Integrating Technological Factors into Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability Framework: A New Model for Knowledge Sharing in Higher Education

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Abstract
Knowledge sharing (KS) is widely recognized as a critical component within the broader domain of knowledge management, serving as a key driver of organizational learning and innovation. In behavioral research, the Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability (MOA) framework has been widely adopted to understand KS in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). However, rapid global technological advancements have highlighted a significant gap, namely the increasing role of technology in facilitating KS. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to propose an extended model of KS grounded in the MOA framework, integrating technology factors as a distinct construct alongside the existing MOA dimensions. Based on a comprehensive literature review, the proposed model offers a multidimensional perspective on KS, encompassing motivations, opportunity, ability, and technological factors. It addresses the limitations of prior MOA-based studies, in which the role of technology is not fully recognized. This extended model contributes to the theoretical discourse on KS in academic contexts and offers practical insights for institutional leaders seeking to cultivate collaborative knowledge cultures through digital strategies.
Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Motivation Opportunity and Ability (MOA) Framework, Higher Education Institutions, Technological Factors, Multidimensional Perspective

Introduction
Research productivity, teaching quality, and institutional innovation within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) largely depend on knowledge sharing (KS) practices (Ahmad et al., 2023; Oyenuga et al., 2019). In the context of HEIs, KS has evolved from traditional face-to-face interactions to technology-enabled digital platforms. With the rise of digital platforms, academic social media (ASM) has become an increasingly important tool for knowledge dissemination, collaboration, and professional networking. Despite the growth of online

platforms such as ResearchGate, LinkedIn, and Academia.edu, factors influencing ASM KS remain underexplored in HEIs, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria (Ahmad et al., 2023; Akosile & Olatokun 2020; Fan & Beh, 2024a; Fan & Beh, 2024b).

KS across organizational contexts has been widely explained using various theoretical lenses, among which is MOA framework which offers a comprehensive explanation for knowledge sharing as it considers individual motivation and contextual variables. In the Information Systems (IS) field, (Hughes, 2007) argued that MOA provides greater explanatory power than conventional intention-based models such as TRA, and TPB, particularly for KS which is influenced by context and constraint rather than just attitude and intention. This framework posits that an individual's willingness (motivation), available resources (opportunity), and capabilities (ability) collectively determine KS (MacInnis, Moorman, and Jaworski 1991; Siemsen, Roth, & Balasubramanian, 2008). Although the MOA framework effectively captures motivation, opportunity, and ability factors, it falls short in addressing the transformative role of technology in facilitating KS. Existing studies have often subsumed technology under either opportunity or ability, rather than recognizing it as a distinct driver. Consequently, the accelerating integration of digital technologies necessitates a more comprehensive model.

Technology factors, particularly information technology (IT) infrastructure, perceived usefulness, and facilitating conditions, now serves not only as an enabler but also as a key determinant of KS (Akosile & Olatokun, 2020; Fan & Beh, 2024b; Hu & Noor, 2024; Al-Sabaawi et al., 2022). In contemporary HEIs, factors such as infrastructural limitations, varying levels of digital literacy, and evolving academic cultures significantly shape KS practices (Al-Rushud, 2021). These developments underscore the growing need to revisit and adapt the MOA framework to academic environments characterized by pervasive technology use. Therefore, this paper proposes an extension to the MOA framework by incorporating Technology as a distinct construct. The aim of this paper, therefore, is to fill gaps in the current literature and offer practical insights for HEIs seeking to foster effective knowledge sharing through academic social media. Accordingly, there is a pressing need to propose a model that explicitly integrates technology as an independent construct that interacts with and influences motivation, opportunity, and ability in the KS process within HEIs. The primary objective of this paper is to extend the MOA framework by incorporating technological factors to better explain academic KS in HEIs.

