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The Role of Social Media in Knowledge Sharing Among Faculty Members in Jordanian Public Universities

Ali K. Tawalbeh [1]

[1], Albalqa Applied University, Princess Alia College. Jordan, Email: dr.alitawalbeh@bau.edu.jo

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the role of social media in knowledge-sharing among faculty members. The descriptive analytical approach is deployed in this study due to its suitability to the nature of the study and data was collected using a questionnaire from a sample of 155 lecturers from Jordanian universities. The findings of this study showed that there are significant differences between the means of the respondents' estimates of the role of social media in knowledge sharing among faculty members. Training programs need to be established to strengthen the knowledge sharing among academic staff via social media applications and websites. Jordanian universities have to work to build a strong physical, technological and technical infrastructure, which enables them to face the challenges and difficulties and strengthen the knowledge sharing among faculty members.

1. Introduction

Knowledge is considered among the most important factors that assist in nations' development and growth, as it is one of the most important production factors and it became more substantial than the traditional factors like the land and the capital. It is the basic resource for the competitive advantage, continuing and stability in the light of successive developments and challenges of the current environment. The knowledge management processes contribute greatly to improving firms' performance, enhancing the production levels, and achieving the added value [1] [2], [3]. The knowledge management includes five fundamental processes which are: Knowledge production, knowledge retention, knowledge sharing, knowledge reusing, and knowledge evaluation [4]–[6].

Universities are considered among the most important sources to supply the future generations with knowledge [7], [8]. Universities are currently facing several challenges, social, economic pressures, which require developing their strategies to achieve effective responding toward current era's requirements and variables. Most universities currently are directing toward including knowledge management processes in all university's activities and services in order to developing the quality of learning process, competitive advantage, and enhancing essential abilities through creating work environment that assist in innovation and creativity. Knowledge sharing is one of most important processes that plays a significant role in success knowledge management, which focuses mainly on the available knowledge assets which is one of the most important influencing factors in enhancing the levels of faculty members and upgrading the research abilities and the quality of different university activities, as the knowledge-sharing, which represented in knowledge transfer and circulation, is no longer limited to traditional methods only, but modern technological means have become an effective means in performing this role [9], [10].

Using of technological means has become necessary to keep pace with increasing knowledge explosion in the world. One of the most important technological mean is the social media website such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube which became an effective way to perform important functions of knowledge sharing. Social media websites are the most prevalent in the lives of individuals with their different ages, as it is no longer limited to entertainment performance only, but rather has become a means to achieve economic, social and political goals in addition to being a means of knowledge transferring and circulating [1]. Social media has become a way to form prevailing and modified personal relationships, and it has allowed individuals to contribute to a number of issues and created new possibilities and challenges to facilitate cooperation between individuals. Therefore, universities and educational institutions need to focus not only on the traditional role they play, but also to pay special attention to effective knowledge sharing, which is vitally important to success of these institutions [11]–[13]. Accordingly, the importance of conducting this study that focuses on the role of social media in knowledge sharing among faculty members in Jordanian universities has emerged [14].

Most of Arab universities, nowadays, are striving to keep pace with the rapid global changes developments, by carrying out the processes that apply the thought of quality and seeking to reach a competitive ranking among the advanced international universities [15]–[17], where most of them ignored the important role for availability of institutional culture which enhances the quality as an integrated life system, an elaborate work method, and a means for exchanging experiences and knowledge [18]–[20]. As a result, Arab universities are currently suffering from weakness in knowledge-sharing processes, as individualism and isolationism prevail, the absence of organized work and pride in academic specialization at the expense of the unity and integration of the knowledge process, which has created a barrier between academic sections in the Arabic universities and hindered the foundations of dialogue for the ultimate goal which is the unity of knowledge and its integration, in addition to producing additional negatives such as the weak acceptance of constructive criticism and the weak adherence to the traditions and university values [21].

From this standpoint, this study choose to investigate the methods that stimulate knowledge sharing among colleagues and effectively affect the promotion of the sharing process through the reality of the benefits of social media. Accordingly, the main goal of the study is to examine the role of social media in the knowledge-sharing among faculty members in Jordanian universities.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Social media

The emergence of social media has completely changed the world and the way it works and worked to bring individuals of all cultures and nationalities closer together, and the most important social media sites are the following: Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook as modern electronic platforms that allow individuals to communicate with each other. The definitions used to define the concept of social media are varied, as it can be defined as a set of electronic systems that enable Internet users to create their own pages and link them with other members through electronic social systems to exchange products, information and services [22]–[24].

