



International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Higher Education

Journal Homepage: <https://ijmshe.com/index.php/pub/index>



International Journal of
Multidisciplinary Studies
in Higher Education
Volume 2 Issue 3

Research Article

The Mediating Role Of Digital Online Media Literacy On The Knowledge Sharing And Social Networking Site Usage Of Students

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Article Info

Article history:

Received: 01 July 2025

Accepted: 22 July 2025

Keywords:

communication, digital online media literacy, knowledge sharing, social networking site usage, quality education, descriptive correlation, Philippines.

Abstract

In today's digital era, social networking sites (SNSs) play a vital role in student engagement for academic and social purposes. This study investigates how Digital Online Media Literacy (DOML) influences the relationship between students' knowledge sharing behavior and SNS usage intensity. Grounded in Social Constructivism and Social Capital Theory, a non-experimental, descriptive-correlational design was used. A total of 300 Bachelor of Arts in Communication students from four private higher education institutions in Davao City participated, selected through total enumeration technique. Adapted survey tools assessed knowledge sharing, SNS usage, and DOML. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and mediation analysis via the Sobel test and MedGraph. Results indicated high levels of knowledge sharing and SNS usage, primarily for academic and entertainment purposes. Students also demonstrated very high levels of DOML, particularly in ethical awareness and media evaluation. Significant positive relationships were found among all variables, with DOML partially mediating the link between knowledge sharing and SNS usage. The findings underscore the importance of fostering digital media literacy to enhance responsible and effective online engagement in academic communities.

Cite as: Canoy, K. M., & Lovitos, A. H. (2025). The Mediating Role Of Digital Online Media Literacy On The Knowledge Sharing And Social Networking Site Usage Of Students. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Higher Education*, 2(3), 13–32. <https://doi.org/10.70847/620138>

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1. Introduction

In the digital era, the internet has become the norm, and internet-based social networking platforms have changed how individuals interact, connect, communicate, and engage in social activities and academics. Over 5 billion people are actively using social networking sites (SNSs), proving to the world how information is exchanged and how relationships can be formed and maintained (Du et al., 2024; Cheng et al., 2021). For students, SNSs such as Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and academic platforms have become important outlets for communication, collaboration, and knowledge sharing in both formal and informal learning settings (Azizi et al., 2019; Owen et al., 2024). However, students' engagement toward social networking sites has become the imminent problem among schools globally since students shifted their focus to digital online platforms. Although these SNS platforms' has a huge potential for supporting academic engagements between students, there is a growing concern, particularly in the Philippines, about the possibility of students are effectively using them for educational purposes. Majority of people, particularly students, use SNSs primarily for entertainment and socialization, resulting to low quality and intensity of their engagement in knowledge-sharing behaviors and insufficient digital media literacy to navigate the platforms responsibly and productively.

Most students prefer interacting and exchanging ideas through SNSs as it provides convenience and accessibility, and real-time feedback appeals to young adults. Social media creates cooperative learning and enhanced academic engagement (Du et al., 2020; ResearchGate, 2024). At the same time, it is important to recognize that aside from its academic functions, students still tend to engage with SNSs primarily for entertainment purposes. Watching short-form videos, memes, or gaming-related content has become part of their daily routine, reflecting the idea that entertainment continues to be one of the most dominant motivators behind student

engagement on social media—even when academic and informative uses are available (Karim et al., 2020).

Despite the benefits and convenience social media offers, growing evidence shows that excessive or uncontrolled use of SNSs can negatively affect students' academic performance and psychological well-being. Problematic usage of SNSs has been linked to reduced real-world interaction, increased procrastination, and difficulty maintaining focus in their studies (Amirthalingam & Khera, 2024). Social media such as Facebook, TikTok, etc., have increasingly refined their algorithms to ensure that users maximize their engagement, often by promoting highly personalized and emotionally triggering content. This is designed to foster addictive usage patterns that can lead to an increase in procrastination and a decrease in concentration among students (Nie, 2025). Social networking addiction has now been recognized as a behavioral dependency that is often driven by reward-based features and social comparison, leading to students being vulnerable to distraction and stress (Montag et al., 2024; Nie, 2025). University students in developing countries have seen decreased academic performance and reduced time spent on academic tasks as the addictive algorithm-driven content has disrupted their daily routines (Heliyon, 2024; Nie, 2025). These observations align with the work of Salas et al. (2021), who noted that while students are aware of potential drawbacks of SNS overuse, they often fail to perceive it as a serious academic barrier.

At the global level, the frequency of SNS addiction among students has a significant effect on their academic performance across diverse cultural and educational systems (Cheng et al., 2021). For educators, parents, and institutions, this prevalence of SNSs presents a social challenge in guiding students toward responsible digital habits while promoting academic success (Landa-Blanco et al., 2024; Ndubuaku et al.,

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2020). In response, experts are now advocating for digital systems that incorporate safeguards against content tailored to the user's personal liking that can cause addictive usage patterns while maintaining the platforms' educational utility (Bolis et al., 2025). Additionally, strong levels of digital media literacy among users have proven how it serves as a buffer, helping students manage their SNS usage more effectively and purposefully in their studies (Everson, 2022; Smith & Storrs, 2023). These findings are consistent with Martin et al. (2020), who found that Generation Z learners show heightened sensitivity to ethical considerations and media credibility, reinforcing their potential to act responsibly in digital environments.