Literature Review
Knowledge Sharing
KS is recognized as crucial component of knowledge management, serving as a key driver of organizational learning and innovation (Bock & Kim, 2002; Ramayah, Yeap, & Ignatius, 2013). It involves an exchange of knowledge between at least two parties, allowing for the reshaping, interpretation, and sense-making of knowledge within new contexts. It encompasses the practice of exchanging both implicit and explicit knowledge, alongside fostering the capacity to create new knowledge through collaborative interactions (Alyouzbaky, Al-Sabaawi, & Tawfeeq, 2022). Additionally, it is conceptualized as a set of individual behaviors where members intentionally share their work related expertise and insights with others within their organization, thereby enhancing overall organizational effectiveness and sustaining a culture of continuous learning (Ramayah et al., 2014; Yi, 2009).

Scholars have categorized KS into explicit and tacit. Explicit knowledge is easy to codify and share, often through written documents or digital platforms. In contrast, tacit knowledge is more difficult to transfer due to its personal and experiential nature (Singh et al., 2020). As HEIs move towards digital engagement, ASM platforms are increasingly being used for sharing both forms of knowledge. However, despite their potential, many HEIs continue to rely on traditional face-to-face communication, which limits the scope and immediacy of KS.

Existing KS models often overlook the role of Technology, treating it as a secondary factor. Recent studies (Fan & Beh, 2024a; Kumar et al., 2024) highlight the importance of technological infrastructure, digital tools, and online platforms in facilitating knowledge exchange. This paper argues for the integration of technology as a distinct construct in the MOA framework to better capture the complexities of KS in digitally evolving academic environments. While some scholars adopted a unidimensional perspective, treating KS as unidimensional construct regardless of the type, mode, or context (Abbasi et al., 2021; Fadilla, Nurqamarani, & Juliana 2024; Fauzi et al., 2019; Gooderham et al., 2022; Yaqub & Al-Sabban, 2023). Though this approach simplifies measurement, it has been criticized for failing to capture the realities of KS practices in HEIs as it tends to overlook important differences. For example, between tacit and explicit knowledge, formal and informal exchanges, and written versus verbal dissemination.

In contrast, a growing body of literature supports a multidimensional conceptualization of KS (Mutahar et al., 2022; Ramayah et al., 2014; Shaukat et al., 2023; Yi, 2009), recognizing its multidimensionality comprising various dimensions such as written contributions, organizational communication, personal interactions, and participation in communities of practice (Alyouzbaky et al., 2022; Ramayah et al., 2014). This paper adopts a multidimensional perspective as it provides a more comprehensive understanding of how academics share knowledge. Such an approach is better aligned with the complex, technology-driven environment of today's HEIs.

Knowledge Sharing in Higher Education Institutions
KS in HEIs is fundamental to academic success, promoting research collaboration, enhancing teaching methods, and driving institutional innovation (Almuqrini & Mutambik 2021). Within HEIs, KS typically occurs through formal and informal networks, with academics sharing research, teaching practices, and insights through various communication channels (Fullwood et al., 2019). In recent years, academic social media (ASM) has emerged as a powerful tool for KS. Platforms like ResearchGate and Academia.edu allow scholars to share research outputs, engage in peer discussions, and connect globally, enhancing their visibility and academic reputation. A substantial body of empirical research over the past two decades, a substantial body of empirical research has explored the factors influencing KS in HEIs. Much of this research seeks to understand the interplay between individual, organizational, and technology factors that shape academic knowledge exchange. Collectively, these studies offer critical insights into the enablers, barriers, and outcomes of KS among academics. However, technology factors are the most under-examined compared to individual and organizational factors (Fan & Beh, 2024a; Fan & Beh , 2024b) notable gaps remain, particularly in the explicit integration of technology into the existing theoretical model.

