

Exploring the Relationship between Information Self-Efficacy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour on Social Media among Higher Education Students

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Abstract

This study aims to study the relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviours among students in higher education. The data collected used questionnaires and distributed via a Google form. This paper aims to study the correlation between Information Self-Efficacy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour among higher education students. The respondents of this study were students from public higher education institutions in Terengganu enrolled in diploma and degree programs whose ages ranged from 18 – 30 years old. 266 returned responses were used for the analysis, using SPSS version 27. The study aims to answer research questions on whether there is any relationship between Information Self-Efficacy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour. The findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between Information Self-Efficacy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) where $r = 0.597$, indicating that as students' information self-efficacy increases, their knowledge sharing behaviour inclines to increase. The finding supports the hypothesis that information self-efficacy positively influences knowledge sharing behaviour among students in higher education institutions.

Keywords: Information Self-Efficacy, Knowledge Sharing Behaviour, Social Media, Higher Education Institutions, Students

Introduction

In this digital era, social networks are becoming essential ways for individuals to communicate, particularly among students, where these platforms are commonly used to collaborate and share knowledge as these platforms offer opportunities for knowledge exchange, and foster learning communities that extend beyond the traditional classroom.

Even though social media sites were the most used channel to share information, however, the effectiveness of knowledge sharing in these environments is influenced by various factors, including the users' confidence in their ability to handle and disseminate information, or literally referred to as information self-efficacy.

The concept of self-efficacy is grounded in Albert Bandura's social-cognitive model. Information Self-Efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability to effectively find, evaluate, and use information. It is a personal belief in one's capability to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Artino, 2012). From an academic perspective, this competency is crucial and has become more popular in recent years, where the concept has been a key component in theories of motivation and learning in varied contexts. Laura et al (2020), define informational self-efficacy as the subjective capability of individuals to effectively inform themselves about a specific topic, to achieve goals like forming opinions and engaging in related behaviours. Meanwhile, Javier & Junjie (2023), define self-efficacy as individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to perform tasks. It relates to one's ability to handle and utilize information-related tasks effectively. In addition, a recent study by Thoriq et al (2024), defines information self-efficacy as confidence in their ability to utilize information effectively.

In the context of social networks, this self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining how actively and confidently students engage in knowledge-sharing behaviours. Students with higher information self-efficacy are more inclined to participate in discussions, share their insights, and contribute to collaborative learning. Meanwhile, those with lower self-efficacy may hesitate to engage, fearing criticism or feeling uncertain about the quality of their contributions (Safdar, 2021). It is parallel to a study by Saurabh & Robert (2019), who found that an individual's belief in their ability to effectively use information technology to perform tasks, is influenced by task complexity and technology specificity.

Information self-efficacy is not the sole competency crucial for students, but it is closely linked to knowledge sharing behaviours positively, which is confirmed by previous studies. The relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour is relevant in educational settings, where collaborative learning and peer support are key components of student success. Understanding this relationship enables educators and administrators to create engaging digital learning platforms that encourage active participation and foster a knowledge sharing culture. A study by Prastio (2021), found that there are relations between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour as he agreed that knowledge sharing is the dissemination of information through activities like discussions and presentations., which promotes learning, development, and competence, which this process fostering a better mindset and broadening insights among students.

This study on the relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour on social media is crucial as learning methods have become increasingly digitalized in many higher education institutions. With the growing numbers of students engaged in social media networks, these platforms have the potential to become the key educational tools in this digital era. Therefore, understanding how students' confidence in handling and disseminating information, and how willing they are to share is vital. This area needs to be studied so that higher education institutions can identify strategies to encourage knowledge

sharing behaviours in shaping collaborative learning environment and fostering education outcomes. The findings of this study are significant for higher education institutions as the result can help them to improvise their learning tools and strategies that can improve students' information self-efficacy and enhancing knowledge sharing for better educational outcomes. At the same time, higher education institutions students also can realize the importance of information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing, leads to a better academic achievement. For the social media developers and programmers, this study can serve as a guide for them to enhance their features for academic purposes that can facilitate more learning and sharing among students. In short, this study is needed to provide practical applications for higher education institutions, their students, and social media developers and programmers.