The relationship between digital online media literacy, knowledge-sharing behavior, and SNS usage among students exhibited high digital competence—especially in evaluating, producing, and ethically engaging with media—are likely to participate actively in knowledge exchange and online collaboration (Ng et al., 2020; Yalcin et al., 2021). Despite being digital natives, students' media production skills may still vary due to differing levels of access to tools, formal training, and confidence (Yalcin et al., 2021). Similarly, those with strong knowledge-sharing intentions and self-efficacy tend to use social platforms more meaningfully and frequently (Al-Qaysi et al., 2020; Razak et al., 2021). These findings support earlier claims by Enke and Borchers (2019), who emphasized that digital self-efficacy plays a pivotal role in shaping students' engagement and effective media use.

Digital media literacy not only enhances students' ability to navigate the online world but also mediates how they share and absorb information on SNSs, making it a crucial factor in understanding student engagement in higher education settings (Erfanmanesh & Haghi, 2020; Tømte et al., 2019). This supports previous findings by Erfanmanesh and Haghi (2020), who emphasized that knowledge-sharing behaviors are associated with the development of

information and digital literacy, as individuals are driven to seek, verify, and disseminate reliable content in collaborative environments. While previous studies have examined knowledge sharing and SNS usage in various settings, limited attention has been devoted to exploring how digital online media literacy mediates this connection—especially within the Philippine higher-education landscape.

Despite this growing body of literature, there is a lack of localized research on the interplay between knowledge sharing, digital media literacy, and SNS usage intensity, especially among university students in the southern Philippines. In particular, there remains a gap in understanding how students in Mindanao—especially those studying in Davao City—engage with social networking sites for academic and non-academic purposes. Given Mindanao's socio-cultural and infrastructural context, such research is necessary to design interventions and programs that address students' specific digital behaviors and needs. The study at hand will help to fill the existing gap in the literature. It will contribute to advancing knowledge, theory, and practice about knowledge sharing as a mediator of digital online media literacy and social networking usage among students, primarily in the local context. These considerations also echo the findings of Al-Emran and Teo (2020), who found that informal learning and individual digital competencies are critical enablers of student problem-solving and online knowledge exchange, particularly in developing nations.

This study is grounded in two major theoretical perspectives: Social Constructivism Theory by Vygotsky (1978) and Social Capital Theory by Chiu, Hsu, and Wang (2006). Social Constructivism asserts that knowledge is actively constructed through social interaction and the use of tools, including digital platforms. In this study, social networking sites (SNSs) are seen as tools that facilitate collaborative learning and knowledge exchange. Students with strong digital online media literacy (DOML) are better

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able to evaluate information, communicate ethically, and meaningfully engage in digital environments. Their ability to co-construct knowledge online aligns with Vygotsky's view that learning is enhanced through social participation and interaction within a mediated environment (Vygotsky 1978).

Meanwhile, Social Capital Theory highlights the importance of social connections and shared understanding in facilitating knowledge sharing. It explains how relationships built on trust, norms, and shared goals enhance collaboration and the exchange of information. In the context of this study, knowledge-sharing behavior reflects students' social capital, while digital media literacy represents the cognitive tools they use to navigate online platforms. Prior studies emphasize the importance of knowledge sharing and strong social ties in influencing online behavior (Bolino et al.; Koranteng et al.), and the role of social capital in shaping how individuals benefit from their online networks (Howard and Gilbert; Scheufele and Shah). This study investigates how DOML mediates the relationship between knowledge sharing and SNS usage intensity—recognizing that both social and cognitive resources influence how students participate in digital spaces. Given the limited research on this interplay in the Philippine setting, this study aims to address a clear gap and offer evidence-based insights into student digital behavior in higher education.

By focusing on Bachelor of Arts in Communication students of Davao City, this research aims to contribute to the field of Media and Communication by identifying potential predictors of SNS usage intensity and by providing practical insights for educators, parents, media practitioners, and policymakers. These findings support creating policies, educational programs, and awareness campaigns that encourage balanced and productive use of social networking platforms among students in the region.

Presented in Figure 1 is the conceptual framework of the study. This study is anchored

on a framework that explores the relationship between knowledge-sharing behavior and social networking site (SNS) usage intensity among students, with a particular focus on the mediating role of digital online media literacy (DOML). The independent variable (IV) is knowledge-sharing behavior, which consists of key constructs such as attitude, subjective norms, knowledge creation self-efficacy, web-specific self-efficacy, social networking ties, knowledge-sharing intention, and knowledge-sharing behavior itself. These represent the students' internal and external motivations and abilities to exchange meaningful academic or social information. On the other hand, the dependent variable (DV) is social networking site usage intensity, measured by five domains—academic, socialization, entertainment, informativeness, and constraints. This variable reflects the frequency, purpose, and depth of student interaction with SNS platforms.

