

## FACTORS INFLUENCING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AMONG INTERNSHIP STUDENTS USING FACEBOOK

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### Abstract

Keeping in contact with and sharing knowledge ubiquitously among peer students and teachers during professional internship are utmost important in supporting students both cognitively and affectively to overcome difficulties in their new workplaces. This paper examines the potential factors and its relative impact on influencing the effectiveness of using Facebook as a knowledge-sharing tool during students' professional education. A case study was implemented to study a group of university students' perspectives on using Facebook in their internship. The findings are presented in 4 dimensions, ranging from Human, Policy, Technology, and Knowledge aspects as the theoretical framework with 17 potential factors identified. Among the findings, Social Tie got the highest impact in Human aspects as Facebook could create a peer support network among students. Scaffolding reflections has the highest impact among Policy factors because guidance can assist students to formulate content for their reflective journals. Facebook's News Feed function has been recognized as the highest influence among Technology factors because this function enables students to be updated instantly and frequently on the latest development within the internship activities. Explicit knowledge transfer reached the highest impact among Knowledge factors as students can apply Information Management related model into their working situations.

All in all, the findings of the study also proved that factors from the literature are applicable to the professional experience internship context. This study provides insights for universities to better utilize Facebook to support knowledge transfer in students' internships. The theoretical framework used in this study may serve as a basis for further research on the use of Facebook for knowledge transfer.

**Keywords:** Knowledge Transfer, Knowledge Management, Facebook, Professional Experience, Internships

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### 1. Introduction

Professional experience internship offers many benefits to students' development, especially in effective knowledge transfer as it can expand their achievements in knowledge and skills (Chu et al., 2012a, 2012b). In order to achieve the goals, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) can facilitate peer support and intern-intern communication, as mentioned in Mayer (2002). Among the available ICTs, Facebook is suitable to be used as a tool for knowledge transfer among students in a professional experience internship. It offers a feasible and simple-to-use platform for bringing students and academic supervisors together and online knowledge exchange through discussion. (Cain&Policastri, 2011).

### 2. Literature Review

Many scholars agreed that effective knowledge transfer has positive effects on organizations. With reference to Liyanage et al. (2009), facilitating knowledge transfer can create a knowledge sharing culture, foster collaboration, which in turn can enhance innovation. This study investigates four aspects (i.e. human aspect, policy aspect, technology aspect, and knowledge aspect) affecting knowledge transfer with the use of Facebook during students' internship.

## **2.1 Human Aspect**

Human aspect contains four factors that have influence on the use of Facebook for knowledge transfer, which are absorptive capacity, motivation, supervisors' support and social tie. From a number of studies (Hamel, 1991; Inkpen&Dinur, 1998; Lok et al., 2008; Chai-Arayalert& Nakata, 2011; Martins &António, 2011), absorptive capacity shows a significant impact on knowledge transfer. It is believed absorptive capacity can facilitate student's application of absorbed knowledge, as a process of knowledge transfer. Moreover, motivation affects knowledge transfer, as it encourages and improves student's confidence level in acquisition and sharing of knowledge (Martins &António, 2011). Vera and Corssan (2004) mentioned that management support is an important criterion in knowledge transfer. As applied to this study's scenario, academic supervisors instead of management should have an effect on knowledge transfer. The last factor, social tie, also has impact on knowledge transfer, as suggested by Zhou et al. (2010) and Hansen (1999). It is believed that the social and trust relationships among students do affect their knowledge transfer by using Facebook.

## **2.2 Policy Aspect**

The Policy aspect covers regulations and rules, as well as learning strategy that set for formulating and clarifying commitments and responsibilities of each participant in the process of transferring knowledge. Regulations and rules are helpful to facilitate knowledge transfer which relate to the characteristics of the target group. Recent studies have shown that regulations and rules can support knowledge transfer in a more systemic way (McLaughlin, 2007; Chai-Arayalert& Nakata, 2011).

## **2.3 Technology Aspect**

### **a. Technology**

Many studies concluded that technology is a significant factor which facilitates knowledge transfer. Chai-Arayalert and Nakata (2011) suggested two frameworks to analyze factors that affect knowledge transfer. The first framework is scoped by organizational containment analysis, which shows that technical layers involving communication channels is a fundamental factor affecting knowledge transfer. The second framework, semiotic framework, analyzed socio-technical aspects of the factors. Both help enabling knowledge transfer process from the technical aspect.

### **b. Ease of Knowledge Access**

Watson and Hewett (2006) emphasized that a successful knowledge transfer system should have high level of knowledge reuse such that startup and maintenance cost of the knowledge repositories can be saved. Their study shows that ease of knowledge access is one of the significant predictors of knowledge reuse. They believed that the easier it is to access knowledge, the greater one's motivation of acquiring the knowledge will be.

