



## IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING ON KNOWLEDGE SHARING AMONG EMPLOYEES OF TOP IT COMPANIES

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### Abstract

The Internet makes it possible for individuals to connect, collaborate and share knowledge, information, document, photo, video, etc. endlessly with anyone within the world. This social media networking plays a significant role among the individuals in the organization, as a communication tool, source to share information and knowledge, as a medium to relief their stress and to learn new skills. Descriptive research design is used and convenience sampling technique is adopted through non random sampling method. The dimensions used for this study are social capital, altruism and collaboration. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used for the data analysis. Using the survey of 301 employees working in top IT companies we find that there is a It is found that there is a significant difference existing between gender and collaboration ( $F= 10.283$ ;  $p= .001$ ) at 5% level of significance, this shows that there is a significant difference between collaboration and gender. Organization has to adopt virtual meetings, technical discussion and employee recognition for bringing up collaboration in sharing the knowledge among the employees of all the gender and age groups.

**Keywords:** Social Media Networking, Knowledge Sharing, Social Capital, Altruism, Collaboration, It Companies.

### Introduction

Organizations that need to thrive, compete, and operate in ever evolving surroundings, cannot leave the development of knowledge within the organization to probability. The exchange of information and knowledge among employees is a significant part of knowledge management. Actually, the organizations are faced with the challenge to get individuals to share their knowledge. For several decades, the world's best-known forecasters of social change have foretold the emergence of a brand new economy where brainpower and knowledge, not ancient sources of energy and machine power is the critical resource. However, this future is already here and the knowledge economy has arrived. This evolving era is characterized by rapid change and uncertainty, the increasing importance of knowledge and knowledge sharing and the popularity of new information technologies that have the potential to radically change the way organization do business.

The single most significant technological development in the last 20 years has been the Internet. The Internet makes it possible for individuals to connect, collaborate and share knowledge, information, document, photo, video, etc. continuously with anyone in the world. Furthermore, people are able to make use of social media tools in order to increase range and richness of their networks, gather information and nowadays, increasingly organizations are finding ways of integrating social media into their business processes (Gaál et al, 2014).

The knowledge-based view of the firm actually considers knowledge the most valuable resource for the company and for its capability, performance and ability to build success (e.g. Nonaka, 2007; Spender, 1996, Kogut & Zander, 1992). Knowledge is viewed as organizations' intellectual capital with increasing importance in building companies' competitive advantage. For such a capital to exist individuals in the organizations need to make knowledge available for others; in other words knowledge need to be shared. Sharing knowledge might even be considered as one of the key factors when talking about knowledge management. The value of knowledge increases when it is shared, and knowledge creation only happens when knowledge is shared among employees (Nonaka & von Krogh, 2009; Nonaka, 2007; Quinn et al., 1996).



### Need For the Study

The purpose of this study is to gain understand the importance of knowledge sharing through social media at IT sector, in other words between people in organizations, and to focus on factors that influence individual level knowledge sharing. In such situations social capital, altruism, collaboration and its dimensions have a role in understanding the knowledge sharing of individuals and therefore the ways in which organizations encourage individuals to share knowledge.

### Review of Literature

**Mariotti (2007)** stated that close collaboration allow employees to get to know each other and establish common norms of interaction. This in turn, favors the promotion of joint learning processes. Hence, social capital, if properly harnessed, may contribute to organizational impediments to knowledge sharing.

**Iuliana (2009)** investigated the importance of knowledge management in software engineering using SECI model. Data Collection is done by conducting Interviews and questions are rated using Likert Scale. This study found that for most employees' necessity is the primary motivation for sharing Knowledge. Email, Instant Messaging, Internet, Magazines are used for extracting Knowledge. Culture, Leadership and Technology are identified as important Knowledge Enabler.

**Leidner et al. (2010)** discussed personal and organizational benefits of using an internal social networking system. Some of these benefits include "increasing the feeling of cultural belonging, making the environment of entry-level IT workers exciting, and creating high morale among a new Generation Y workforce".

**Gaffoor and Cloete (2010)** stated the idea that technology aids knowledge sharing: The age of technology where knowledge and information serve as key strategic tools in the organizational context, creates the opportunity for organizations to adopt the role of knowledge-based organizations that thrive on the competence of knowledge workers.