At the center of the framework lies the mediating variable—digital online media literacy. This includes ethical awareness, media access, media awareness, media evaluation, and media production. DOML functions as a cognitive and ethical filter that determines the effectiveness and purpose of a student's digital engagement. The framework hypothesizes that knowledge-sharing behavior affects SNS usage intensity both directly and indirectly, with DOML mediating this connection. This suggests that students who are more critically aware and digitally skilled are more capable of transforming knowledge-sharing into meaningful and productive social networking engagement. The model provides a comprehensive understanding of how students' behaviors, digital competencies, and online habits interact in the context of a rapidly evolving media environment.

Anchored on Social Constructivism and Social Capital Theory, this study aims to determine the mediating role of digital online media literacy on the relationship between students'

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knowledge-sharing behavior and their SNS usage intensity. Specifically, the objectives are: (1) to assess the level of students' knowledge-sharing behavior and SNS usage intensity; (2) to determine the level of digital online media literacy among students; (3) to examine the relationships between knowledge sharing, DOML, and SNS usage intensity; and (4) to test whether DOML significantly mediates the relationship between knowledge-sharing behavior and SNS usage intensity. These objectives aim to provide evidence-based insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policy advocates working to improve digital engagement and responsible media use among Filipino students.

The research aims to determine the mediating role of digital online media literacy on the intensity of knowledge sharing and social networking site usage by students. First, students' knowledge-sharing level regarding their attitude, subjective norm, knowledge creation self-efficacy, web-specific self-efficacy, social networking ties, knowledge-sharing intention, and knowledge-sharing behavior. Second, to ascertain students' social networking site usage intensity regarding their academic, socialization, entertainment, informativeness, and constraints. Third, to describe the level of digital online media literacy of students. Fourth, the significant relationship between knowledge sharing and social networking site usage intensity of students, knowledge sharing and digital online media literacy of students, and digital online media literacy and social networking site usage intensity of students should be determined. Lastly, to find out the significance of the mediating role of digital online media literacy on the knowledge sharing and social networking site usage intensity of students.

2. Materials and Methods

Considering the class schedule of the Bachelor of Arts in Communication students, the researcher secured approval from the respective institution to conduct a survey study using a

The study offers valuable insights into the global educational system amid increasing pressure on student performance and digital media literacy. It highlights the significance of employing relevant information to enhance knowledge sharing and address global, national, and local demands. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of social networking sites in facilitating knowledge sharing among learners and educators, providing practical guidance regardless of the curriculum. Additionally, it delves into predictors of social networking site usage specific to the Philippine educational system. It offers implications for future research and practical suggestions for educational stakeholders to optimize students' utilization of such platforms.

Similarly, this would provide guidance and insights to higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines to revisit their curriculum and design appropriate programs and interventions that enhance students' knowledge-sharing behavior, strengthen their digital online media literacy, and promote purposeful and responsible use of social networking sites. In doing so, this research aligns with SDG #4: Quality Education, which aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." By focusing on the development of digital competencies—such as ethical media use, digital collaboration, and responsible knowledge sharing—this study supports the vision of SDG 4 by equipping students with the 21st-century skills needed to thrive in a digital society. These efforts are vital not only for individual student success but also for preparing globally competitive graduates who are capable of navigating the challenges and opportunities in today's digital communication landscape.

paper-based survey method, wherein printed questionnaires were manually distributed to the respondents for completion. The administration of the questionnaire followed a total

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enumeration technique, wherein every student in the population of the BA Communication program was selected (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010).

The survey was conducted across four private University and Colleges offering BA Communication programs in Davao City. For the 1st semester of the academic year 2024-2025. College A had 155 officially enrolled students, College B had 79 students, College C had 57 students, and College D had 105 students, totaling 396 enrolled students across the four institutions. Of this population, 306 BA Communication students across were successfully interviewed and completed the paper-based survey questionnaires which is the total number of enrolled students in four schools.

Regarding the inclusion criteria, only students who were officially enrolled in the BA Communication program, enrolled in the 1st semester of the academic year 2024-2025 and demonstrated willingness to participate were considered eligible. Students were excluded if they were not enrolled in the BA Communication program, not enrolled in the specified semester, or unwilling to participate in the survey. Regarding withdrawal, BA Communication students who initially agreed to participate but later decided to withdraw were fully respected; as voluntary participants, they retained the right to discontinue their participation at any point in the study.

The researcher used three sets of survey questionnaires as research instruments in this study, specifically employing a cross-sectional survey design. The independent variable (IV), *Knowledge Sharing*, was measured using a 35-item questionnaire adapted from Chen et al. (2009). This instrument included seven indicators: attitude items 1–5, subjective norm items 6–10, knowledge creation self-efficacy items 11–15, web-specific self-efficacy items 16–20, social networking ties items 21–25,

knowledge-sharing intention items 26–30, and knowledge-sharing behavior items 31–35.