### **c. Knowledge Aspect**

Knowledge aspect covers two factors that have effect on the effective use of Facebook for knowledge transfer, which are explicit knowledge transfer and tacit knowledge transfer. It is proved that nature of knowledge has influence on knowledge transfer (Martins &António, 2011). Knowledge can be classified into explicit and tacit in which the former is defined as "knowledge of rationality" and the latter is defined as "knowledge of experience of the body" (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). In this study scenario, explicit knowledge refers to the knowledge that can be easily shared between students like their knowledge acquired from workplace. On the other hand, tacit knowledge refers to the embedded knowledge in students' minds like their personal changes during internship. It is believed that both kinds

of knowledge have impact on the knowledge transfer process.

### 3. Research Gap

Even though it is widely accepted that an array of factors affects the knowledge transfer process, there is no extensive research on how these factors affect the usage of Facebook in support of effective knowledge transfer among students during their professional experience internship.

To address the above research gaps, this study raises three key questions: (1) What are the major factors influencing the usage of Facebook in support of effective knowledge transfer, and how they are interconnected? (2) What is the relative impact of each factor? (3) To what extent do these factors affect students' knowledge transfer process in a professional experience internship context? The study takes a case-based approach in studying the use of Facebook by a group of Bachelor students in a university and its impact on knowledge transfer during their internships.

### 4. Research Methodology

#### 4.1. Case-based approach

A particular discipline of students from the field of Information Management at a university in Hong Kong is selected for this research to explore factors that affect the use of Facebook for knowledge transfer. This group of 21 students has interned for various organizations in the 2014 summer for at least 6 weeks. They used Facebook as a tool for communication and knowledge sharing by setting private groups among themselves to write reflective journals and provide comments to others during internship. Table 1 summarizes the case background.

Table 1: Summary of the case background

<b>Background of students</b>	From the field of Information Management at a university in Hong Kong
<b>Population size</b>	21 students
<b>Sector of internship organizations</b>	Publishing companies, law firms, financial companies, IT firms, hospitals, government organizations, and non-government organizations
<b>Private groups' participants</b>	21 students and 4 academic supervisors

#### 4.2. Data collection methods

A combination of research methods including observations, questionnaire and interview was adopted in this study. The research subject is students' perspectives on the factors affecting their use of Facebook for knowledge transfer during internship. Students' reflective journals, comments, photos, and others were extracted from Facebook for content analysis. A questionnaire (27 close-ended questions) was distributed to students after their internship. The questions adopt a five-point Likert scale about four aspects, which include human, policy, technology, and knowledge. Lastly, a focus group interview with 6 students was conducted after the collection of questionnaire to clarify their answers and gather further perspectives.

#### 4.3. Data analysis

The questionnaire serves as the basis for investigating students' perspectives on the factors affecting effective use of Facebook for knowledge transfer during internship. Data collected from the questionnaire is categorized and identified to match patterns on the usage of

Facebook for knowledge transfer and the investigated factors (Yin, 2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Score of individual factors is calculated for measuring the level of influence on knowledge transfer. Content analysis from Facebook and focus group interview were used to supplement quantitative analysis to produce solid and comprehensive analysis.

Table 2: Relative impact of factors affecting effective use of Facebook on knowledge transfer in a professional experience internship.

Factors	Effective use of Facebook on knowledge transfer in a professional experience internship					
	Female		Male		Overall	
	Score (Maximum: 60)	Level of Impact	Score (Maximum: 45)	Level of Impact	Score (Maximum: 105)	Level of Impact
<b>Human Aspect:</b>						
Absorptive capacity	41	High	28	Medium	69	Medium
Motivation	44	High	28	Medium	72	High
Supervisor's support	44	High	30	Medium	74	High
Social tie	52	High	27	Medium	79	High
<b>Average score</b>					<b>73.5</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Policy Aspect:</b>						
Internship guidelines	42	High	28	Medium	70	Medium
Scaffolding reflections	45	High	32	High	77	High
<b>Average score</b>					<b>73.5</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Technology Aspect:</b>						
Facebook's news feed function	47	High	34	High	81	High
Facebook's photo album function	43	High	29	Medium	72	High
Facebook's document function	47	High	30	Medium	77	High
Facebook's comment function	39	Medium	39	High	78	High
Facebook's tag function	42	High	30	Medium	72	High
Facebook's private group function	46	High	32	High	78	High
Facebook's email notification function	42	High	30	Medium	72	High
Facebook's "like" function	48	High	30	Medium	78	High
Ease of information and knowledge access	46	High	31	High	77	High
<b>Average score</b>					<b>76.11</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Knowledge Aspect:</b>						
Explicit knowledge transfer	44	High	32	High	76	High
Tacit knowledge transfer	40	Medium	30	Medium	70	Medium
<b>Average score</b>					<b>73</b>	<b>High</b>

**A) Female**

1. Maximum score for each factor in all 12 Female interns =  $5 \times 12 = 60$
2. Score of 41-60 out of a maximum of 60 => High Impact
3. Score of 21-40 out of a maximum of 60 => Medium Impact
4. Score of 1-20 out of a maximum of 60 => Low Impact

**B) Male**

1. Maximum score for each factor in all 9 Male interns =  $5 \times 9 = 45$
2. Score of 31-45 out of a maximum of 45 => High Impact
3. Score of 16-30 out of a maximum of 45 => Medium Impact
4. Score of 1-15 out of a maximum of 45 => Low Impact