To explain patterns of KS, researchers have applied behavioral theories such as Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), and Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability (MOA) framework. For instance, Ramayah et al., (2013) employed TRA in the context of Malaysian universities, demonstrating that extrinsic motivation, reciprocal relationships, self-worth, and subjective norms significantly influence academicians' KS attitudes and intentions. Similarly, Ahmad et al. (2023) extended TPB by incorporating motivation and opportunity constructs, finding that individual attitudes, perceived opportunities, and behavioral intentions play a crucial role in shaping KS behaviors in Indian HEIs. Furthermore, Siemsen et al. (2008) refined the MOA framework through the Constraining Factor Model (CFM), emphasizing the most limiting factor, whether motivation, opportunity, or ability, predominantly determines KS. This highlights the importance of dynamic, context specific interventions.

Beyond individual and organizational influences, an emerging stream of research highlights the critical role of technology in enabling or constraining KS in HEIs. Studies such as those by Fan & Beh (2024a) and Hu and Noor (2024) emphasized that technology is not merely a facilitating tool but an active determinant of KS among academics, these supported the argument made by (Akosile & Olatokun, 2020; Chandran & Alammari, 2021; Fauzi et al., 2023; Lo & Tian, 2020). Fan and Beh (2024b) found that while self-development motives and trust remained strong determinants, academics often viewed technology as necessary but insufficient substitute for deeper social connections. A systematic review further mapped psychological, technological, environmental, and social factors affecting KS intentions on social media platforms, highlighting the growing centrality of digital technology in KS (Hu & Noor, 2024). Alshalaan et al. (2023) specifically focused on engineering HEIs in Saudi Arabia, using interpretive structural modeling to identify critical technological factors like perceived ease of use, technical support, and content appropriateness as pivotal for effective KS on social media.

KS practices have also been found to be influenced significantly by institutional contexts. Fauzi et al. (2023) compared research and non-research universities in Malaysia, revealing that organizational stressors and competitiveness can dampen voluntary KS even when infrastructural support is strong. Similarly, Akosile and Olatokun (2020) investigated KS in a Nigerian private university, the findings indicate that trust, university policies, and individual satisfaction as significant drivers, while IT infrastructure played a surprisingly minor role. Akaeze and Akaeze, (2024) further contributed to this discourse by exploring online learning challenges in Nigerian universities, showing that infrastructural deficits, limited digital literacy, and attitudinal resistance hinder not only online education but also broader digital KS among academics. Nguyen et al. (2024) demonstrated that engagement in academic communities on social networking sites enhances creative behavior and work performance through the mediating effects of KS and relationship quality. This has broadened the understanding of KS beyond traditional academic boundaries. Moreover, Mustapha et al. (2023) proposed a socially driven KS system tailored for UAE HEIs, highlighting that platform design incorporating social features significantly fosters sharing behavior. Similarly, Kumar et al. (2024) systematically reviewed how IT integration across teaching, governance, and research functions enables KS ecosystems, albeit with persistent barriers related to leadership, organizational culture, and digital divides.

However, despite these advantages, KS via ASM platforms remains underutilized in some regions, particularly in resource-constrained environments like Nigeria. Studies indicate that motivation, opportunity, and ability are key factors influencing the extent of ASM engagement. Academics in Nigeria often face challenges related to digital infrastructure, institutional support, and cultural barriers, which limit their participation in ASM-driven knowledge exchange (Akosile & Olatokun, 2020; Fauzi et al., 2023). Addressing these barriers requires a comprehensive model that considers technological, organizational, and individual factors in promoting effective KS. Despite these rich insights, most empirical studies still treat technology as a subsidiary factor under opportunity or ability constructs rather than as a primary driver of KS. Furthermore, few studies fully account for the combined influence of technological factors, opportunity, ability and motivation, particularly in the context of HEIs. This study addresses these gaps by proposing an extended MOA framework that explicitly integrates technology as a distinct construct influencing academic KS.

