

Socio -Technical Determinants of Knowledge Sharing Behaviour-An Investigation on Social Networking Sites users

Md. Fahami Ahsan Mazmum

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5

6 **Abstract**

7 Social Networking is a buzzword in modern communication for eradicating the distance
8 barrier. Due to the advancement in Information and Communication Technology, peoples can
9 communicate with each other from anywhere in anytime. Different way of communication
10 tools exists; Social networking is one of them. Through social networking, users can share their
11 thinking, values, emotions, insights and so on with others. However, their behaviour of the
12 social networking sites (SNS) users is influenced by different factors. This paper aims at
13 identifying those determinants, specially the sociotechnical determinants of knowledge sharing
14 behaviour among the user of SNS. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was conducted on the
15 primary data collected through the survey. Therefore, the outcome of this study shows that
16 ethical culture, social ties, sense of belonging, knowledge selfefficacy, information privacy and
17 structural assurance are all significant variables as socio-technical factors. This study provides
18 a guideline to the different group of people likemarketers, employers who need to understand
19 the knowledge sharing behaviour of the SNS users.

20

21 **Index terms**— socio-technical, determinants, social networking, knowledge-sharing behaviour.

22 **1 Introduction**

23 In this day and age, people are getting more involved in virtual world through their presence in social networking
24 sites (SNS). Online users of various sites consider networking online as a convenient media of sharing thoughts
25 and knowledge. People in online communicate with their friends, family, neighbours and even strangers. By the
26 grace of these online networking sites, people get scope to interact with one another in more convenient way
27 then the previous. People from diverse geographical area with similar interest can communicate with each other
28 through online networking (Brown & Duguid, 2001). Social networking sites become more popular because of
29 high level social presence and self-disclosure (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Currently, popular social networking
30 sites are-Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, Flickr, WhatsApp etc. (Maina, 2018). Through this
31 SNS people share their views, idea, insights which derived from the implicit and explicit knowledge they process
32 (Hakami et al., 2014).Knowledge sharing among people enhanced through the emerged online tools, like-Social
33 Network, Blogs, Wikis and Podcast Forums (Hakami et al., 2014).

34 According to Aliakbar et al. (2012), knowledge sharing is the process by which knowledge is transferred and
35 exchanged among people. Pulakos et al., (2003)believes that knowledge sharing is not limited to transfer and
36 exchange but sharing thoughts to solve problem and developing ideas also included in knowledge sharing. This
37 knowledge sharing may be influenced by various types of factors; social, technical, personal etc. In this paper
38 socio-technical determinants of knowledge sharing are given concentration. Socio-technical determinants refers
39 to users social background regarding knowledge acquire, thought, views and its interaction with technical system
40 like SNS (IGI, 2018). These socio-technical factors can affect the knowledge sharing which leads to knowledge
41 gap among communities. So if the socio-technical determinants can be identified, the way of knowledge sharing
42 will be accelerated, which ultimately reduced knowledge gap with proper knowledge, among the communities.
43 For this purpose this paper will focus on socio-technical issue on knowledge sharing behaviour where variable of
44 each factor will be identified by reviewing literature. Later, quantitative analysis is conducted to determine the

5 ETHICAL CULTURE

45 core variable on social and technical sector. The research question of this study is-What are the sociotechnical
46 determinants of knowledge sharing behaviour among social networking sites user? This paper includes six parts.
47 First part provide introduction of this paper. In the second part, literature review has been described. Third
48 part discusses the methodology. Data analysis and discussion has been shown in forth part. Fifth part includes
49 the integrated findings. In the last part, conclusion of this paper has been given.

50 2 II.