**C) Overall**

1. Maximum score for each factor in all 21 interns =  $5 \times 21 = 105$
2. Score of 71-105 out of a maximum of 105 => High Impact
3. Score of 36-70 out of a maximum of 105 => Medium Impact
4. Score of 1-35 out of a maximum of 105 => Low Impact

**D) Average score of each aspect = Total score / number of factors**

## 5. Findings and Discussion

### 5.1 Background of the respondents

A questionnaire was administered to the subjects of this study. 21 students (9 male and 12 female students) have responded to the questionnaire. With regard to the background questions in the questionnaire, the results concluded that students are veteran of using Facebook. 71% of the students have been using Facebook before Professional Experience for more than 3 years (Figure 1). 48% of the students claimed that they accessed Facebook more than 10 times per week (Figure 2).

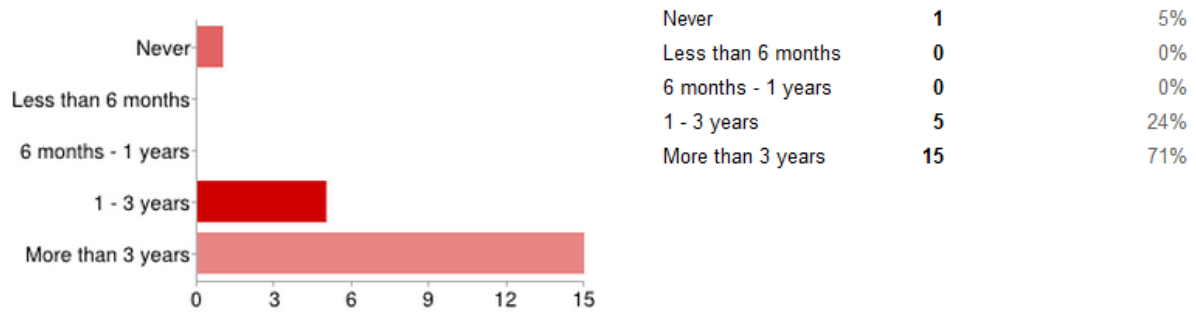


Figure 1: Number of years that students using Facebook before internship

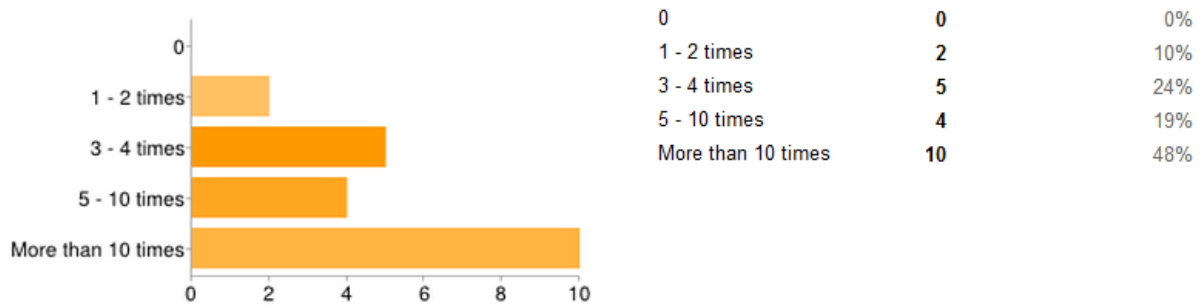


Figure 2: Frequency of using Facebook by students per week

Besides, the results show that students participated continuously and actively in writing reflective journal during professional experience. 81% of the students wrote reflective journals on Facebook 1-2 times per week on average (Figure 3). Moreover, 81% of the students responded to other students' comments on Facebook pages regarding the internship 1-2 times per week on average (Figure 4). The results show that majority of the students are willing to share knowledge in Facebook frequently and continuously.