Social media is a number of web pages that facilitate interactions between actively participating members in the social networks on the Internet and which provide all means that enable individuals to interact with each other and help them to do so. They are sites on the Internet that form huge communities of individuals, and through which various services are provided that support interaction and communication between members of the social network through the various means and services provided, such as friendship and acquaintance [25]–[28]. Social media enables conversation and instant messaging, and creating pages and groups for individuals and institutions participating in events and occasions, and share media with other people, such as videos and photos [29]–[32]. Social media depends directly on the interactions within it to feed and operate its contents, and the forms of these sites vary, some of them aim at public matters such as creating friendships and communicating with others around the world, while others are for limited interactive operations and are limited to a specific domain or field such as networks of photographers, professionals and graphic designers, and there are many social media available on the Internet, and among the most important of which are Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. The means used by the interactives on social media vary, as some sites enable voice, image, video and file exchange services, live broadcasts, music and advertisements and provide them the opportunity to interact on them through likes and comments, which achieve a high level of participation and interaction between individuals participating in these social media. For this reason, researchers linked the use of social media with several outcome such as knowledge sharing, creativity and performance [33]–[37].

2.2 Knowledge-sharing

Knowledge-sharing is considered among the most important processes on knowledge management for its great importance in many aspects in different institutions [4], [38]. It assists in developing thought abilities for human resources and stimulates the exchange of information and an experience, which supports their store of knowledge, therefore, all institutions seek to create a system that supports the process of knowledge sharing to achieve the continuous development and enhance of the knowledge resources available [6], [19], [39]. The definitions used for knowledge-sharing varied, it is defined as a group of individuals' behaviors that are related to their exchanges of knowledge and experiences with their colleagues at work in the same organization.

The process of knowledge-sharing among individuals faces a lot of difficulties and limitations that can be represented as difficulties related to the ability of individuals to transfer tacit knowledge, which is difficult to transfer through education and training processes, and it requires time and effort on the part of the source to replicate it and teach it slowly to them so that they can possess it, some individuals consider their knowledge to be the source of their strength, so some tend not to share it with other individuals, and the lack of personal links based on reliable foundations, which create barriers between parties to communicate with each other, which hinders the process of transferring information [11], [12], [40]; [41], [42].

3. Research Methodology

This study is a descriptive in nature aims to understand the link between using social media and knowledge sharing processes among academic staff in Jordan. The population is the academic staff in three universities namely, University of Science and Technology, AL Balqa, Yarmouk universities. The sample was selected randomly to represent the three universities. Measurement of the variables were adopted from [1] [6]. The questionnaire was validated, and a pilot study was conducted prior to data collection. The data was collected from 155 academic staff. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and AMOS.

4. Findings

4.1 Profile of Respondents

The sample of this study consists of faculty members in Jordanian universities. A total of 155 lecturers participated in this study. In the Table 1, the profile of the respondents is presented.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Variable	**Level**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Age in years	Less than 30 years	37	23.9%
	30 years - less than 40 years	35	22.6%
	40 years – less than 50 years	38	24.5%
	50 years or older	45	29%
	Total	**155**	**100%**
Academic qualification	Lecture	48	31%
	assistant professor	35	22.6%
	associate professor	34	21.9%
	professor	38	24.5%
	Total	**155**	**100%**
Experience	Less than 5 years	38	24.5%
	5 years – less than 10 years	42	27.1%
	10 years – less than 15 years	34	21.9%
	15 years and above	41	26.5%
	Total	**155**	**100%**

It was found from the above table that those whose age groups ranged from 50 years or older were (45) individuals with a percentage of (29%), and those whose age groups ranging from 40 years to less than 50 years were (38) with a percentage of (24.5%), then it followed by those whose age groups is less than 30 years with a percentage of (23.9%) with a number of (37), and finally those whose age groups 30 years - less than 40 years and they were (37) with a percentage of (23.9%). It was evident from the above table that the number of who's their academic qualification is Lecture reached (48) with a percentage of (31%), and the number of who's their academic qualification is professor reached (37) with a percentage of (24.5%). Then, those who's their academic qualification is assistant professor which are (35) with percentage of (22.6%). And finally, for those with an associate professor qualification, their numbers reached (34), with a percentage of (21.9%). It was evident from the above table that those with experience of 5 years - less than 10 years, their numbers reached (42) with a rate of (27.1%), they followed by those with years of experience ranged between 15 years and above which are (41) with percentage of (26.5%), then they followed with those whose years of experience are Less than 5 years which are (38) with percentage of (24.5%), and finally those with 10 years – less than 15 years, their number was (34), a percentage (21.9%).