51 3 Literature Review

52 The term 'Socio-technical' use to emphasize the connections between the social and the technical factors to
53 understand particular technology or behaviour in the organization (Trist, 1963). In socio-technical system,
54 social and technical factors interact and impact each other for a particular process or output. (Pasmore et al.,
55 1982). According to Davenport & Prusak (2000), if only technological factors are considered, proper knowledge
56 sharing behaviour cannot be determined, as knowledge sharing behaviour is a social process which impacted
57 by social factors. To understand the knowledge sharing in SNS, both social and technical factors are necessary
58 for investigation. Therefore, this study focused on the socio-technical determinants of the knowledge sharing
59 behaviour in SNS.

60 In the modern age, the uses of SNS as a form of communication and knowledge sharing is increasing at a
61 high speed and the times lapse between per visit also gradually reducing. Some researchers used quantitative
62 analysis to identify the determinants of knowledge sharing behaviour while others used qualitative approach. A
63 study by Tan (2013) found that the main determinants of successful knowledge sharing behaviour are Social ties,
64 knowledge self-efficacy, structural assurance and system quality. As a social factors ethical culture, social tie, and
65 a sense of belonging in online network and as a technical factors structural assurance of service providers and
66 structural assurance of the Internet have been identified by Chai & kim (2012). However, these studies focused
67 on particular demographic area, different age group can provide different outcome. Therefore, more quantitative
68 studies need to conduct on diverse group of people for more generalizable outcome.

69 Different researchers used different theories to analyse the knowledge behaviour of the SNS users. A study to
70 analyse knowledge sharing behaviour by Hsua et al. (2007) proposed a social cognitive theory (SCT)based model
71 which mainly focused on trust, selfefficacy, and outcome expectations. According to study by Paroutis & Saleh
72 (2009) history, outcome expectation, perceived organizational and management support and trust are four key
73 variable of knowledge sharing with the use of web 2.0 technologies. Social factors, like-trust, reciprocity, social
74 network ties were founded along with other personal and organizational factor by Chen & Hew (2015).Share
75 willingness, trust, reciprocity and altruism identified as main variables in a proposed model based on social
76 exchange theory of knowledge sharing behaviours in virtual communities by Jinyang (2015). A study by Majali
77 et al. (2016) identified that reciprocity and sense of community play vital role in knowledge sharing behaviour
78 where trust considered as insignificant one. However, they ignored technical and other factors that might have
79 impact on knowledge sharing behaviour as well. Information Privacy and Social Ties are considered initially as
80 determinants in a technological category in knowledge sharing behaviour, however finally social ties identified as
81 a leading variable in knowledge sharing in social media (Hakami et al., 2014). Studies conducted by Tohidinia &
82 Mosakhani (2010) and Chai & kim (2012) identified that social ties is positively correlated with the knowledge
83 sharing behaviour. Previous study by Wang & Wei (2011) indicates that sense of belongings does not have
84 high positive correlation relation with the knowledge sharing behaviour, where absence of direct relationship
85 is considerate as moderating variable. Self-efficacy impacts positively in knowledge sharing behaviour, which
86 is identified in a study conducted by Zhang & Ng (2012). Hara & Hew (2007) conducted a research study
87 where, structural assurance considered as positively correlated with knowledge sharing behaviour. Considering
88 all the previous research, this study considered some social and technical factor as sociotechnical determinants
89 of knowledge sharing behaviour.

90 4 a) Research Dimension and Hypothesis Developed

91 Reviewing the literature and considering the outcome of the previous studies, variables are identified for study in
92 two sectors, one is social and another one is technical. In social sector the variables are-ethical culture (EC), social
93 ties (ST), sense of belonging (SB), knowledge self-efficacy (KSE). In technical sector the variables are-information
94 privacy (IP), structural assurance (SA).

95 5 Ethical Culture

96 Ethical culture refers to the moral value that is injected to the individual (Hawker, 2002). Hawker (2002) said
97 that ethics is a moral value and principle while Pai & Arnott (2013) defined ethics in Social Networking Sites
98 (SNSs) as access control and privacy control of information. Chai & kim (2012) mentioned that the ethical
99 culture is becoming imperative in recent days because of the widespread use of technology. In this consequence,
100 the quality of information sharing in SNSs is very essential as a medium or platform for knowledge sharing.
101 Devito (2009) emphasized on politeness while communicating in SNSs towards other individuals and mutual
102 respect to one another. Matthews & Stephens (2010) marked that ethical culture is important to seek the truth.