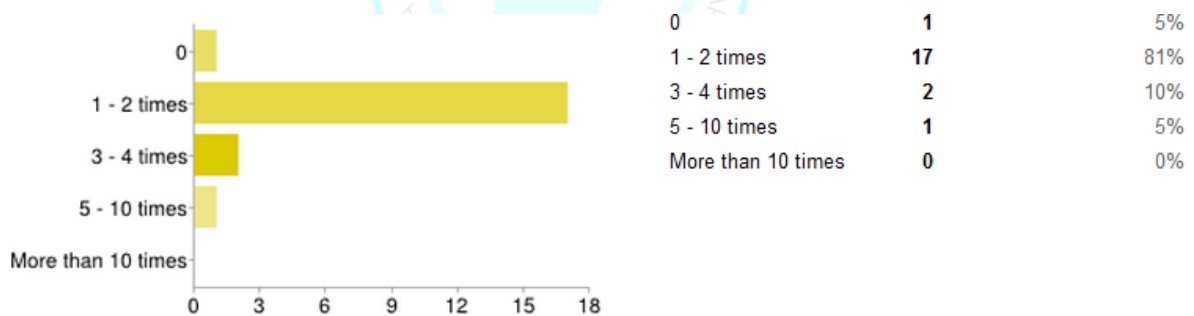


Figure 3: Frequency of writing reflective journals by students per week

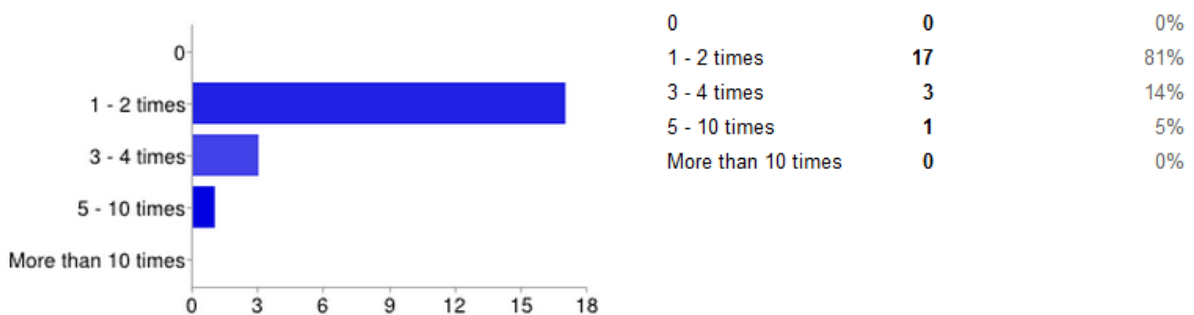


Figure 4: Frequency of providing comments by students per week

## 5.2. Relative Impact of Factors

### 5.2.1. Human Aspect

#### a. Moderate impact of absorptive capacity

The impact of absorptive capacity is moderate because the score is 69 out of 105 (Table 2). Some students believed that using Facebook aids their absorptive capacity and that youngsters are proficient in using computer applications, including Facebook as they are the Y-generation. This indicates that students will not have problems in using Facebook to write reflective journals. However, some students think that the level of absorptive capacity depends on the ability of the knowledge receivers. Furthermore, it is found that the impact of absorptive capacity for female students (41 out of 60) is higher than the male (28 out of 45).

#### b. Strong impact of motivation

There is a high level of impact in motivation as the score is 72 out of 105 (Table 2). Most of the students agree that supervisors' support strengthen their motivation to write reflective journals for knowledge transfer. Apart from this, students were also motivated by the journals from other students. Moreover, more female students (44 out of 60) thought that motivation has strong impact of knowledge transfer than male students (28 out of 45).

#### c. Significant impact of supervisors' support

The result of the study shows that there is high impact of supervisors' support on knowledge transfer since the score is 74 out of 105 (Table 2). There are several examples of reflective journals where academic supervisors provided supports to students. A student suggested using various colors to draw workflows so that the workflows would be more "user-friendly" and "user-readable". Although the score of male students (30 out of 45) is still lower than the female (44 out of 60), supervisors' support is the highest impact for male students among the five human aspects.

#### d. The highest impact in human aspects: Social tie

The result indicates that social tie is the highest impact of knowledge transfer in human aspects as the score is 79 out of 105 (Table 2). Most students pointed out that Facebook can be served as a peer support network since students have trust relationship with each others. They also believe that this network is useful for students in the whole stage of their internship as long as they encounter any problems in their internship. Furthermore, the results reveal that social tie has the highest impact for female student (52 out of 60) in all factors. Nevertheless, the score of male students (27 out of 45) is still lower than the female.

### 5.2.2 Policy Aspect

#### a. Medium influence of internship guidelines

There is medium level of influence of internship guidelines on knowledge transfer as this factor scores 70 out of 105 (Table 2). Most of the students agreed that the guidelines should state the frequency of writing the reflective journals for them to follow. Thus, without guidelines, this will influence the effectiveness of knowledge transfer. However, some thought that the suggested frequency was not flexible. The findings show that there is a need to specify the frequency of writing reflective journals. Then, knowledge transfer can be facilitated throughout the internship. However, there is still room for improvement on the flexibility of the suggested frequency. The results also show that there are different perceptions between female and male students. Female students thought that internship guideline has high impact on knowledge transfer (42 out of 60). However, male students believed that the level of impact for this factor is moderate (28 out of 45).

b. High impact of scaffolding reflections

The scaffolding reflections have high impact of students on knowledge transfer because it scores 77 out of 105 (Table 2). Majority of the students preferred providing suggested content of the reflective journals, which indicates that scaffolding reflections can help students enrich the content of their journals.

