. Different methods such as (PLS) were used to analyze the study results in order to consider the influence of all constructs on the framework simultaneously. Therefore, a (157) online questionnaires were collected from undergraduate students in major British universities. The results reveal that knowledge sharing behavior had five positive factors: mutual trust, reciprocity, eWOM quality, perceived usefulness and perceived online attachment motivation. Practical implications, limitations and directions for future research are also discussed.

KEYWORDS

Knowledge Sharing, Online Knowledge Sharing Behavior, Social Media Technologies (SMT), Social Media Tools

INTRODUCTION

“Knowledge is Power”, Knowledge element is acknowledged as the fundamental resource that can provide sustained competitive advantage. Hernaez and Campos (2011) defined Knowledge as “Justified true belief that increases an entity’s capability for effective animation” (p. 225). The importance of Knowledge in an organizational context can refer to the increase of its awareness, understanding, perceiving and discovering new territories thus leads to increase its ability to create and innovate in its global dynamic environment.

“Social Media” is used as a communication apparatus where students will be able to participate in knowledge sharing (Jones, Temperley & Lima 2009). Social media technologies (SMT) and tools have provided new opportunities to the world, it supports the procedure of knowledge sharing in institutions as it allows easy and prompt communication.

In academic fields, SMT is a powerful type of communication system that provides a platform for knowledge sharing which is essential to attract the attention of both students and faculty members (Anari, Asemi et al., 2013). Moreover, people are adept to make use of social media tools in order to increase and richen their networks and collect information by integrating social media into their business processes (Gaál et al., 2014).

According to Brown (1988) students are expected to be responsible of their education proactively by learning with both individual responsibility and communal sharing. This concept determines the importance and value of knowledge sharing through students.

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The purpose of this study is to study the role played by social media in disseminating knowledge in universities with the individual and organizational factors and their impact on improving the educational system by studying the intensive targeting of students in universities. This study also offers proposals that contribute to the improvement and development of the educational and academic level, thereby achieving a competitive advantage.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

So far there has been no research on how social media tools can help to share knowledge between students and faculty at universities. So, we tried to include some researchers relevant to the subject of our study.

The effectiveness of social networks in organizations was investigated by Van Zell (2009). The study aimed to educate information technology, business decision makers, knowledge workers and others about the various applications, benefits and risks associated with social networking. It concluded that the application of this type of Web 2.0 toolkit in enterprises would help individuals to engage in knowledge management.

Kong, Ogata et al. (2009) investigate factors affecting the exchange of knowledge among students. Covering individual factors, classrooms, and technological aspects. A questionnaire was used to collect data, assigning that technology supports the student’s ability to participate and compete with colleagues and influence the exchange of knowledge for students respectively.

Damoffek, Bottgit and Mernes (2012) realized the trends of social media technology in Nielsen to find out how these techniques can help create a culture of knowledge sharing. The study indicates that respondents had a positive attitude to share knowledge with each other through the use of social media tools.

Fatima Anari, Asifah Asmi et al. (2013) define the use of interactive social media tools such as social networking tools, social networking tools (SAT) and image tools or video sharing tools (EVISHT) to expand knowledge and information among university librarians.

Faculty members can use social media to create e-learning experiences. More importantly, students can use social media in ways that can help their learning experience (Jonavithola and Trityakov, 2012).

Need for Knowledge Sharing

Sharing knowledge is helping others to learn, joining with others to solve problems, develop new ideas, or implement operations (Cummings, 2004).

There are several reasons for focusing on knowledge sharing because it may lead to improved innovation capacity and thus a sustainable competitive advantage (Foss, Hastid & Michelova, 2010).

Knowledge is valuable and intangible assets to create and sustain competitive advantages within institutions, especially educational institutions (Miller & Chamsey, 1996), as mentioned above, three results related to knowledge sharing have been extracted as shown in Figure 1.

Knowledge sharing is a social phenomenon linked to interpersonal relations and social interactions (Lin, Wu & Andlo, 2012.) Unfortunately, people have different reasons for not sharing knowledge in all circumstances as their organizations wish (Cho, Li, & Sue, 2007). (Reg, 2005) however, sharing knowledge is a difficult task that requires time and effort and requires students to be persistent and willing to interact with each other (Ghadirian et al., 2014).

Social Media Tools for Effective Communication

Many definitions of social media, such as computer tools that allow people or companies to create, exchange or exchange information, functional interests, ideas, images and videos in virtual communities and networks (Bitner, 2016), the idea is that social media have the ability to bring people together Very broad definition. This definition suggests that telegraph and telephone are social means of communication - not technology scientists intend to describe them. (Schuster, Tiroche, 2015)
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