Despite the growing importance of this topic, research exploring the connection between information self-efficacy and knowledge-sharing behaviour in social networks remains limited. Although the concept of social presence and self-efficacy is studied in online environments, there is still a gap in studies specifically addressing social media platforms (Keshavarzi, F., 2024). In relation to scenario, this study aims to fill that gap by examining how higher education institution students' information self-efficacy influences their knowledge-sharing behaviours on social media platforms. The findings will provide valuable insights into how educational institutions can leverage social networks among those with information efficacy to enhance learning and sharing information. Thus, the study was done to examine the relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviours among university students on social networks. To achieve this, the study addresses this question and hypothesis:

Research Question – Is there any relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour?

Hypothesis – Information self-efficacy among higher education students positively influences their knowledge-sharing behaviour on social media sites.

Literature Review

Knowledge Sharing Behaviour

Knowledge sharing is referred to as an act of explaining concepts to others, structuring information, identifying gaps, and enhancing retention. It benefits both the sharer and the recipients by fostering learning and understanding. (Chernenko, 2023). The activity involves the exchange of tacit and explicit knowledge among individuals, leading to new knowledge creation and competitive advantages within a community of practice (Oliveira & Cardoso, 2022). Apart from that, knowledge sharing is essential for knowledge societies, as it transforms information into knowledge. It involves the transfer of knowledge through various means, such as direct encounters and media (Fokko, 2022).

A previous study by Kim et al (2019), found that knowledge sharing behaviour is influenced by personal characteristics. The study indicates that individual characteristics, such as online identity, web-specific self-efficacy, and knowledge-creation self-efficacy, significantly predict knowledge-sharing behaviour on social networking sites. This behaviour is mediated by sharing intention where it was found that intent to share knowledge mediates the

relationship between these personal characteristics and actual knowledge-sharing behaviour, suggesting that stronger online identity and self-efficacy lead to higher intentions to share knowledge, which in turn increases knowledge-sharing activities. Personal online identity, encompassing attributes like social skills and creativity, was found to have a particularly strong influence on knowledge-sharing behaviour, mediated by the intent to share knowledge.

Knowledge sharing not only takes place among individuals within the organizations but is also common among students. Knowledge sharing behaviour among students refers to the voluntary act of sharing information, ideas, or expertise with others, influenced by personal, social, and technological factors identified in the study (Abdul Aziz et al., 2022). A study by Zieba et al. (2024), identified three distinct clusters of students based on their knowledge sharing behaviours: new entrants with neutral knowledge sharing behaviour, undergraduates with strong knowledge sharing behaviour facilitated by social ties, and mature students who share knowledge based on perceived self-concept. Key determinants influencing knowledge sharing behaviours include compassion, social ties, self-concept, and university support. In addition, institutional support, such as the availability of Information Communication Technology (ICT), policies, and infrastructure, is essential in fostering knowledge sharing among students. Social ties play a critical role in facilitating knowledge sharing among students, highlighting the importance of personal connections in promoting a culture of knowledge sharing. This explains that knowledge sharing in the digital era commonly takes place online.

In support of this, M. Salleh et al (2020), in their study on Knowledge Sharing in Online Community, highlighted that the sharing was done due to its potential benefits when online, particularly in social networks. This platform is undeniably making information sharing at ease, as the accessibility of information is accessible from the fingertips. Another benefit is the competency of the attained information, normally in an easy-to-understand material such as an e-book. Other than that, social media sites enable the rapid transmission of numerous information without constraints. Furthermore, larger audiences are reachable in online communities from diverse cultural backgrounds, and it also works as a credible source of information (M. Salleh et al., 2020)