**5.2.3. Technology Aspect**

**5.2.3.1 Strong Influence of Facebook functions**

From the findings, all the 8 Facebook's functions have high impact on effective use of Facebook for knowledge transfer during internship.

a. News feed

Overall score of the Facebook's news feed function received a high score of 81 out of maximum 105 (Table 2); it has a solid impact on knowledge transfer with the highest score among the factors in the technology aspect. News feed updates students instantly on the latest development. As reflected by a student, the functions can help to establish more interactions between students, and academic supervisors. This, in turn, enhances the motivation of assessment fulfillment, which stimulates students to write more reflections. As a result, more content and knowledge are circulated within the Facebook internship pages.

b. Photo album

The photo album function scores 72 out of maximum 105 (Table 2). This overall score shows a strong impact of the photo album feature of Facebook on knowledge transfer. The photo album can be used as an alternative to writing reflective journals. The function was well-received by students and academic supervisors. Comparing the score between male and female students, there is a clear difference that photo album has a higher impact from female students (43 out of 60) than male students (29 out of 45).

c. Document

The document function has a major influence on knowledge transfer with a score of 77 out of maximum 105 (Table 2). Students can write and organize the journals systematically and clearly within the same webpage. More importantly, such degree of performance cannot be achieved with other storage and distribution channel such as the post function in Facebook. This document function can be considered a major tool for knowledge transfer. While the overall score shows a favorable impact, female students rated it more highly (47 out of 60) than male students (30 out of 45).

d. Comment

Comment function yields an aggregate score of 78 out of 105 (Table 2). It is one of the highest impact factors among all technology factors. It is inferred that such a high rating is due to the necessity nature of the comment function, as comments are one of the most commonly used communication channels inside Facebook. Through the comment function, students and academic supervisors can interact for guidance, support, and experience sharing. Another benefit of using comment function is that it stimulates textual interactions between students, which facilitates knowledge transfer occurrence. Female students indicate medium impact (39 out of 60) while male students indicate strong impact (39 out of 45).

e. Tag

The findings show a high significance on knowledge transfer with the tag function in Facebook. The score of tag function is 72 out of 105 (Table 2), which is relatively lower than

that of previous Facebook functions. This relatively low score maybe due to the fact of relatively minor benefits as tags are used to link person, page, or place to other students' post. Despite the relatively low score, a student pointed out the importance of photo function in knowledge transfer that tag can reinforce the descriptions of photos when the photos taken were used to illustrate the internship tasks. Apart from the overall result, it is found that tag function has higher impact on female students (42 out of 60) than the male students (30 out of 45).

#### f. Private group

Besides the comment function, private group also scores 78 out of 105 (Table 2), which made it one of the highest scores in the technology aspect. Such importance was also strongly reflected during the interview. The use of private group can ease students' concern on privacy about their reflective journals, which enables them to reflect more frequently and hence, leading to a more effective knowledge transfer. This shows that private group can provide space for students not just reflection, but also communicating other areas of internship to their friendly classmates. These topics can be discussed wholeheartedly without any compromise on its wordings and content. As a result, information quality and integrity can be improved during the knowledge transfer process by using private group in Facebook.

#### g. Email notification

The internship students rated the email notification function with an overall score of 72 out of 105 (Table 2), which shows a high impact on knowledge transfer. Though this function is also under the high influence category, it has a relatively low score as one student reported that the function is like a spam, due to how the Facebook email notification works. By default, Facebook automatically notifies users any updates on activities, posts and friends' posts on Facebook. A student reflected that email notification helped alert him of the latest comments in his private group. This feature was helpful, especially when he was busy during his internship period. The findings show that email notification has high impact from female students' perspective (42 out of 60) whereas there is medium impact from male students' perspective (30 out of 45).

#### h. "Like" function

The Facebook "Like" function scores 78 out of 105 (Table 2) from students' ratings. This is the one of the highest score within the technology aspect. During the internship, a student wrote down that he spent a week to prepare and carried out a presentation as well as his reflection of the task. Another student and an academic supervisor appreciated his effort and "like" his reflective journal. The supervisor also provided further suggestions to him. Furthermore, the results revealed that "like" function has strong influence on female students (48 out of 60) whereas it has moderate impact on male students (30 out of 45).

### 5.2.3.2 Overall function

Over half of the students (Figure 5) agreed that the overall functions of Facebook positively affect their knowledge transfer process. Students generally presented positive comments regarding the overall functions of Facebook in fostering knowledge transfer.



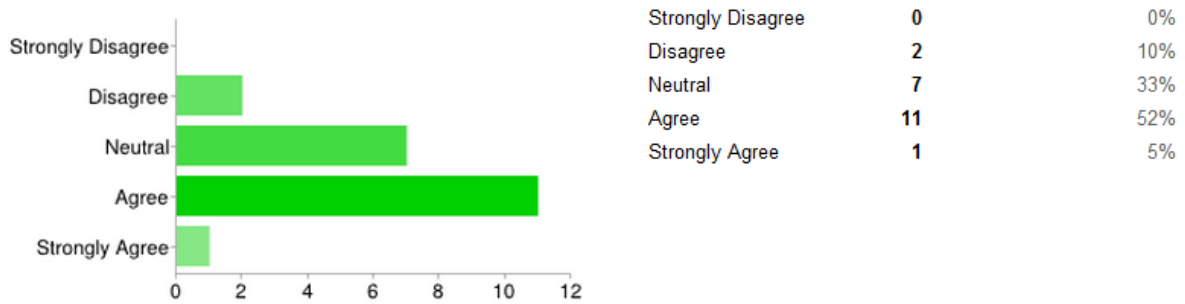


Figure 5: Students' viewpoint on Facebook's overall functions that can positively affect knowledge transfer

Moreover, the following line chart (Figure 6) shows that most of the Facebook's functions have higher impact on female students than male students. However, it is found that the comment function has larger impact on male students than female students.