4.2 Descriptive Statistic of Variables

4.2.1 Level of Using Social Media

To identify the level of using social media among academic staff, Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations for paragraphs of opinions of faculty members about using social media.

Table 2: Opinions of Faculty Members about Using Social Media

No.	Paragraph	Mean	Standard deviation	Rank	Level
1	I share valuable information and requirements about educational subjects on social media.	3.33	0.97	7	Medium
2	The benefit from social networks is limited to acquaintance and social communications, while it weakens the educational process.	3.50	0.96	4	Medium
3	I encourage my fellow faculty members to strengthen their teaching methods through self-learning based on social media.	3.63	1.01	3	Medium
4	Social media sites help me to view the scientific and intellectual opinions of scholars, writers, educators, and relevant developments.	3.35	1.01	6	Medium
5	Social media helps me to send and publish some educational materials related to my specialization to my fellow faculty members and students as well.	3.74	1.01	1	Medium
6	I use social media to enrich my research and study requirements.	3.64	1.1	2	Medium
7	Social media sites provide the opportunity to form groups with common scientific interests.	3.20	0.91	8	Medium
8	I get scientific experiences through social networking sites I do not obtain through other means.	3.43	1.00	5	Medium
Total		**3.47**	**0.69**		**Medium**

Table 2 indicates that the means of the faculty members' opinions about the use of social media sites came at a medium level. The paragraph that states "Social media helps me to send and publish some educational materials related to my specialization to my fellow faculty members and students as well" came in first place with a mean of 3.74, and the standard deviation of (1.01) while the paragraph that states "Social media sites provide the opportunity to form groups with common scientific interests" came in last place, with a mean of 3.20 and the standard deviation of (0.91). The general result indicates that there is a medium level of the faculty members' opinions about the use of social media from the point of view of the study sample, as the arithmetic mean of the general total was (3.47) the standard deviation of (0.69) with level medium, and this indicates that the responses of the study sample were positive, ranging from high to medium grades distributed over paragraphs of this field. As for the standard deviation values, they are high, indicating that the answers of the study sample are varied and divergent to some extent in this field.

4.2.2 Level of Difficulties of Using Social Media Sites

Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations of the difficulties of using social media sites.

Table 3: Difficulties of Using Social Media Sites

No.	Paragraph	Mean	Standard deviation	Rank	Level
1	I cannot allocate enough time to use social media in the educational process.	3.51	1.02	6	Medium
2	The instability and unsteady of websites and links to social media sites causes me confusion and flounder.	3.41	1.04	8	Medium
3	I do not have enough time to use social media; because there are large number electronic search engines.	3.50	1.03	7	Medium
4	Lack of logical organization of some information content available on social media sites.	4.02	0.98	1	High
5	The lack of my knowledge of the purpose or goal of using social media sites, in addition to my conviction that it has more disadvantages than good.	3.65	1.02	4	Medium
6	The lack of my mastery of the foundations of searching using social media.	3.65	0.98	4	Medium
7	Network slow and no immediate response to the internet in general.	3.70	1.02	3	High
8	The high cost of using social media sites, in addition to the lack of constant access to the Internet.	3.75	1.01	2	High
Total		**3.64**	**0.70**		**Medium**

Table 3 indicates that the mean of the difficulties of using social media sites came at a medium level. The paragraph that states "Lack of logical organization of some information content available on social media sites" came in first place with

a mean of 4.02 and the standard deviation of (0.98) with high level, while the paragraph that states "The instability and unsteady of websites and links to social media sites causes me confusion and flounder" came in last place, with a mean of 3.41 and the standard deviation of (1.04) with medium level. The general result indicates that there is a medium level of the difficulties of using social media sites from the point of view of the study sample, as the mean of the general total was 3.64, the standard deviation of (0.70) with level medium ,and this indicates that the responses of the study sample were positive, ranging from high to medium grades distributed over paragraphs of this field. As for the standard deviation values, they are high, indicating that the answers of the study sample are varied and divergent to some extent in this field.