The Role of Technology in Knowledge Sharing
While traditional KS models primarily focus on motivation, opportunity, and ability, recent research underscores the importance of Technology as an independent factor that influences KS (Fan & Beh, 2024a; Kumar et al., 2024). Technological infrastructure, such as internet connectivity, digital platforms, and collaborative tools, plays a pivotal role in enabling the seamless exchange of knowledge among academics. This paper incorporates Technology as a fourth construct in the MOA framework, highlighting its direct impact on KS behavior in HEIs. The integration of digital tools facilitates knowledge exchange by overcoming geographical barriers, enhancing communication, and supporting collaborative research (Alshalaan et al., 2023; Fan & Beh, 2024b).

Factors Affecting Knowledge Sharing
The existing literature identifies various factors that influence KS among academics ranging across individual, organizational, and technology antecedents that collectively shape KS in HEIs. Focal to this discourse in this study is the MOA framework, which categorizes influencing factors into three domains, motivation (individuals' willingness), opportunity (contextual), and ability (the capability) factors. However, it is evident that organizations across the world including HEIs are increasingly transitioning to digital environments. Thus, technology emerged as the fourth distinct construct beyond motivation, opportunity and ability. This section discusses the key constructs of the extended MOA framework which are motivation, opportunity, ability, and technological factors highlighting their interplay in influencing academic KS within the context of HEIs.

Motivation Factors
Motivation influences an individual's willingness to engage in knowledge sharing. It includes both intrinsic (e.g., enjoyment in helping others, professional self-fulfillment) and extrinsic factors (e.g., recognition, academic reputation, institutional rewards). In academic settings, intrinsic motivation is often driven by a desire for reputation enhancement or the satisfaction gained from contributing to the academic community (Lo & Tian 2020). Extrinsic motivation involves tangible rewards, such as promotion or funding opportunities (Chandran & Alammari, 2021). A growing body of research supports that Motivation is the central driver of KS, especially in informal environments like ASM (Fan & Beh 2024a). However, without

sufficient Opportunity or Ability, motivation may not translate into actual knowledge sharing (Siemsen et al., 2008).

Opportunity Factors
Opportunity refers to the external conditions that either enable or constrain knowledge sharing. It includes organizational policy, institutional support, and organizational culture. In HEIs, an open organizational culture encourages collaboration and trust, promoting knowledge exchange (Javaid et al., 2020). Institutional policies supporting digital engagement (such as, incentives for online research dissemination) are also vital (Al-Rushud, 2021). However, in many resource-constrained HEIs, lack of leadership support, outdated systems, and insufficient time can limit Opportunity to engage with ASM platforms (Akosile & Olatokun, 2020). Critically, inadequate opportunity can obstruct KS despite sufficient motivation and ability (Gooderham et al., 2022).

Ability Factors
Ability refers to the cognitive and physiological capabilities that enable an individual to perform tasks effectively. It encompasses knowledge, skills, competencies, and proficiencies (Bos-Nehles et al., 2023; Li et al., 2019) emphasize that ability includes both psychological and physical capabilities necessary for executing behaviors. In knowledge sharing (KS) research, ability is operationalized as an individual's internal competencies, skills, knowledge, and expertise required to engage in ASM-KS effectively (Bos-Nehles et al. 2023; Fadel & Durcikova 2014; Gooderham et al. 2022). It includes both formal qualifications (e.g., education, professional certifications) and informal competencies, such as technical expertise, cognitive skills, and practical experience (Ipe, 2003; Siemsen et al., 2008). Thus, ability in current research is measured through academic collaboration, trust, and digital literacy.

Technological Factors
Technology, particularly IT, forms the foundational infrastructure for KS, providing easy information access while overcoming spatial and temporal barriers. Fauzi et al. (2023) emphasize technology serves as a catalyst for KS, creating an environment conducive to information flow. Technology factors in the context of ASM refer to the digital infrastructure, tools, and platforms that facilitate the exchange of knowledge. This study incorporates three key sub-dimensions of technology IT Infrastructure which includes access to reliable internet connectivity, computing devices, and institutional support systems (such as., digital libraries, servers). Without adequate IT infrastructure, the adoption and use of ASM platforms are hindered (Akosile & Olatokun, 2020). Perceived Usefulness, the extent to which academics believe that ASM platforms enhance their academic performance, such as research collaboration, visibility, and networking (Said-Hung et al., 2024). Academics are more likely to engage with ASM when they perceive it as useful in achieving personal or institutional goals (Nguyen et al., 2024). Facilitating Conditions, the organizational and technical supports that enable effective use of ASM, such as training, technical support, and integration with academic workflows (Al-Sabaawi et al., 2022).