103 Although there is high usage of SNSs which makes ethical culture much important, we need to avoid circulation
104 of false information also. Based on this discussion following hypothesis emerged-H1: Ethical culture (EC) has a
105 significant effect on KSB.

106 **6 Social Ties**

107 Social ties indicate the closeness between or among users in SNSs (Chaia & kim, 2012,). Chow & Chan (2008)
108 highlighted that social ties is the degree of contact that is maintained with other members in the SNSs. Several
109 researchers ??Hsu et al., 2007;Chow & Chan, 2008)shows that stronger social ties between or among users in SNSs
110 increase the Knowledge Sharing (KS) behaviour. He et al. (2009) also indicated that the degree of Knowledge
111 Sharing (KS) may vary on the basis of the degree of social ties. So, higher social ties make higher KS in SNSs.
112 Wang & Wei (2011) supported that trust is an essential segment of social ties which help build up the strong
113 relationship among the participants or individuals. Moreover, the time spent in SNSs has contributory effect
114 to make social relationship between users (Chai & kim, 2012). Therefore, following hypothesis is developed-H2:
115 Social ties (ST) has a significant effect on KSB.

116 **7 Sense of Belonging**

117 Lin (2008) defined sense of belonging as a selfrealization of being as an individual within the specific community.
118 He added that it defines the relationship for sense of belonging with Knowledge Sharing. Lin (2008) suggested
119 that the higher the degree of belonging an individual has, the greater the chances for sharing knowledge. ??hiu
120 Based on the discussion following hypothesis emerged-H3: Sense of belonging (SB) has a significant effect on
121 KSB.

122 **8 Knowledge Self-efficacy**

123 Hakami et al. (??014)) perceived that self-efficacy has high relationship to knowledge sharing behaviour. It
124 is assumed that people with high self-efficacy believe that their owned knowledge will benefit others and they
125 are more willing to share (Tohidinia, 2010). Knowledge self-efficacy, as believing that, an individual knowledge
126 has the ability to solve problems as well as to make better decisions (Luthans, 2003). Therefore, this study has
127 considered knowledge self-efficacy to have an effect on KSB H4: Knowledge self-efficacy(KSE) has a significant
128 effect on KSB

129 **9 Information Privacy**

130 The wish of individuals to manage or have some influence over data about themselves is called information
131 privacy. Information technology's advances have increased the concern information privacy and its impacts.
132 As a result, researchers of information systems have started to explore information privacy issues, along with
133 technical solutions to focus these concerns (France & Robert, 2011). Information Privacy is an individual's claim
134 to control personal information-information identifiable to the individual-is acquired, disclosed or used (Kang,
135 1998). The ability of users' like-individuals, groups or institutions to decide when, how, and to what extent their
136 information is shared to others is called information privacy. Information privacy refers to restricted access to
137 private information in internet and is a significant reason for user participating in social networking sites (Snyder
138 & Slauson, 2006). H5: Information privacy(IP) has a significant effect on KSB.