Knowledge Sharing Behaviour in Social Media

A previous study by Kim, Lee & Elias (2015), identified two factors that influence knowledge sharing on social networking platforms, which are personal and environmental factors. Personal factors are influenced by information self-efficacy, positive social outcome expectations, and sharing enjoyment significantly predict sharing activities on social networking sites. As for environmental factors, the perception of weak ties in the audience increases the likelihood of sharing information on social networks, while the size of the social network has minimal effect on sharing behaviours. Additionally, positive social outcome expectations had a stronger influence on sharing activities when users perceived their audience as weak ties rather than strong ties. It is also concluded that enhancing users' self-efficacy and acknowledging their contributions can foster information sharing on social networks.

Thompson, Wang, & Daya (2019), agrees that status-seeking and information-sharing motivation play a significantly influence on news-sharing behaviour on social media. Status-seeking has a stronger effect when news quality is emphasized, as individuals are selective about the news quality to enhance their social status. The study revealed that information-sharing gratification is more influential when individuals focus on the credibility of the news rather than its quality. This indicates that users who emphasized on source credibility may rely on heuristic cues to determine the news's trustworthiness, rather than thoroughly analysing the content.

In relation to learning, knowledge sharing is crucial for students' performance, and significance in higher education institutions (Godfred, 2024). Knowledge sharing can be seen not just in higher education institutions but also among school students. In a previous study by Asterhan, & Bouton (2017), on teenage peer-to-peer knowledge sharing through social media, it was found that school-related knowledge sharing through social network sites is common among teenagers and involves various types of knowledge, where this activity is primarily motivated by prosocial motives and expectations for future reciprocation. Hosen et al (2021), in their study found that social media does have a significant influence on student knowledge sharing. Social media serve as a medium for documents exchange, virtual communication, and knowledge formation which are crucial factors in enhancing knowledge sharing and learning outcomes among students. Additionally, it was also noted that individual motivation does influence sharing information behaviour via social media, with reputation being a key motivator for students to share knowledge. However, the study found that compassion does not significantly influence knowledge sharing or learning performance. Overall, knowledge sharing through social media positively impacts students' learning performance.

Arif, Qaisar, & Kanwal (2022), in their study on factors affecting students' knowledge sharing over social media, found that WhatsApp, YouTube, and Facebook are the most used social media platforms for knowledge sharing, driven by behaviour intention, facilitating conditions, ability to share knowledge, and perceived reciprocal benefits as the key factors influencing knowledge sharing behaviour. The study also found that attitude, social norms, and enjoyment in helping others drive students' behaviour intention towards knowledge sharing, and there is a positive relationship between knowledge sharing over social media technologies and student creativity. Similarly, a study on Knowledge Sharing through Social Media Platforms in the Silicon Age by Muhammad (2023) highlights that social media platforms significantly improve knowledge sharing behaviour, which is influenced by users' motivation levels. In short, both studies conclude that social media is an effective tool for promoting knowledge sharing among students, boosting their motivation and performance, and serving as a valuable resource for educational purposes.

Information Self-Efficacy

Demographic factors, such as educational background and access to information, play a role in shaping information self-efficacy. For instance, students' self-efficacy in information literacy was shaped by their university environment (Prabowo et al., 2024). Additionally, internet self-efficacy also plays a tremendous influence on individuals' attitudes towards knowledge sharing, where higher self-efficacy leads to more favourable attitudes towards

knowledge sharing (Teh et al., 2010). While Haris Budiyo et. al (2024), in their study also agree that social networks play a crucial role in shaping knowledge sharing behaviour.

Another study by Mohammed, Ibrahim, & Yunus (2021), on the relationship between social media usage and multitasking of social media on self-efficacy and academic performance, found a significant positive relationship between social media usage and students' academic self-efficacy. This indicates that students who engage with social media for academic purposes are more likely to develop higher levels of confidence in their academic abilities. Moreover, Marwa & Ali et al (2023), found that information self-efficacy also positively influences knowledge sharing behaviour among students on social networks, as indicated in their study on Factors Affecting Academic Performance in Universities.