4.2.3 Level of Knowledge Sharing

The level of knowledge sharing is presented in Table 4. The practicing knowledge-sharing among faculty members is presented with means and standard deviations for paragraphs

Table 4: Level of Practicing Knowledge-Sharing among Faculty Members

No.	Paragraph	Mean	Standard deviation	Rank	Level
1	The experiences and knowledge about the teaching materials are exchanged.	3.89	1.01	1	High
2	All faculty members seek to provide other colleagues with the information and knowledge necessary for the success of the educational process.	3.79	1.07	2	High
3	Faculty members accept knowledge and information from colleagues about the enrichment of their teaching methods.	3.65	1.04	6	Medium
4	Faculty members exchange research materials and ideas on scientific materials and research.	3.74	1.06	4	High
5	Faculty members contribute to conduct joint research together.	3.74	0.93	4	High
6	Faculty members are interested in diversifying methods and techniques that stimulate learning and knowledge sharing.	3.79	0.99	2	High
7	Faculty members recognize that sharing knowledge creates strength point that serve all.	3.57	1.04	8	Medium
8	Teaching members are keen to benefit from the knowledge of their colleagues.	3.63	1.03	7	Medium
Total		**3.73**	**0.75**		**High**

Table 4 indicates that the mean of the of practicing knowledge-sharing among faculty members came at high level. The paragraph that states "The experiences and knowledge about the teaching materials are exchanged" came in first place with a mean of 3.89 and the standard deviation of (1.01) with level high, while the paragraph that states "Faculty members recognize that sharing knowledge creates strength point that serve all" came in last place, with a mean of 3.57 and the standard deviation of (1.04) with level medium. The general result indicates that there is a high level of the reality of practicing knowledge-sharing among faculty members from the point of view of the study sample, as the arithmetic mean of the general total was (3.73) and the standard deviation of (0.75) with level high, and this indicates that the responses of the study sample were positive, ranging from high to medium grades distributed over paragraphs of this field. As for the standard deviation values, they are high, indicating that the answers of the study sample are varied and divergent to some extent in this field.

4.2.4 Level of the Challenges of Knowledge Sharing

The level of the challenges that face the knowledge sharing among academic staff is given in Table 5. The mean and the standard deviation are given for each statement as well as the rank and the level. Table 5 indicates that the mean of the challenges of practicing of knowledge-sharing came at a high level. The paragraph that states "Some fellow of faculty members does not share their knowledge" came in first place with a mean of 3.97 and the standard deviation of (1.07) with high level, while the paragraph that states "Faculty members take the initiative to share their knowledge and experiences with others in order to serve the achievement of the college's goals and vision" came in last place, with a mean of 3.52 and the standard deviation of (1.01) with a medium level. The general result indicates that there is a high level of the factors affecting the practicing of knowledge-sharing from the point of view of the study sample, as the arithmetic mean of the general total was (3.68) and the standard deviation of (1.07) with level high, and this indicates that the responses of the study sample were positive, ranging from high to medium grades distributed over paragraphs of this field. As for the standard deviation values, they are high, indicating that the answers of the study sample are varied and divergent to some extent in this field.

Table 5: Challenges of Practicing of Knowledge Sharing

No.	Paragraph	Mean	Standard deviation	Rank	Level
1	Weak interest of the college in training programs that assist in knowledge-sharing through social media sites.	3.55	0.98	7	Medium
2	Lack of infrastructure (physical, technical, and technical) at the college level, which hinders knowledge-sharing among its members.	3.62	1.01	4	Medium
3	Weak academic leadership encouragement for individual and group knowledge-sharing initiatives.	3.59	1.02	5	Medium
4	The lack of an objective work environment that achieves fair evaluation of members according to their knowledge-sharing.	3.70	1.11	3	High
5	Some fellows of faculty members does not share their knowledge.	3.97	1.07	1	High
6	Teaching members participate in work teams that aim to exchange and share knowledge.	3.88	1.02	2	High
7	Faculty members take the initiative to share their knowledge and experiences with others in order to serve the achievement of the college's goals and vision.	3.52	1.01	8	Medium
8	Faculty members share knowledge content related to enriching academic materials.	3.58	0.96	6	Medium
Total		**3.68**	**0.76**		**High**

4.3 Structural Model

The issue of goodness of conformity is one of the very important issues in path analysis, and it is related to the extent to which the theoretical model matches the field data, and there are many indicators of good conformity, and among the most prominent of these indicators provided by the statistical software Amos. The measurement model was assessed and all the criteria of reliabilities and validities were achieved. For the structural model, the Chi-Square index was (3.76), which is not good, indicating that the model does not match the data. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) value (0.99) is greater than 0.90 and is very close to one, which indicates the good fit of the model to the data. As for the value of the Tuker-Lewis Index (TLI) it reached (0.96), which is a good value because it is close to one, which indicates the good fit of the model to the data. As for the value of the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of (0.13), it is an unacceptable value because it is greater than 0.08, which indicates the rejection of the model.