The mediating variable (MV), *Digital Online Media Literacy*, was assessed using a 25-item instrument adapted from Hallaq (2016). It consisted of five indicators: ethical awareness items 1–5, media access items 6–10, media awareness items 11–15, media evaluation items 16–20, and media production items 21–25. The dependent variable (DV), *Social Networking Site Usage Intensity*, was measured using a 25-item instrument based on Gupta and Bashir (2018), which included five indicators: academic items 1–5, socialization items 6–10, entertainment items 11–15, informativeness items 16–20, and constraints items 21–25, with five items for each indicator.

These instruments were reviewed and validated by a panel of examiners and experts. Revisions were made to contextualize the tools to the local setting, including language simplification, cultural relevance, and educational framing. Vague items were subjects were enhanced to be used appropriately in the study. Also, foreign references were modified to reflect locally familiar technologies and practices. The validation results obtained 4.015 mean rating which is very good.

Moreover, a five-point Likert scale was used for the three variables involved in the study. The three sets of questionnaires were adapted to suit the context of the study. These modifications included adjusting the wording of certain items to make them more relevant to the participants' specific context. For instance, some items from the original Chen et al. (2009) questionnaire were adapted to reflect the specific knowledge-sharing behaviors in virtual learning environments rather than general knowledge-sharing. Similarly, items from Hallaq (2016) on Digital Online Media Literacy were revised to address the digital media literacy practices relevant to students in the local academic context, such as adding references to local privacy policies and online academic tools.

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Additionally, items related to social networking from Gupta and Bashir (2018) were reworded to focus on the specific social media platforms commonly used by students in the study setting. These adjustments ensured that the items were contextually appropriate and understandable for the respondents.

The scale has a numerical value from one (1) to five (5) and has a descriptive value ranging from Poor to Excellent. The range of means from 4.20 to 5.00 is described as Excellent, which means that the respondents strongly agree with the statement provided. The range of means from 3.40 to 4.19 is interpreted as Very Good, indicating that the respondents agree with the statement. The range of means from 2.60 to 3.39 is described as Good, showing that the respondents moderately agree with the statement. In contrast, the range of means from 1.80 to 2.59 is described as Fair, suggesting that the respondents disagree with the statement provided. Finally, the range of means from 1.00 to 1.79 is interpreted as Poor, which means that the respondents strongly disagree with the statement provided.

This study utilized a non-experimental quantitative research design, specifically employing the descriptive-correlational method. This approach was appropriate as it allowed the researcher to collect data to describe and assess the current status of the variables of interest—namely, knowledge sharing and social networking site (SNS) usage intensity among students. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), quantitative research involves the systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, often through surveys or experiments, to identify relationships among variables. The correlational design was deemed suitable for examining how digital online media literacy relates to both knowledge sharing and the intensity of SNS usage. The data were derived from the responses to a researcher-adapted questionnaire.

Correlation research measures the strength and direction of the association between two variables (McLeod, 2008). In this study, digital online media literacy (DOML) was also introduced as a mediating variable. A mediating variable explains the process or mechanism through which one variable affects another. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a mediator (Z) helps illustrate how or why an independent variable (X), in this case knowledge sharing, influences a dependent variable (Y), which is SNS usage intensity. Taylor, MacKinnon, and Tein (2008) further explained that a mediator intercepts the direct pathway between two variables, offering a deeper understanding of the relationship. Hence, this study explored not only the direct relationships among the variables but also the indirect influence of knowledge sharing on SNS usage intensity through the mediating effect of digital online media literacy.

To gather the necessary data, the researcher first secured permission from the Dean of the Professional School through formal letters requesting endorsement. Subsequent letters were sent to the presidents of four private universities and colleges in Davao City to seek authorization to conduct the survey within their BA Communication programs. Before implementation, the research instruments and procedures were reviewed and approved by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC), under Protocol No. 2024-360. This ensured that all ethical considerations and data collection procedures followed appropriate academic and institutional standards. Once permission was granted, the researcher personally distributed the paper-based questionnaires to the respondents and collected the completed surveys after administration.

The researcher personally distributed the said survey questionnaires and waited for the participants to finish answering the said questionnaires and retrieved the answered questionnaires. After collecting the questionnaire answers, the researcher started

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tabulating the respondents' answers. The data were treated through specific statistical tools. The next step was to interpret the data. The tabulated data was presented in the succeeding pages, analyzed, and interpreted.

Descriptive statistics. It was used to describe the basic features of the data in a study. It will provide simple summaries of the sample and the measures. Mean. This was applied to measure digital online media literacy, knowledge sharing, and intensity of social networking site usage. Pearson r. This was employed to determine the significant relationship between digital online media literacy and knowledge sharing, digital online media literacy and social networking site usage intensity, and knowledge sharing and self-generated social networking site usage intensity. Medgraph using Sobel test. This was

utilized to determine the coefficient as input to the red graph, prove the mediation, and strengthen the results.