Research Methodology
This study employs conceptual framework development and empirical validation through a preliminary survey. The conceptual component involved a structured literature review synthesizing factors influencing knowledge sharing (KS) among academics in higher education

institutions (HEIs). Factors were extracted from peer-reviewed journal articles spanning 2020 to 2024, including works by Al-Kurdi et al. (2020), Lo and Tian (2020), Chedid et al. (2020), and others. Identified factors were categorized using the Motivation, Opportunity, Ability, and Technology (MOAT) framework. Comprehensive thematic synthesis consolidated overlapping constructs across studies, ensuring factors with identical meanings but varied terminology was unified. This process yielded a refined pool of factors operationalized for empirical validation through a preliminary survey.

The empirical component administered a preliminary questionnaire to academics across HEIs in Nigeria. The questionnaire, designed using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree), assessed the relevance of literature-identified factors. Distributed via Google Forms, the survey received 35 valid responses. Data were analyzed using simple percentages to calculate the proportion of respondents selecting 5 (Somewhat Agree), 6 (Agree), or 7 (Strongly Agree). Items achieving 70% or more agreement were retained as the most relevant factors for the main study. This two-phase approach conceptual model development and empirical validation ensures academic rigor by triangulating literature-based findings with real-world academic perspectives, thereby enhancing the validity of the proposed extended MOAT framework.

Proposed Academic Social Media Knowledge Sharing (ASM-KS) Model
Building on a comprehensive review of peer-reviewed literature examining individual, organizational, and technological factors influencing knowledge sharing in HEIs via ASM by researchers such as (Abbasi et al., 2021; Akosile & Olatokun 2020; Al-Kurdi et al., 2020; Alshalaan et al., 2023; Alyouzbaky et al., 2022; Chedid et al., 2020; Fan & Beh, 2024; Lo & Tian, 2020), this study derived an initial pool of twenty (20) contextually relevant factors. These factors were structured around the core Motivation-Opportunity-Ability (MOA) framework (Schuster et al., 2019). To address the recognized technological gap in MOA-based KS studies, constructs from recent models of technology integration (specifically Akosile and Olatokun 2020; Fan and L. S. Beh 2024) were incorporated. This integration led to the proposal of an extended framework the Academic Social Media Knowledge Sharing (ASM-KS) model adding Technology as a fourth dimension alongside Motivation, Opportunity, and Ability (MOAT).

The final selection of sub-factors within this MOAT framework was validated through a preliminary survey of academicians in Nigerian HEIs (n=35). Respondents rated the influence of each factor on ASM-KS using a 7-point Likert scale; only factors achieving ≥70% agreement (ratings of 5, 6, or 7) were retained. Motivation encompasses intrinsic factors (reputation/recognition, enjoyment in helping others) and extrinsic factors (organizational rewards, perceived reciprocity). Opportunity includes organizational culture, organizational policy, and institutional support. Ability comprises trust, digital literacy, and academic collaboration. Crucially, the Technology dimension operationalized as availability of IT infrastructure, perceived usefulness, and facilitating conditions is explicitly integrated to reflect its distinct and critical role in enabling ASM-KS within contemporary HEIs.