Facebook's functions	Female		Male	
	Score (Maximum: 60)	Average score (= score / 12 female students)	Score (Maximum: 45)	Average score (= score / 9 male students)
1. News feed function	47	3.916666667	34	3.777777778
2. Photo album function	43	3.583333333	29	3.222222222
3. Document function	47	3.916666667	30	3.333333333
4. Comment function	39	3.25	39	4.333333333
5. Tag function	42	3.5	30	3.333333333
6. Private group function	46	3.833333333	32	3.555555556
7. Email notification function	42	3.5	30	3.333333333
8. "Like" function	48	4	30	3.333333333

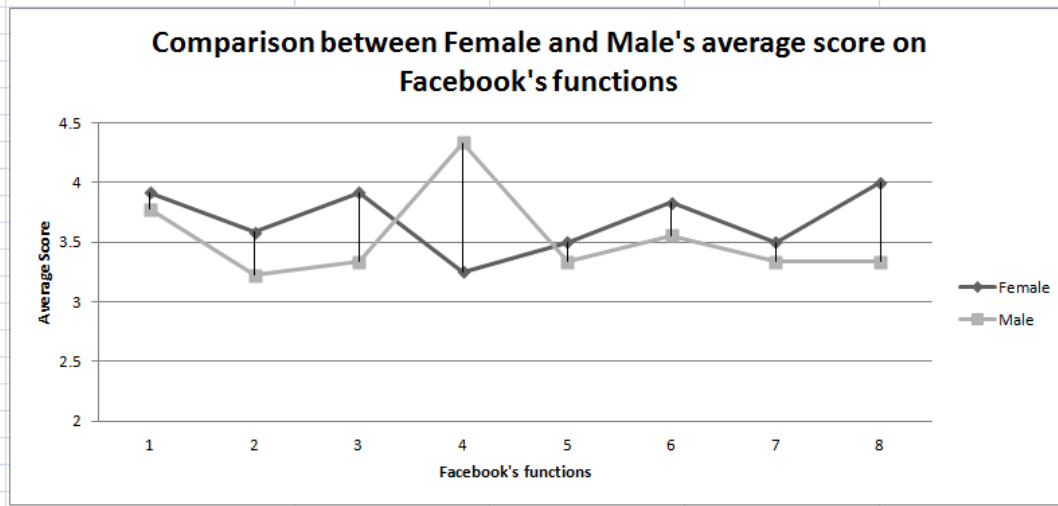


Figure 6: Comparison between Female and Male's average score on Facebook's functions

### 5.2.3.3 High impact of ease of information and knowledge access

Ease of information and knowledge access which is embraced by technology was rated with a score of 77 out of 105 (Table 2) which in turn shows a high influence on knowledge transfer. Students summarized that the use of Facebook during internship did in fact improve the ease of information and knowledge access when they could access Facebook anytime anywhere. This enables knowledge transfer during internship where it will be impossible without Facebook in the past.

### 5.2.4 Knowledge Aspect

#### a. High effect of explicit knowledge

The effect of explicit knowledge is high because it scores 76 out of 105 (Table 2). Majority of the students agreed that explicit knowledge can facilitate knowledge transfer. There are several examples of reflective journals which demonstrate the effectiveness of explicit knowledge. A student applied some Information Management (IM) models such as Shannon-Weaver model of communication and record life cycle into his real working scenarios.

#### b. Average impact of tacit knowledge

The impact of tacit knowledge is satisfactory as it scores 70 out of 105 (Table 2). Many students thought that tacit knowledge is not transferred as effective as explicit knowledge. A student believed that effective transfer of tacit knowledge is reliable on the ability of persons. If the ability of a person is high, they can transform their personal knowledge of job experiences into the reflective journals. Thus, the finding shows that the impact of tacit knowledge is not certain.

### 5.2.5. Summary on the relative impact of aspects

The overall impact of each aspect is summarized with a line chart (Figure 7) showing average score of each aspect. It reveals that technology aspect gets the highest impact; and then policy and human aspects rank the second highest; and knowledge aspect ranks the third. The chart also shows that the relative impact of aspects from female and male students' perspectives is different. The female think that human aspect has the highest influence, followed by technology, human and knowledge aspects. On the other hand, the male think that technology aspect is the most important factor, then knowledge, policy, human aspects are followed accordingly. Generally, female students have higher impact of the four aspects on knowledge transfer than the male.