The researcher adhered to the ethical standard by securing necessary permissions, following protocols, and ensuring respondents' informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Ethical practices such as avoiding plagiarism, deceit, and conflict of interest were strictly maintained, ensuring the protection of respondents' rights and the integrity of the study data. Additionally, the study was conducted without risk to participants, who were fully informed about the study details, and it confirmed that the manuscript was the researcher's original work, eligible for use by the University of Mindanao's plagiarism detection.

3. Results

Presented in table 1 is the level of knowledge-sharing behavior among BA Communication students across various indicators. While all dimensions are considered *high*, social network ties yielded the lowest mean score ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.79$). This suggests that although students maintain social connections, these ties may not be the strongest driver of their knowledge-sharing behavior. In contrast, higher means were observed in knowledge-sharing behavior ($M = 3.93$), knowledge-sharing intention ($M = 3.96$), web-specific self-efficacy ($M = 4.03$), knowledge creation self-efficacy ($M = 4.07$), and subjective norm ($M = 4.10$), all with relatively moderate standard deviations, indicating consistency in responses. These findings imply that students are generally confident in their ability to create and share content and that perceived social expectations significantly motivate such behaviors. This aligns with Lin

(2019), who found that self-efficacy and positive subjective norms strongly predict knowledge-sharing behavior in academic digital environments.

The highest mean was recorded in attitude toward knowledge sharing ($M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.52$), indicating that students have a highly favorable outlook toward sharing knowledge. This result may reflect the positive culture within academic communities that encourages collaboration and collective learning.

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Table 1. Level of Knowledge Sharing Behavior of Students

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Attitude toward Knowledge Sharing	0.52	4.58	Very High
Subjective Norm	0.65	4.10	High
Knowledge Creation Self-efficacy	0.60	4.07	High
Web-specific Self Efficacy	0.64	4.03	High
Social Network Ties	0.79	3.90	High
Knowledge Sharing Intention	0.67	3.96	High
Knowledge Sharing Behavior	0.73	3.93	High
Overall	0.51	4.08	High

Overall, the composite mean score of 4.08 with a standard deviation of 0.51 suggests that the respondents demonstrate a *high* level of knowledge-sharing behavior. These results support the claim that digital online media literacy frequently manifests among students, particularly in attitude, self-efficacy, and intention. Furthermore, it highlights that while social network ties contribute to the process,

intrinsic factors such as personal attitudes and confidence in digital tools are more influential, echoing the findings of Al-Emran and Teo (2020), who emphasized that informal learning and individual digital competencies are critical enablers of problem-solving and knowledge exchange in online learning environments.

Table 2. Level of Knowledge Sharing Behavior of Students in terms of Knowledge Sharing Behavior

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Academic	0.68	4.16	High
Socialization	0.85	3.87	High
Entertainment	0.69	4.40	Very High
Informativeness	0.73	4.11	High
Constraints	0.80	3.81	High
Overall	0.53	4.07	High

Shown in Table 2 is the intensity level of social networking site utilization by students. Among the five categories, the lowest mean was observed in the constraint dimension ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.81$), indicating that student use SNSs frequently and do not strongly perceive their use as limiting or burdensome. This finding aligns recent studies suggesting that although students are aware of the potential downside of excessive SNS use, they often do not recognize it as a serious hindrance to their academic or personal lives (Sales et al., 2021). The second lowest mean was recorded in socialization ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.85$), reflecting students' moderate use of

SNSs to maintain and develop interpersonal connections.

Informativeness scored a high intensity level ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.73$), showing that students actively use social media platforms to seek news, educational content, and other relevant information. This is followed by academic use ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.68$), confirming that students rely on SNSs for class-related discussions, group work, and accessing learning materials. The highest usage intensity was found in the entertainment dimension ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.69$), indicating that students most frequently engage

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with SNSs for recreational purposes such as watching videos, browsing memes, and playing games. This finding supports earlier research indicating that entertainment remains the dominant motivator for student engagement on social media, even when academic and

informative uses are present (Karim et al., 2020). Overall, the results suggest that while SNSs serve diverse purposes in students' lives, entertainment, and academic use are particularly prominent drivers of engagement.

Table 3. Level of Digital Online Media Literacy of Students

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Ethical Awareness	0.59	4.36	Very High
Media Access	0.77	3.92	High
Media Awareness	0.64	4.21	Very High
Media Evaluation	0.66	4.22	Very High
Media Production	0.81	4.06	High
Overall	0.55	4.15	High

Shown in Table 3 is the level of digital online media literacy among students. The indicator with the lowest mean is Media Access ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.77$), suggesting that while students have moderate access to digital tools and platforms, it is still their least developed competency. This is followed by Media Production ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.81$), which reflects students' ability to create digital content such as blogs, videos, and social media posts. Despite being a generation often referred to as digital natives, production skills may vary depending on access to tools, formal training, or digital confidence (Yalcin et al., 2021). The next indicator is Media Awareness ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.64$), which pertains to the student's ability to comprehend how media content is constructed and how it can shape beliefs and public opinion. Media Evaluation ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.66$) is closely aligned with this, demonstrating their capacity to critically assess media sources, credibility, and intentions behind the content.