139 **10 Structural Assurance**

140 Defensive arrangements such as securities, laws, lawful recourses and promises, that are used for promoting
141 transactional success is called structural assurance. For example, there are different legal and technological
142 internet and websites safeguards that are attached with the internet or website. These protective measures secure
143 the internet and website users from privacy loss, identity loss, credit card fraud or any other criminal activities
144 that could happen on the internet. This is usually known as structural assurance To make feeling safe the internet
145 and websites users in their sharing of knowledge is the objective of structural assurance. If the service providers
146 and the internet can't provide necessary structural assurance ,it will play negative role in stimulating knowledge
147 sharing behaviours (Evangelou & Karacapilidis, 2005). Moreover, in electronic marketing, structural assurance
148 has acted an important role in forming trust (Pavlou, 2002). Customers' belief while making decision on which
149 e-vendors to use is influenced by strong structural assurance provided by these e-vendors. (Gefen et al., 2003).
150 Thus, for maintaining knowledge sharing, structural assurance is taken as major element (So & Bolloju, 2005). In
151 SNSs, structural assurance is known as the internet's structure that ensures user a protected environment (Chai
152 & Kim, 2012). Performance promises, rules, regulations, and legal assurance are the terms of this structure.
153 McKnight et al.(2002) specified that that structural assurance is the protection of SNSs' users from criminal and
154 fraud activities and also from the prevention of loss of privacy and individual identity. As for example, SNSs
155 users must be able to make their information open to the public or limited to certain users and every SNS should
156 provide such kind of options (Tan, 2013). Hara & Hew, (2007) indicated that structural assurance is positively
157 related to knowledge sharing behaviour in SNSs. Ribbink et al., (2004) found that structural assurance have

17 IMPLICATION

158 positive impact on the internet use and internet trust. Therefore, following hypothesis emerged-H6: Structural
159 assurance(SA) has a significant effect on KSB.

160 People can and do encounter unpredicted reprimand or even discharge from their positions because of
161 unsuitable actions as a result. According to Chou & Liao (2013) in case of knowledge sharing in social media,
162 information privacy has a significant impact. So, Information privacy is considered in this study, so following
163 hypothesis emerged- The measurement construct of the variables taken for this study are developed based on the
164 discussion above. Considering the nature and core facts of each variable the items are taken for this study. This
165 study considered new items rather than the previous one to represent the core theme of the variables, because
166 the previous items were not self-exploratory. As survey method was used, so self-exploratory items will provide
167 more quality data (Duffy et al., 2005). However, the new items were developed through changing and modifying
168 the items of Chai & kim (2012)

169 11 Methodology

170 Both primary and secondary data have been used to answer the research question of this study. For secondary
171 data, various relevant research articles, journals, books, periodicals, magazines have been reviewed. A semi-
172 structured questionnaire has been prepared to collect primary data. A Google form has been used to prepare
173 this questionnaire. The link of this form has been shared with respondents to collect this data. There are various
174 thoughts regarding the sample size. According to Wang & Wang (2018) in order to conduct structural equation
175 modelling (SEM) sample size of more than 150 would be better, whereas Roscoe (1975) argued that total number
176 of items on the study provide the base for calculating sample size. Moreover for collecting good sample size
177 questionnaire link was sent to 270 people. Out of 270, 242 responses have been received thus the response rate is
178 89.63%. Therefore, the collected responses show a good sample size for conducting the SEM. At first the reliability
179 of the constructs were tested through Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. Afterwards, a confirmatory factor
180 analysis was conducted in AMOS (version 22) on both measurement model and structural model. The outcome
181 of the CFA provides the base from testing the model fitness of measurement model and also for the testing the
182 hypotheses.

183 12 IV.

184 13 Data Analysis and Discussion

185 14 a) Demographic Analysis

186 In our study, out of 242 respondents 54.1% and 45.9% are male and female respectively. In case of age group,
187 76.4% people grouped into 20-24 years where .4% people are from 40-44 years. Most of the respondents are
188 students which is responsible for 86% of the total response. Among the participants, all have more or less
189 experience in using social networking sites. But 122 participants out of 242 mentioned that they have 4-6 years
190 of experience in this regard. It is needed to refer that 35.5% spent 3-4 hours per day (where less than 1 hour
191 usage rate is 6.6% and more than 14 hours rate is .4%) in social networking sites.