4.4 Hypotheses Testing

The study hypotheses regarding the role of social media in cognitive sharing among faculty members in Jordanian universities were tested using path analysis using the statistical program Amos, and the results were as follows in Table 6.

Table 6: Results of hypotheses Testing

IV		D.V	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P-value
Social media	→	The reality of practicing knowledge-sharing among faculty members	0.162	0.093	1.749	0.082
The difficulties of using social media sites	→	The reality of practicing knowledge-sharing among faculty members	0.648	0.091	7.099	***
The difficulties of using social media sites	→	The factors affecting the practicing of knowledge-sharing	0.708	0.062	11.494	***
Social media	→	The factors affecting the practicing of knowledge-sharing	0.189	0.066	3.082	0.002

For the first hypotheses it states: “There is no statistically significant effect in the use of social media sites on the reality of knowledge exchange for faculty members.”Table 6 shows that the calculated value (C.R) was (1.749) with a standard error of (0.093), and the value of non-standard estimates was (0.162) and the value of the standard estimates was (0.149). The value of the statistical significance of the research hypothesis was (0.082), which is greater than the level of significance (0.05), which indicates acceptance of the research hypothesis, which indicates that “there is no statistically significant effect in the use of social media on the reality of the knowledge exchange of faculty members.”

For H2, which states: “There is no statistically significant effect in the use of social communication on the reality of the knowledge exchange of the faculty members.” Table 6 shows the calculated value (C.R) was (7.009) with a standard error of (0.091), and also recommended the value of the standard computed (0.648) and the indicated value (0.606). The sign

of the statistical significance value of the research hypothesis (0.001) and it is less than the significance level (0.05), which indicates the rejection of the research hypothesis indicating that "there is no statistically significant effect in the use of social communication on the reality of the knowledge exchange of the faculty members."

For H3, which states: "There is no statistically significant effect on the reality of the knowledge exchange of the faculty members on the factors affecting the practice of knowledge exchange." Table 6 shows that the calculated value (C.R) was (11,494) with a standard error (0.062), and the value of non-standard estimates was (0.708) and the value of the standard estimates was (0.704). The value of the statistical significance of the research hypothesis was (0.001), which is less than the level of significance (0.05), which indicates the rejection of the research hypothesis, which indicates, "there is no statistically significant effect on the reality of the knowledge exchange of the faculty members on the factors affecting the practice of knowledge exchange."

For H4 which states: "There is no statistically significant effect on the difficulty of using social media on the factors affecting the practice of knowledge exchange." Table 6 shows that the calculated value (C.R) was (3.082) with a standard error of (0.066). The value of non-standard estimates was (0.189) and the value of standard estimates was (0.189). The value of the statistical significance of the research hypothesis was (0.002), which is less than the significance level (0.05), which indicates the rejection of the research hypothesis, which indicates that "there is no statistically significant effect on the difficulty of using social media on the factors affecting the practice of knowledge exchange."

5. Discussion

The results of the statistical analysis shows that there is no statistically significant effect in the use of social media on the reality of the knowledge exchange of faculty members. There is no statistically significant effect in the use of social communication on the reality of the knowledge exchange of the faculty members. While there is no statistically significant effect on the difficulty of using social media on the factors affecting the practice of knowledge exchange. There is no statistically significant effect on the difficulty of using social media on the factors affecting the practice of knowledge exchange. There is no relationship between the use of social media sites and the difficulty of using social networking sites. However, this paper recommends working on awareness-raising programs and the actions they create by establishing the concepts of knowledge sharing and providing adequate infrastructure for faculty members to use and employ social media. Documenting and archiving this shared knowledge in order to retrieve it when needed. The need to motivate faculty members who contribute to knowledge sharing morally and financially. Increasing the academic leadership's interest in knowledge sharing initiatives among the educational, administrative and technical personnel. The necessity of employing social media as an effective tool to transfer and move data and information in the educational process. In addition to the needs of work to educate students about the importance of knowledge sharing through the means of communication and communication available to them.

6. Conclusion

The importance of the study is lying in the importance of the topic it addressed, which is to identify "The role of social media in knowledge-sharing among faculty members in Jordanian universities" through the following points: The importance of the study lies in the fact that it is the only study according to the researcher's knowledge that studied the impact of social media on knowledge-sharing among faculty members, making it an addition to enriching the content of Arab and local libraries. The possibility of the study results contributing to highlighting the positive role in the use of social media as a means to enhance knowledge- sharing. The possibility of the study results contributing to drawing the attention of faculty members in Jordanian and Arab universities towards the importance of social media in promoting knowledge-sharing.

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