The highest mean is found in Ethical Awareness ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.59$), indicating that students are highly aware of ethical responsibilities in

digital spaces, such as respecting privacy, avoiding misinformation, and engaging in responsible online behavior.

The overall digital online media literacy level among students is high, with a mean of 4.15, showing that they possess strong competencies in accessing and creating media and critically evaluating and ethically navigating it.

These findings align with recent research showing that Gen Z learners are more sensitive to digital ethics and credibility, crucial in the age of social media (Martin et al., 2020). While media access remains lower, students compensate by maximizing their media presence through creative and analytical skills, reflecting a well-rounded digital literacy profile (Hallaq, 2016).

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Table 4. Significance of the Relationship between Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Social Network Site Usage Intensity of Students

Knowledge Sharing Behavior	Social Network Site Usage Intensity					Overall
	Academic	Socialization	Entertainment	Informativeness	Constraints	
Attitude toward Knowledge Sharing	.333** .000	.249** .000	.283** .000	.306** .000	.125* .029	.359** .000
Subjective Norm	.353** .000	.364** .000	.232** .000	.302** .000	.224** .000	.417** .000
Knowledge Creation Self-efficacy	.365** .000	.380** .000	.356** .000	.353** .000	.235** .000	.475** .000
Web-specific Self Efficacy	.387** .000	.323** .000	.259** .000	.324** .000	.281** .000	.443** .000
Social Network Ties	.393** .000	.537** .000	.363** .000	.403** .000	.299** .000	.567** .000
Knowledge Sharing Intention	.404** .000	.463** .000	.330** .000	.400** .000	.323** .000	.544** .000
Knowledge Sharing Behavior	.445** .000	.522** .000	.326** .000	.355** .000	.304** .000	.554** .000
Overall	.498** .000	.537** .000	.399** .000	.455** .000	.338** .000	.630** .000

Exhibited in Table 4 is the significance of the relationship between Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Social Networking Site (SNS) Usage across multiple dimensions: Academic, Socialization, Entertainment, Informativeness, and Constraints. The data reveal statistically significant positive correlations across all indicators, as reflected in the p-values (< 0.05), with stronger significance levels denoted by $p < 0.01$. Notably, the strongest correlation is observed between knowledge-sharing behavior and Overall SNS Usage ($r = .554$, $p = .000$), suggesting that students more active on social media platforms are also more inclined to engage in knowledge-sharing activities. This reinforces previous findings that the frequency and purpose of SNS use are often intertwined with students' motivation to share and access information in academic and personal contexts (Al-Qaysi et al., 2020). Among individual

dimensions, Knowledge Sharing Intention shows robust associations with both Socialization ($r = .463$, $p = .000$) and Overall Usage ($r = .544$, $p = .000$), reflecting the idea that intentionality is a key driver of peer interaction in social media environments.

Other notable findings include high correlations between Knowledge Creation Self-Efficacy and Overall SNS Usage Intensity ($r = .475$, $p = .000$), indicating that students who believe in their ability to generate valuable content are more engaged on these platforms. Similarly, Web-Specific Self-Efficacy, which reflects confidence in navigating digital tools, shows strong correlations with Overall Usage ($r = .443$, $p = .000$) and all subdomains, suggesting that higher digital competence contributes to more consistent and purposeful SNS activity. The dimension of Social Network Ties emerges as

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one of the strongest correlates, particularly with Socialization ($r = .537$, $p = .000$) and Overall Usage ($r = .567$, $p = .000$), indicating that the breadth and strength of students' online relationships play a crucial role in their knowledge-sharing behavior. Although Attitude Toward Knowledge Sharing shows slightly lower correlation values, its significant associations with Overall Usage ($r = .359$, $p = .000$) and Informativeness ($r = .306$, $p = .000$)

suggest that students who view knowledge sharing positively are more likely to engage with SNSs for educational purposes. These findings are consistent with recent studies emphasizing that social and cognitive factors—such as intention, efficacy, and attitudes—significantly influence students' engagement and knowledge dissemination in digital platforms (Razak et al., 2021).

Table 5. Significance of the Relationship between Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Digital Online Media Literacy of Students

Knowledge Sharing Behavior	Digital Online Media Literacy					Overall
	Ethical Awareness	Media Access	Media Awareness	Media Evaluation	Media Production	
Attitude toward Knowledge Sharing	.339** .000	.248** .000	.407** .000	.359** .000	.187** .001	.375** .000
Subjective Norm	.249** .000	.318** .000	.303** .000	.350** .000	.330** .000	.391** .000
Knowledge Creation Self-efficacy	.335** .000	.357** .000	.381** .000	.458** .000	.358** .000	.473** .000
Web-specific Self Efficacy	.372** .000	.482** .000	.415** .000	.395** .000	.381** .000	.515** .000
Social Network Tiles	.266** .000	.394** .000	.333** .000	.317** .000	.343** .000	.419** .000
Knowledge Sharing Intention	.278** .000	.477** .000	.418** .000	.411** .000	.364** .000	.493** .000
Knowledge Sharing Behavior	.257** .000	.426** .000	.334** .000	.304** .000	.406** .000	.442** .000
Overall	.382** .000	.505** .000	.474** .000	.475** .000	.444** .000	.574** .000

