Teenage peer-to-peer knowledge sharing through social network sites in secondary schools

# Keywords

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## Sample

STUDY 1: An online questionnairewas distributed among a representative sample of Hebrew-speaking secondary school students in Israel.STUDY 2: Participants were 206 Israeli adolescents. They were recruited from the largest national panel data base (with over 10,000 active adolescent members), which is subjected to state privacy law and ethical regulations. Invitations to participate in the current study were sent via e-mail to all registered adolescent members (age 15-17) from the majority population in Israel (mainstream, ethnically Jewish population. The mean age of the 205 remaining participants (103 male) was 16.00 (SD= 0.81) Study 2: Participants were 515 Hebrew-speaking Israeli adolescents. Recruitment procedures were identical to those in Study 1, and excluded participants that had participated in the Study 1 sample. Mean age of the 291 remaining participants (127 male) was 16.73 (SD =1.04)

## Implications For Educators About

Other

# Abstract

The promise of social network technology for learning purposes has been heavily debated,
with proponents highlighting its transformative and opponents its distracting potential.
However, little is known about the actual, everyday use of ubiquitous social network sites
for learning and study purposes in secondary schools. In the present work, we present
findings from two survey studies on representative samples of Israeli, Hebrew-speaking
teenagers (N1 ¼ 206 and N2 ¼ 515) which explored the scope, characteristics and reasons
behind such activities. Study 1 shows that these can be described best as online
knowledge sharing, that is: the up- and downloading of knowledge and knowledge sources
to social network-based peer groups. Findings were replicated in study 2 to further support
the claim that school-related knowledge sharing is common and widespread and entails
different types of knowledge. Findings from study 2 furthermore show that sharing is
mainly motivated by prosocial motives, as well as expectations for future reciprocation.
Sharing is predicted by individual differences, such as gender, collectivist values, mastery
goal orientations and academic self-efficacy. Relations between competitive-individualist
values and sharing are more complex, and are, among others, moderated by expectations
for future

# Outcome

In their first study, Asterhan and Bouton (2017) found that secondary school peer-to-peer knowledge sharing in SNS groups is a common and frequent phenomenon in which most teenage students participate, either as sharers or as users of shared materials, or as both. The majority of respondents perceive these school-related usages of SNS favourably and believe it helps improve their own as well as their peers' academic achievements. The results also indicate that, at least currently, these study groups are mainly
WhatsApp-based and peer-led, even though teachers are members in at least some of them. Finally, sharing intensity was positively associated with the extent to which students are active users of social network technology and with self-reported level of academic achievement. As for the latter, higher academic achievement was specifically associated with two types of content categories that require expertise and personal effort, namely real-time peer assistance and posting one's solved homework solutions. Solved homework solutions and student-made content summaries were indeed among the least frequently shared materials. These materials are arguably among the most valuable (for users) and costly (for posters) knowledge sources. Similarly, administrative message and snapshots of teacher-produced materials were indeed among the most frequently shared and used materials. However, unexpectedly, so was real-time peer assistance. Of the different content categories, females only provide more peer assistance than male students, but did not share other knowledge sources more often.
 Study 2 findings: The majority of teenagers partake in SNS e based, school-related knowledge sharing and use shared materials posted by peers. As in Study 1, students reported using and sharing learning materials with their friends frequently. The types of materials that were shared and used most frequently are, once more, administrative messages, snapshots and real-time peer assistance, with solved solutions (cheating/
copying) the least frequent content category. The majority of teenage students reported to be members of SNS study groups, often several ones. Girls were found to share more often overall, and specifically share more content summaries than boys. Among the different motives for school-related sharing through SNSs, self-recognized “prominent sharers” most frequently mentioned the wish to help their classmates succeed. competitive individualism was not associated with less overall knowledge sharing or more overall use of shared materials, as would be expected based on a straightforward utility maximization strategy. However, even though competitively oriented individuals participate in sharing activities to the same extent as others, they also expressed more regret and experienced more social pressure to share content. Moreover, competitive individualism was associated with more frequent sharing of the cheating type, that is: sharing and using copied homework and other assignments. Finally, the results reported here also show that belief in quid pro quo, i.e., the gift economy rationale for sharing, serves as a moderating factor of the association between peer sharing and competitive individualism: When teenagers do not expect quid pro quo benefits, stronger endorsement of competitive individualist values is associated with less sharing. For teenagers who expect quid pro quo benefits from sharing, on the other hand, the opposite patterns was found, that is: endorsement of individualism was associated with increased sharing. For them, the act of sharing could both boost their social reputation as well as give them access to other repositories of potentially useful materials and knowledge.