Factor Aspects	Female		Male		Overall	
	Total Average Score (from Table 2)	Average Score per students (= total average score / 12 female students)	Total Average Score (from Table 2)	Average Score per students (= total average score / 9 male students)	Total Average Score (from Table 2)	Average Score per students (= total average score / 21 students)
1. Human Aspect	45.25	3.770833333	28.25	3.138888889	73.5	3.5
2. Policy Aspect	43.5	3.625	30	3.333333333	73.5	3.5
3. Technology Aspect	44.44	3.703333333	31.67	3.518888889	76.11	3.624285714
4. Knowledge Aspect	42	3.5	31	3.444444444	73	3.476190476

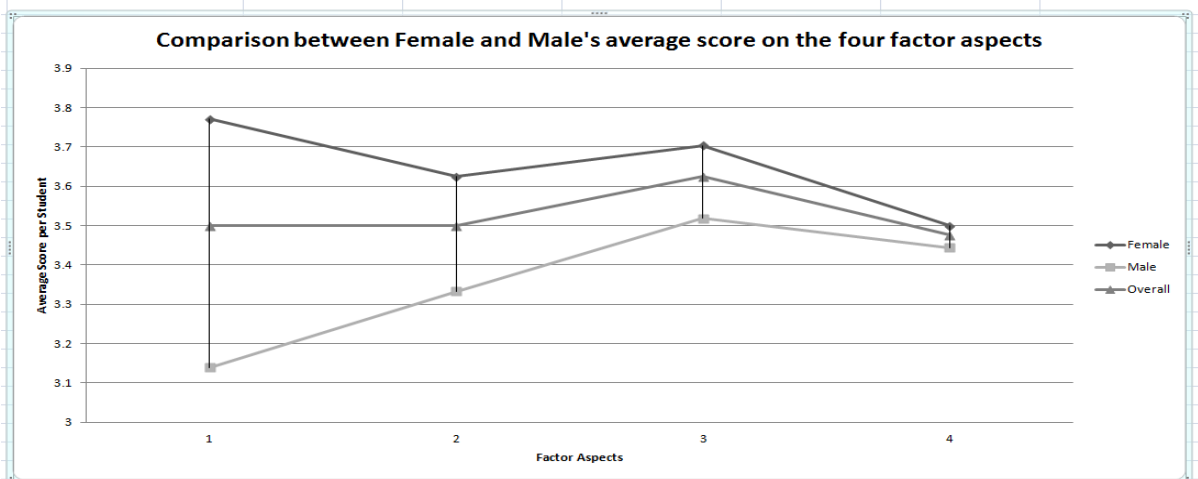


Figure 7: Comparison between Female and Male's average score on the four factor aspects

### 5.3 Effectiveness of knowledge transfer

The overall result of the effective use of Facebook for knowledge transfer during a professional experience internship is highly satisfied. 67% of the students (Figure 8) agreed that Facebook is suitable for sharing information and knowledge in the internship.

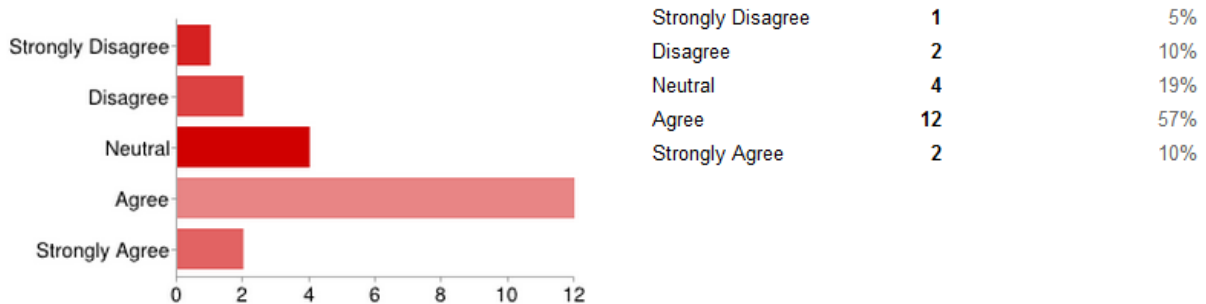


Figure 8: Students' standpoint on the suitability of Facebook for sharing information and knowledge during internship

Apart from this, this study also shows that effective use of Facebook for knowledge transfer exists during internship. Some students illustrated examples of effective knowledge transfer. During the internship, comments in Facebook from peers and academic supervisors provided inspiration for the students to improve work performance. This proved that knowledge transfer is effective during students' internship, which align with the study by Jensen and Szulanski (2007) mentioning that application of knowledge is one of the measurements for effective knowledge transfer.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Answers to Research Questions

To conclude, this study has answered the three research questions posed earlier. First, the study provided insights for the use of Facebook for knowledge transfer. Based on the literature, this study identified 17 factors affecting knowledge transfer with the use of Facebook from Human, Policy, Technology and Knowledge aspects. The result of the study proved that 14 factors have strong impact of knowledge transfer whereas only 3 factors have moderate impact. It is concluded that the use of Facebook in this case study is effective for knowledge transfer.

Secondly, the study also discovered the relative impacts for each factor on knowledge transfer during students' internship. The top three factors that show significant impact of knowledge transfer are Technology aspect – Facebook's News Feed function (score: 81), Human aspect – Social Tie (score: 79) and Technology aspects – Facebook's Comment function (score: 78), Private Group function (score: 78) and Like function (score: 78) (Figure 9).