Exhibited in Table 5 is the significance of the relationship between Knowledge-Sharing Behavior and Digital Online Media Literacy (DOML) across five key dimensions: Ethical Awareness, Media Access, Media Awareness, Media Evaluation, and Media Production. All correlations are statistically significant at $p < 0.01$, indicating strong positive associations between students' media literacy skills and

knowledge-sharing behaviors. At the overall level, the highest correlation is found between Overall Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Overall DOML ($r = .574$, $p = .000$), suggesting that students who are more digitally literate are more likely to engage in sharing information and ideas. The strongest specific correlation is between Web-specific Self-Efficacy and Overall DOML ($r = .515$, $p = .000$), highlighting that

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students who feel confident using digital platforms, tools, and online systems also tend to be more media literate.

This reinforces the findings of Enke and Borchers (2019), who emphasized that digital self-efficacy plays a pivotal role in shaping effective engagement and media use among students. Additional findings indicate that Media Evaluation is particularly linked to Knowledge Creation Self-Efficacy ($r = .458, p = .000$) and Knowledge Sharing Intention ($r = .411, p = .000$), suggesting that students who can critically assess the quality and credibility of digital content are also more inclined and confident to generate and share knowledge. In terms of Media Production, meaningful correlations are observed with all behavioral variables, especially with Web-specific Self-Efficacy ($r = .381$) and Knowledge Behavior ($r = .406$), demonstrating students' capacity to apply their

digital skills in real-world content creation—such as producing blog posts, videos, and social media materials. As shown by Ng et al. (2020), proficiency in content creation reflects a deeper form of digital literacy, empowering students to contribute thoughtfully and responsibly in media-rich environments. Lastly, Ethical Awareness shows moderate but significant correlations with Attitude Toward Knowledge Sharing ($r = .339$) and Knowledge Creation Self-Efficacy ($r = .335$), suggesting that responsible digital behavior is positively associated with students' confidence in creating and sharing knowledge. The table confirms that enhancing students' digital literacy—especially in media evaluation and production—can significantly improve their knowledge-sharing capacity, digital citizenship, and critical thinking in online communities.

Table 6. Significance of the Relationship between Digital Online Media Literacy and Social Network Site Usage Intensity of Students

Digital Online Media Literacy	Social Network Site Usage Intensity					Overall
	Academic	Socialization	Entertainment	Informative	Constraints	
Ethical Awareness	.333** .000	.319** .000	.400** .000	.411** .000	.262** .000	.483** .000
Media Access	.393** .000	.464** .000	.358** .000	.464** .000	.357** .000	.577** .000
Media Awareness	.357** .000	.413** .000	.518** .000	.462** .000	.242** .000	.557** .000
Media Evaluation	.356** .000	.375** .000	.438** .000	.406** .000	.275** .000	.519** .000
Media Production	.361** .000	.340** .000	.316** .000	.371** .000	.235** .000	.455** .000
Overall	.453** .000	.481** .000	.501** .000	.529** .000	.345** .000	.649** .000

Moreover, Media Awareness demonstrates a particularly strong relationship with Entertainment ($r = .518, p = .000$), which implies that students who understand how digital media formats and functions work are more likely to use SNSs for leisure and recreational purposes. Similarly, Media Evaluation is

strongly correlated with Informativeness ($r = .406, p = .000$), revealing that students who can critically assess the quality, credibility, and source of digital content are more inclined to use SNSs as educational tools. These findings align with recent scholarship emphasizing that critical evaluation skills are essential for navigating the

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complexity of online environments and filtering misinformation (Everson, 2022; Butler et al., 2022). Additionally, Ethical Awareness shows notable correlations with both Informativeness ($r = .411$) and Entertainment ($r = .400$), suggesting that students with stronger ethical considerations are thoughtful in how they consume and share content. While Media Production had slightly lower correlations across the domains, it still demonstrated significant

associations—particularly with Informativeness ($r = .371$) and Academic Use ($r = .361$)—reflecting students' ability to contribute meaningfully to digital spaces. Overall, these results affirm that digital media literacy fosters more purposeful, critical, and responsible social media use, as emphasized in studies on digital self-efficacy and media engagement in educational contexts (Hallaq, 2016; Ng et al., 2020).