**Anupam Pareek et al. (2012)** explained a majority of leading organizations in India are venturing into the new pastures for employee communication, engagement, collaboration and other areas of human resources. However, a great amount of insecurity and ambiguity still exists from an information security perspective. Organizations are embracing social media for various reasons and some are doing so, because they wish to be there because their competition does so". Social media is trendy to some and a necessity to the others. With generation Z entering the active workforce, the need to be on social media is assuming greater importance from a human resources perspective. They found that Leadership in majority of the organizations has shown keen interest in usage of social media in the areas of Internal Branding, Collaboration & Communication, and Hiring. Social media continues to remain a major tool for organizations to reach their customers and employees, however, marketing and sales leads the way, followed by human resources and corporate social responsibility. Majority of the organizations use social media in human resources. However, they also agree that it has not been tapped to the maximum. It is used disparately and inconsistently, however, organizations are confident that they will be using social media better in the future to be ahead of the competition.

**Said Abdullah Al Saifi (2014)** explained the relationships between social networks, interpersonal trust, management support, and knowledge sharing. He says that social networks facilitate knowledge sharing in diverse ways. These ways are: the use of multiple communication styles, brainstorming and problem solving, learning and teaching, training, employee rotation, and consultation. In addition, the data from the interviews suggests that, through various factors, the level of interpersonal trust influences the extent to which employees are willing to share knowledge. These factors are organizational, relational, and individual factors. Furthermore, both middle and top managers can play significant roles in facilitating knowledge sharing between employees. These roles are: encouragement of participation in decision-making, provision of recognition, breaking down of barriers, building up of teams, providing training or assigning others to do training, encouragement of training, communication, learning, putting knowledge into practice in the form of processes, and movement of employees.



**Ellison et al. (2015)** poised that ESN can improve knowledge sharing in distributed multinational organizations through increased social capital, support for relationships and interactions, content collapse, and network interactions. The transparency of other people’s interactions in ESN further helps knowledge seekers to obtain interpersonal and knowledge-related material, which they use to facilitate their interaction with knowledge sources. Hence, ESN can reduce knowledge stickiness.

**Objectives:** To identify the variation of age, gender, marital status with social capital, altruism and collaboration.

**Methodology**

This research is a descriptive research aiming at describing how IT Companies are sharing their knowledge through social media. Non random sampling method is adopted with convenience sampling technique. The dimensions used for this study are social capital, altruism and collaboration. The top ten IT companies taken for the study are TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCL technologies, Tech Mahindra, Oracle Financial Services software, Larsen & Toubro infotech, Mphasis, Mindtree and Hexaware technologies. These companies are listed based on their market capitalization. The statistical tool used for the study is Analysis of variance (ANOVA).

**Data Analysis**

**Table1-Variation between age groups and social capital, altruism and collaboration**

Variables	Age group	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	P
Social capital	21-30	33.1000	7.13105	16.771	.000
	31-40	36.9180	2.84778		
Altruism	21-30	28.1500	6.27628	2.475	.117
	31-40	29.4426	2.59823		
Collaboration	21-30	41.3250	6.80532	10.482	.001
	31-40	44.3934	5.76564		

Source: Primary data

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between age group and social capital, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is a significant difference existing among the age group and social capital (F= 16.771; p= 0.000) at 1% level of significance with mean showing 33.1000 and Std.deviation showing 7.131 for age group 21-30 and (mean= 36.918, Std.deviation= 2.847) for age group 31-40. This shows that the social capital contributes to the knowledge sharing for the employees at different age groups.

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between age group and altruism, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is no significant difference existing among the age group and altruism (F= .2475; p= 0.117), with mean= 28.1500 and Std.deviation=6.276 for age group 21-30 and (mean= 29.442, Std.deviation= 2.598) for age group 31-40. This shows that the employees’ show altruistic behavior towards the employees on knowledge sharing through social media at different age groups.

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between age group and collaboration, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is a significant difference existing among the age group and collaboration (F= 10.482; p= .001) at 5% level of significance, this shows that there is a significant difference between collaboration and age groups, with (mean= 41.325 and Std.deviation= 6.805) for age group 21-30 and (mean= 44.393, Std.deviation= 5.765) for age group 31-40. This shows that the employees’ are collaborative in sharing knowledge through social media towards different age groups.



**Table2- Variation between gender and social capital, altruism and collaboration**

Variables	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	P
Social capital	male	34.0288	6.56290	.139	.709
	female	33.7407	6.77917		
Altruism	male	28.9353	5.44300	2.151	.144
	female	27.9630	5.97187		
Collaboration	male	43.2662	4.91017	10.283	.001
	female	40.8148	7.77975		

Source: Primary data

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between gender and social capital, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is no significant difference existing among the gender and social capital ( $F = .139$ ;  $p = .709$ ) with mean = 34.028 and Std.deviation = 6.562 for male employees and (mean= 33.740, Std.deviation= 6.779) for female employees. This shows that the social capital contributes to knowledge sharing for the employees with different gender.