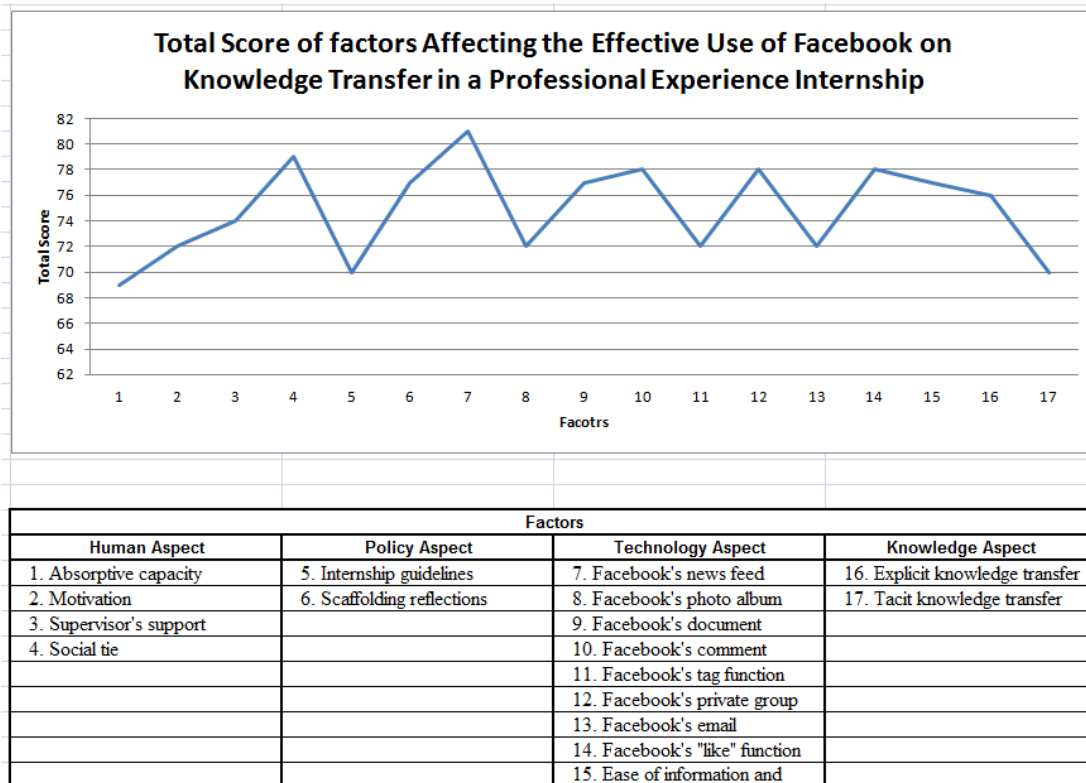


Figure 9: Total Score of factors

Third, the findings of the study discovered how factors from each aspect affect knowledge transfer in professional experience internship context. Social tie got the highest impact in human aspects as Facebook could create a peer support network among students. Scaffolding reflections has the highest impact among policy factors because guidance can assist students to formulate content for their reflective journals. Facebook's News Feed function has been recognized as the highest influence among technology factors because this function enables students to be updated instantly and frequently on the latest development within the internship activities. Explicit knowledge transfer reached the highest impact among knowledge factors as students can apply IM-related model into their working situations. All in all, the findings of the study also proved that factors from the literature are applicable to the professional experience internship context.

### 6.2 Limitations and Future Directions

It is acknowledged that this study has several limitations. Firstly, this study has identified that female students rated the concerned research topic more highly than male students. It is suggested that gender differences be investigated in future studies. Secondly, cultural impact should be studied as well, since culture plays substantial influences on knowledge transfer behaviors (Bhagat et al., 2002). This study focuses on a group of Bachelor students in the same discipline and at the same university in Hong Kong. The Chinese social network has its distinctive traits. In order to obtain more comprehensive findings, future studies should be expanded to cover different cultural settings. Thirdly, due to limited sample size and confined sample scope, more factors affecting the effectiveness of Facebook on knowledge transfer are not able to be included in the theoretical framework. In future research, more factors in different dimensions should be included, such as operational, cultural, social factors (Chow, 2011). Finally, the nature of a case study is bound to some limitations. For example, the study may not be generalisable; it may lack objectivity; and it does not answer a large number of relevant and appropriate research questions (Hodkinson&Hodkinson, 2001). Ideally, in future research, longitudinal studies should be conducted in order to examine

effectiveness of Facebook on knowledge transfer in different contexts, e.g. in various colleges or in various disciplines.

### **6.3 Contribution of this Research**

Based on the literature on factors affecting knowledge transfer, this study highlighted the interplay of these factors affecting the effective use of Facebook on knowledge transfer, the relative impact of the factors and how they affect knowledge transfer in professional experience internship context. Factors from technology, policy, human and knowledge aspects have at least medium to high level of impact on students' knowledge transfer process. In particular, factors from the technology aspect had the highest impact on students' knowledge transfer process.

This study provides insights for universities to better utilize Facebook to support knowledge transfer in students' internships. The theoretical framework used in this study may serve as a basis for further research on the use of Facebook for knowledge transfer.



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