This ASM-KS model therefore adapts the foundational MOA framework (Schuster et al. 2019) while integrating key technological determinants (Fan & Beh 2024). It posits Motivation, Opportunity, Ability, and Technology as distinct determinants directly influencing ASM knowledge sharing. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model, depicting the relationships among these four MOAT dimensions and their collective influence on ASM-KS, providing a validated and contextually grounded framework for empirical analysis.
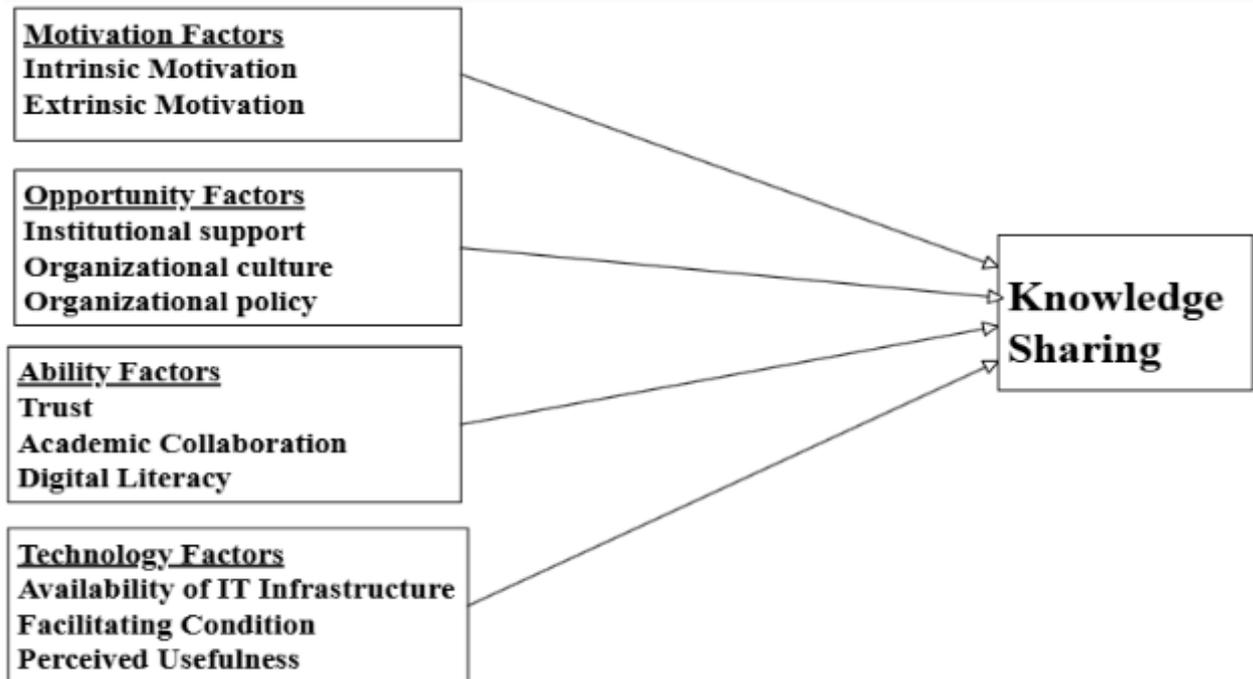

Figure 1. The Proposed Conceptual Model

Conclusions
The study has introduced a conceptual model extending the MOA framework by explicitly integrating technological factors as a fourth pillar shaping academic KS in HEIs. In an era defined by digital transformation, the existing constructs of MOA are no longer sufficient to capture the complexities of modern knowledge exchange. Technology, ranging from IT infrastructure, ASM and other knowledge management platforms, now operates not just as a contextual enabler but as a principal determinant of KS. Recognizing technology as an independent construct in the proposed model advances theoretical clarity and better reflects the realities of academic practice in the current digital era. This extended model not only enriches academic discourse but also serves as a reference point for HEIs, policymakers and administrators to design more inclusive, digitally competent, and collaborative academic ecosystems.

Future empirical studies are needed to validate the proposed extended model. Researchers should investigate the moderating effects of technological readiness on the relationships between motivation, opportunity, ability, and KS. Moreover, future research could extend this conceptual model to other knowledge intensive sectors beyond HEIs, such as healthcare, government, or industry, to test its broader applicability.

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