192 15 b) Reliability Analysis

193 Before conducting the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) through Structural equation modelling (SEM) the
194 reliability of the construct need to be tested through the cronbach alpha reliability analysis. Following provide
195 the details of the reliability analysis. From the reliability statistics (Table 3), the value of Cronbach's alpha
196 coefficient for the 16 items is .835. It means that these items have comparatively high internal consistency. The
197 last column of item-total statistics table (Table 4) entitled 'Cronbach's alpha if item deleted' measures probable
198 value of the Cronbach's alpha, if it is needed to get rid of a particular item. So, from the item-total statistic
199 stable, it is obvious that that none of the values of the column of 'Cronbach's alpha if item deleted' is greater
200 than the current alpha of the whole scale: .835. This indicates that it is not necessary to delete any items. Hence,
201 to measure all construct consistency, the survey questionnaire can be taken as a trustworthy tool.

202 16 c) Model fitness measures

203 After checking the reliability of the constructs, a measurement model was developed in AMOS ??version 22) in
204 order to test the fitness of the model. To test the model of this study, structural equation modelling (SEM) was
205 used as SEM test the relationship among the variables through confirmatory factor analysis (Byrne, 2016) V.

206 17 Implication

207 This study provides a theoretical contribution on the area of studies relating to social networking and knowledge
208 sharing. This study also shows the significance of the taken factors to the knowledge sharing behaviour. Social
209 and technical factors that are taken into consideration in this study turned significant, which implies that not
210 only social factors but also technical factors affect the knowledge sharing behaviour of SNS users. Whereas,
211 previous studies showed social factors more significant than the technological factors (Chai & kim, 2012). As a
212 methodological contribution, this study shows construct reliability of the newly developed items through reliability

213 analysis and model fitness measures. This study also implies some practical contribution, the outcome of this
214 information provide good insight about the social media users behaviour and the underlying feeding factors which
215 ultimately provide guidance to various group of people (i.e. marketers, organizations focus group, employers etc.)
216 who needs to deal with the behavioural psychology of the SNS users. The output information is also useful to
217 the social networking platform provider to develop, improve and make it interactive through understanding their
218 needs. In order to provide social networking platform to particular community and group, platform provider
219 should consider the offline developed social factors because along with technical factors, as those offline social
220 factors also impact the online behaviour.

221 **18 VI.**

222 **19 Limitation and Future Focus**

223 This study counted several limitations; firstly, this study is cross-sectional, so the long term relationship between
224 the factors cannot be confirmed by this study. Therefore, in future longitudinal studies can be conducted.
225 Secondly, this study didn't test the master validity of the measurement items, which implies that convergent and
226 divergent validity of the newly developed measurement items cannot be confirmed. In future, these validities can
227 be tested to make the items more generalizable. Thirdly, this study used two items for Knowledge Self-Efficacy
228 and structural assurance; however use of more items can robust the outcome for generalization as researcher
229 recommend use of at least three items of reflecting a factor (Hair et al., 2010).

230 **20 VII.**

231 **21 Conclusion**

232 In the nutshell, this study aimed to research the socio-technical determinants of the knowledge sharing behaviour
233 of SNS users. To find the answer of the research question this study collected data on the developed items of
234 each factors taken from the previous literature. A SEM was conducted which leads to the outcome of this study.
235 All the considered factors; ethical culture, social ties, sense of belonging, knowledge selfefficacy, information
236 privacy and structural assurance are found as significant factors behind the knowledge sharing behaviour of the
237 SNS users. The finding of this research contributes theoretically, methodologically and practically. A manager
238 can use this paper for getting ideas and make decision on how social networking is used for the organizational
239 engagement along with to realize the factors of social networking engagement. Researchers may find valuable and
240 interesting factors that were previously less prioritized but with the sequence of time those factors are getting
more importance. ^{1 2}