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between gender and altruism, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is no significant difference existing between the gender and altruism ( $F = .2151$ ;  $p = 0.144$ ) this shows that there is no significant difference between altruism and gender, with mean= 28.935 and Std.deviation= 5.443 for male employees and (mean= 27.963, Std.deviation= 5.971) for female employees. This shows that the employees' show altruistic behavior towards the employees on knowledge sharing through social media at different gender.

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between gender and collaboration, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is a significant difference existing between gender and collaboration ( $F = 10.283$ ;  $p = .001$ ) at 1% level of significance, this shows that there is a significant difference between collaboration and gender, with (mean= 43.266 and Std.deviation= 4.910) for male employees and (mean= 40.814, Std.deviation= 7.779) for female employees. This shows that the employees' are collaborative in sharing knowledge through social media towards different gender.

**Table3-Variation between marital status and social capital, altruism and collaboration**

Variables	Marital status	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	P
Social capital	married	34.9752	6.38157	5.601	.019
	single	33.1333	6.77524		
Altruism	married	29.7686	4.63997	11.686	.001
	single	27.5000	6.22887		
Collaboration	married	42.1653	7.24264	.214	.644
	single	41.8000	6.34959		

Source: Primary data

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between marital status and social capital, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is no significant difference existing between marital status and social capital ( $F = 5.601$ ;  $p = 0.019$ ) with mean= 34.975 and Std.deviation= 6.381 for marital status with (mean=34.975, Std.deviation= 6.381) for employees who are married and (mean= 33.133, Std. deviation= 6.775) for employees who are single. This shows that the social capital does not show any difference to the knowledge sharing for the employees with different marital status.



With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between marital status and altruism, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there is a significant difference existing among the marital status and altruism ( $F= 11.686$ ;  $p= 0.001$ ) at 1% level of significance with mean =29.768 and Std.deviation= 4.639 for married employees and (mean= 27.500, Std.deviation= 6.228) for employees who are single. This shows that the employees' show altruistic behavior towards the employees on knowledge sharing through social media with different marital status.

With the purpose of discovering the significant difference between marital status and collaboration, one way ANOVA was performed. The result revealed that there no significant difference existing among the marital status and collaboration ( $F= .214$ ;  $p= .644$ ), this shows that there is a no significant difference between collaboration and marital status, with (mean= 42.165 and Std.deviation= 7.242) for married employees and (mean= 41.800, Std.deviation= 6.349) for employees who are single. This shows that the employees' are collaborative in sharing knowledge through social media towards different marital status.

### Findings and Suggestion

1. It is found that there is a significant difference existing among the age group and collaboration ( $F= 10.482$ ;  $p= .001$ ) at 1% level of significance, this shows that there is a significant difference between collaboration and age groups.
2. It is found that there is a significant difference existing between gender and collaboration ( $F= 10.283$ ;  $p= .001$ ) at 1% level of significance, this shows that there is a significant difference between collaboration and gender.
3. The result revealed that there is a significant difference existing among the marital status and altruism ( $F= 11.686$ ;  $p= 0.001$ ) at 1% level of significance.

From the findings it is suggested that employees belonging to the different age groups show significant difference in collaboration, therefore the organization has to adopt virtual meetings, technical discussion and employee recognition for bringing up collaboration in sharing the knowledge among the employees of all the gender and age groups. There also exist variation among marital status and altruism. In this study the female employees show more altruistic behavior than the male employees. Hence it is suggested that the organization should motivate the employees' by intrinsic rewards, which leads them to share their knowledge on social media.

### Conclusion

For organizations that guarantee worth to knowledge sharing, integrating social media tools into their daily business life it is important to enable easy access to the employees. So as for a knowledge sharing culture to thrive at IT companies, its employees need to engage more with social media tools in their business practices. A numerous opportunities exist using social media tools, Communication between employees can be encouraged to support problem solving. If organization needs an expert for a specific task, a post can be placed on a blog and likely receive a response from another employee or search on LinkedIn to find a person, who can help convert personal knowledge to organizational knowledge: if the senior employees record videos about their work and share it with the new employees, the organization can use these videos instead of expensive training programs to explain the details. Discuss professional problems with a group of people who are active practitioners in a particular area, professional communities can be useful because they are neutral and can provide a way to share best practices, ask questions of and provide support for each other outside the organization.

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