Research Methodology

The respondents in this study were higher education students from public university in Terengganu, Malaysia. Data collection was conducted via a questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of six sections, covering demographic information, technology self-efficacy, information self-efficacy, positive social outcome expectations, sharing enjoyment, and knowledge sharing behaviour. The questions were adapted from Barton et al (2020), and Han, et al (2021), where each question was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for Strongly Disagree to 5, for Strongly Agree. A simple random sampling method was employed to select the participants. There are 266 returned responses and 100% of the responses were used for analysis purposes. The data were then analysed using SPSS version 27. Although several variables have been identified that may influence knowledge sharing behaviour in the study, this paper focuses on examining the relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour among students in social media, as outlined in the framework below.

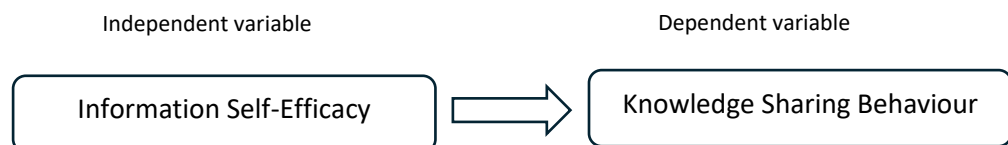


Figure 1: Framework

Finding and Discussion

Demographic Analysis

Out of 266 respondents in this study, the majority of the respondents were female, recorded 85%, and 15% were male. A higher percentage of female respondents is attributed to the number of enrolments in the university where females are the major population in many courses. The respondents were among the diploma program students (68.4%) and degree students (31.6%). Respondents aged 18 – 20 years old were 55.6%, 21 – 23 years old were 42.1%, 24 – 26% were 1.9% and the remaining were 30 and above was 1%. The majority of the respondents fall within 18 – 20 years of age because typically, this is the age for diploma students, followed by 42% of the respondents at 21 – 23 years of age, the typical age for enrolling the degree programs. Regarding information sharing, based on the response, the data shows that majority of students, that is 39.8%, share less than once a month. A moderate percentage of 21.4% share information 2 to 3 times a week, and 19.9% share once a week. A

relatively low percentage is recorded for frequency of sharing information several times a week which is 9.4% and 6.4% share information once a day. Meanwhile, only 3% of the respondents never shared information. In this study, the information shared is primarily academic related information or any information related to learning activities.

Table 1

Demographic information

	N	%		N	%
<i>Gender</i>			<i>Program</i>		
Female	226	85	Diploma	182	68.4
Male	40	15	Degree	84	31.6
<i>Age group</i>			<i>Frequency of sharing information</i>		
18 - 20	148	55.6	Several times a day	25	9.4
21 - 23	112	42.1	Once a day	17	6.4
24 - 26	5	1.9	2 to 3 times a week	57	21.4
30 and above	1	4	Once a week	53	19.9
			Less than once in a month	106	39.8
			Never	8	3

(n=266)

Overall, the data shows the frequency of information sharing is relatively low, despite students' frequent use of social media. This could be influenced by demographic factors, such as educational background and access to information, that play a role in shaping information self-efficacy, along with individual preferences, and the perceived value of sharing information online. Besides, gender, program of study, age, and information also play roles in shaping these behaviours. For instance, students' self-efficacy in information literacy was found to be influenced by their university environment (Thoriq, Jirarat & Chung, 2024). Meanwhile, many students recognize the importance of knowledge sharing, barriers such as fear of judgment and lack of relationships can restrain these behaviors. Other factors such as social media ties, and prior experiences, also significantly impact students' willingness to share knowledge (Sutharsini, Natkunarajah & Sabina, 2022), which explains the reasons for the frequency of sharing information in Table 1.