241 Figure 1:

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users

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Construct	Related items
Ethical Culture (EC)	EC-1: I think individual values is important in knowledge sharing behaviour EC-2: I do believe that individual norms play a vital role in knowledge sharing behaviour EC-3: Individual morality has great impact on knowledge sharing behaviour
Social Ties (ST)	ST-1: Trust to followers shapes knowledge sharing behaviour ST-2: Time one spent in virtual world is judgmental in knowledge sharing attitude ST-3: Frequency of people interaction is one of the vital components in knowledge sharing Attitude
Sense of Belonging (SB)	SB-1: One belongs to a particular group sometimes shape one behavioural pattern in sharing knowledge SB-2: Commitment level to a particular group in knowledge sharing is note worthy SB-3: Comfort level to share his/her thoughts and opinions is very crucial in knowledge sharing trend

Figure 2: Table 1 :

2

Descriptions		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male Female	131 111	54.1% 45.9%
	15-19	6	2.5%
	20-24	185	76.4%
	25-29	36	14.9%
Age	30-34 35-39	7 2	2.9% .8%
	40-44	1	.4%
	45-49	3	1.2%
	Above 49	2	.8%
	Student	208	86%
	Teacher/Faculty	14	5.8%
	Engineer	3	1.2%
Profession	Business	8	3.3%
	Doctor	3	1.2%
	Others	6	2.5%
Experience in Us- ing Social Net- working Sites (In years)	1-3 4-6 7-9	63 122 43	26.0% 50.4% 17.8%

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Figure 3: Table 2 :

3

	Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's	Cronbach's		N of Items
Alpha	Alpha Based on Standardized Items		16
.835	.844		

Figure 4: Table 3 :

	Scale if	Mean	Scale Variance if	Item-Total Statistics		Cronbach's Alpha if Deleted
				Corrected Item-Total	Squared Multiple Correlation	
				Item Deleted	Item Deleted	
EC_1		63.6186	47.309	.348	.248	.831
EC_2		63.6864	47.671	.347	.305	.831
EC_3		63.6864	46.599	.392	.253	.829
ST_1		64.2203	45.151	.436	.298	.827
ST_2		64.4280	46.348	.315	.274	.834
ST_3		63.9661	45.939	.414	.254	.828
SB_1		64.0085	46.340	.417	.238	.828
SB_2		64.2585	45.461	.373	.220	.831
SB_3		63.9195	45.802	.372	.238	.830
KSE_1		63.8093	45.815	.472	.305	.825
KSE_2		64.2246	45.017	.483	.319	.824
SA_1		64.0381	43.782	.568	.444	.819
SA_2		64.2246	45.154	.395	.267	.830
IP_1		63.7500	44.810	.485	.424	.824
IP_2		64.2881	44.844	.447	.309	.826
IP_3		63.6780	45.326	.502	.433	.823

Figure 5: Table 4 :

significance level (p-value), Comparative fit index (CFI),

Standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) and

Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)(Hair

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et al., 2010). The estimated value of the measurement model of this study shows excellent model fitness in comparison to the threshold value (shows in table-5).

Figure 6:

5

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation		
CMIN	119.330	—	—	Cut-off	
DF	87	—	—	criteria taken	
CMIN/DF	1.372	? 3	Excellent	from (Hair et	
CFI	0.951	0.051	Excellent	Excellent	al., p.654) 2010,
SRMR		>0.95			
SEA	0.040	<0.08	Excellent		
		<0.06			
PClose	0.833	>0.05	Excellent		
d) Hypothesis Testing					

Figure 7: Table 5 :

6

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized path coefficient (Beta)	T-statistics	Decision
H1	EC -> KSB	.247	6.286***	Supported
H2	ST -> KSB	.264	6.652***	Supported
H3	SB -> KSB	.128	3.014**	Supported
H4	KSA -> KSB	.212	5.050***	Supported
H5	IP-> KSB	.179	4.846***	Supported
H6	SA -> KSB	.208	4.187***	Supported

Note: ***p < 0.001, ** P<0.05

Figure 8: Table 6 :

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21 CONCLUSION

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