

# Chapter 15

## Library and Information Science Female Undergraduate Preference for Facebook as Information Sharing Tool

**Adeyinka Tella**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5382-4471>

*University of South Africa, South Africa*

**Oluwale Olumide Durodolu**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2734-8165>

*University of South Africa, South Africa*

**Stephen Osahon Uwaifo**

*Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria*

### ABSTRACT

*This study has examined the library and information science female undergraduates' preference for Facebook as an information-sharing tool. A survey approach was adopted using a questionnaire to collect data from 457 LIS female undergraduate students drawn from five library schools in Nigeria. The findings of the study have demonstrated that most significant factors that lead to the use of Facebook for information sharing among LIS female undergraduate students are user-friendly nature of the tool, personal gain, enjoyment, and self-efficacy while the least factors are social engagement and empathy. User-friendliness nature of Facebook has the highest correlation with the preference for Facebook as an information-sharing tool by female students followed by enjoyment while learning and empathy are the least correlated factors.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Social networking site is increasingly the most popular forms of communication on the Internet. Generally, social networking websites (SNS) facilitate communication and information sharing between people. It has been argued repeatedly that people turn to those in their social network for information rather than going to formal sources (Savolainen, 2017). As social network sites (SNSs) have been shown to connect individuals to people with whom they have a previously established offline connection (Lampe., Ellison,& Steinfield, 2006), as well as connecting different degrees of relational closeness (Gilbert & Karahalios, 2009), it is likely that people turn to SNSs as an efficient way to tap these connections for sharing information.

Among the accessible social networking sites, Facebook has become an increasingly important tool for people engaging in a range of communication behaviours, including requesting help from their social network to address information needs. Social networking websites, such as Facebook, are member-based Internet communities which allow participants to post profile information, such as usernames and photographs, and to interact with others in innovative ways, such as sending public or private online messages or sharing photos online (Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009).

Currently, it is projected that 2.41 billion are monthly active users of Facebook during the second quarter of 2019 (Clement, 2019). With these statistics, Facebook has become the most significant social network worldwide. It was reported in the third quarter of 2012 that the number of active Facebook users surpass one billion, making it the first social network ever to achieve this (Clement, 2019). Active users in this context are those who have logged in to Facebook during the last 30 days. In the previous reported quarter, Facebook stated that 2.7 billion people were using at least one of Facebook's core products (Clement, 2019). It can be seen from here that the growing percentage increase in the number of users of Facebook reveals its potential as favourite tool for sharing information, particularly among the female gender.

As an appropriate tool for Internet communication, Facebook has become an essential part of Internet users' lives. Facebook become part of people's day-to-day existence. According to the research results, 65% of the users log on to Facebook each day, and 85% of the users log on to Facebook at least once a week, which shows that Facebook-is getting more and more popular, and is becoming one of the crucial tools for interpersonal interaction (Tella, et al. 2014; Tella & Babatunde, 2017). Bhattacharjee (2001) commented that system acceptance is an essential factor for users' adoption of the system. Nevertheless, to observe from a long-term viewpoint, whether the system is accepted has something to do with whether users "continue to use" that system. Hence, for Facebook, it is an issue worthy of investigating currently how the users mainly the female undergraduate keep on preferring Facebook as a platform to share information.

Information sharing is an essential motivation for people to join virtual communities (Ridings and Gefen 2004). Social networking websites (e.g. Facebook) empower their users to share different kinds of information such as ideas, pictures, and videos with just a few clicks. From only using the usual way of sharing information like discussion, distribution of documents via postage, sharing information via electronic media, social network or media is now trending as an information-sharing tool (Dahri & Yunus, 2017).

As Dahri and Yunus (2017) indicated, there are many social media platforms that are famously used globally including Facebook, Youtube, Whatsapp, FB messenger, Instagram, WeChat, Google+, Line, Twitter, Sino Weibo, Linkedin and Skype. However, based on the available statistic from the literature

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