Reliability Test

Table 2

Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Information self-efficacy	.894	.895	4
Knowledge sharing behaviour	.857	.857	5

The table above provides the result of the reliability test, used to determine the consistency and stability of a construct or instrument. A Cronbach's Alpha value of .894 for Information Self-Efficacy suggests that the items in the questionnaire are highly consistent with each other. In most cases, an Alpha value above 0.7 is considered acceptable, above 0.8 is good, and above 0.9 is excellent (George & Mallery, 2003). Thus, a value of 0.894 suggests that the items used in the questionnaire are highly reliable. The Cronbach's Alpha of .895 indicates that the five items in the questionnaire have a very high level of internal consistency, suggesting that they reliably measure the intended construct. The strong reliability implies that the questionnaire is a dependable tool for assessing these behaviours and self-efficacy among the respondents. Meanwhile, the scale for Knowledge Sharing Behaviour also has good reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.857. The result indicates that the items in this scale consistently measure the construct of knowledge sharing behaviour. Therefore, the construct for both Information Self-Efficacy and Knowledge Sharing Behaviour is considered dependable and can be used to measure both variables accurately.

Correlation Analysis

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Analysis

	Knowledge sharing behaviour	Information self-efficacy
Knowledge sharing behaviour	1	.597**
Information self-efficacy	.597**	1

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

The Pearson correlation coefficient between Knowledge Sharing Behaviour and Information Self-Efficacy is 0.597. This value indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship between the two variables. In practical terms, as students' information self-efficacy increases, their knowledge sharing behaviour also tends to increase, and vice versa. It explains that students who are more confident in their ability to handle and manage information, are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing behaviour. This finding is supported by Marwa & Ali (2023) who shared the same finding in their study. The study found that, higher self-efficacy could lead to increased sharing behaviour, and increased knowledge sharing among students, particularly on platforms like Facebook for instance, which students find familiar and accessible. Meanwhile, Tyna (2021), also agreed that Self-efficacy is positively correlated with knowledge sharing behaviours, suggesting that students who believe in their ability to share information are more likely to engage in such activities. Students exhibit high knowledge sharing behaviours in online learning environments, positively correlated with a strong sense of online learning community, influenced by factors like grade level and online activity (Erdogmus, Cakir & Korkmaz, 2022). The result answers the research question that there is relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour. The result also confirms that information self-efficacy positively influence knowledge sharing behaviour, thus the hypothesis is accepted.

Recommendation

The findings of this study are beneficial for higher education institutions in emphasizing virtual communication systems and promoting document exchange to improve knowledge sharing and learning performance especially via social media platforms. Higher education institutions can make necessary adjustments to better support students in improving their information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour. By building information self-efficacy through targeted educational efforts, active engagement, mentorship, and resource provision, they can foster a more collaborative and knowledge-sharing environment among students via social networking. By fostering knowledge sharing behaviour, students can enhance their confidence in handling information and their willingness to share it with others. This study can act as valuable resource for the social media developers and programmers, to enhance social media features to better support academic activities and sharing among students. In short, this study is needed to provide practical applications for higher education institutions, their students, and social media developers and programmers.

However, this study has some limitations in terms of questionnaires design. The study uses the quantitative approach with closed-end questions. The questionnaire should include some open-ended questions to gain deeper insights into the reasons why respondents are either willing or unwilling to share knowledge on social media. It is also suggested that for future study, academic performance can be included in the framework, to measure the academic achievement of students who share the information via social media. The study can also further investigate the knowledge sharing behaviour as a mediator in academic achievement among the respondents involved.

Conclusion

This study explores the relationship between information self-efficacy and knowledge sharing behaviour among students in higher education institutions. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between these two variables, meaning that the higher the information self-efficacy, the more likely students will share knowledge with others. In other words, the more confidence they have in managing or handling the information, there is an increase in the sharing behaviour. This study also provides insight for future research to explore the relations between information self-efficacy and academic performance among students, mediated by knowledge sharing behaviour. Ultimately, the study provides practical insight which benefited higher education institutions, students, and social media developers and programmers.

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