Table 7. Regression analysis showing the influence of knowledge-sharing behavior on social network site usage intensity as mediated by digital online media literacy

Step	Path	B	S.E.	β
1	c	.658	.046	.630***
2	a	.625	.051	.574***
3	b	.412	.047	.429***
4	c'	.400	.051	.383***

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p = 0.000$

The analysis reveals that KSB significantly predicts SNS usage intensity, with a regression coefficient ($B = 0.658$ and standardized beta ($\beta = 0.630$ ($p = 0.000$), indicating a strong direct influence. In addition, KSB has a significant positive effect on DOML ($B = 0.625$, $\beta = 0.574$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that students who are active knowledge sharers tend to develop stronger digital media competencies. This supports previous findings by Erfanmanesh and Haghi (2020), who emphasized that knowledge-sharing behaviors are associated with the development of information and digital literacy, as individuals are driven to seek, verify, and disseminate reliable content in collaborative environments.

Furthermore, the regression analysis demonstrates that DOML significantly predicts SNS usage intensity ($B = 0.412$, $\beta = 0.429$, $p = 0.000$), confirming that students with higher digital literacy levels are more likely to engage

actively with social media platforms for various purposes. Importantly, even after controlling for the mediating effect of DOML, the direct effect of KSB on SNS usage intensity remains significant, though slightly reduced ($B = 0.400$, $\beta = 0.383$, $p = 0.000$).

This partial mediation indicates that DOML enhances, but does not fully explain, the relationship between knowledge sharing and social media engagement. These results highlight the importance of digital competencies in shaping students' digital behavior, aligning with the work of Tømte et al. (2019), who found that media literacy strengthens online participation by enabling users to interact more meaningfully and responsibly in digital communities. Collectively, the findings underscore that fostering digital media literacy—especially in educational settings—can amplify the positive effects of knowledge-sharing behavior on SNS usage.

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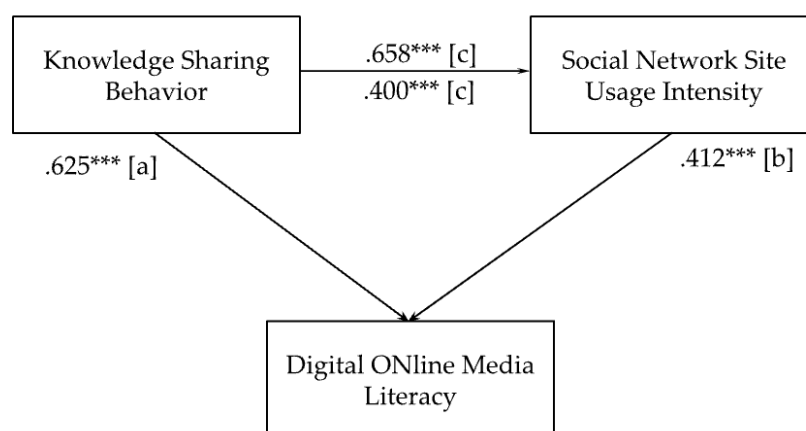
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Table 8.Results of statistical analysis on the presence (or absence) of mediating effect

Combination of Variables	Sobel z	p-value	Mediation
<i>knowledge sharing behavior digital online media literacy</i> <i>social network site usage intensity</i>	7.163042	$p < 0.05$	Partial mediation

* $p < 0.05$

Figure 1. Medgraph showing the variables of the study



Mediation Analysis

Sobel z	7.163042, $p < 0.05^{***}$
Percentage of the total effect that is mediated	39.124078%
Ratio of the indirect to direct effect	0.642686

Effect Size Measures

Unstandardized Coefficients

Total:	0.658
Direct:	0.400
Indirect:	0.625
Ratio Index:	0.9498

Displayed in Table 8 are the results of a statistical analysis to determine whether there is a mediating effect in the relationship between knowledge-sharing behavior, digital online media literacy, and social network site usage intensity. The Sobel test was applied to assess

the significance of the mediation effect. The Sobel z-value for the mediation pathway, which is knowledge-sharing behavior digital online media literacy social network site usage intensity, is 7.163 with a p-value of $p < 0.05$. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, it indicates

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that the mediation effect is statistically significant. The results suggest partial mediation, meaning that digital online media literacy partially mediates the relationship between knowledge-sharing behavior and social

network site usage intensity. This implies that while knowledge-sharing behavior directly influences social network site usage intensity, part of this effect is also explained by the development of digital media literacy skills.

4. Discussion

The findings of the study indicate that high social networking ties support user-driven technologies that enable social, collaborative, and creative learning, both within and outside conventional educational settings (Cevik et al., 2014; Gupta & Bashir, 2018; Guraya, 2016). Knowledge sharing behavior is strongly influenced by individuals' willingness to participate and their perception of the value in doing so. While individuals may be informed that sharing enhances learning, this alone does not guarantee active engagement in knowledge sharing (Yan et al., 2016). In classroom settings, knowledge-sharing intention can be integrated into pedagogical methods such as group discussions, promoting critical thinking and exposure to diverse viewpoints. However, without deliberate intervention, the process of acquiring collective knowledge may be hindered (Gupta & Bashir, 2018; Wang et al., 2014).

Self-efficacy—particularly in digital contexts—plays a significant role in students' engagement. High web-specific self-efficacy suggests that individuals feel capable of using online platforms and e-services effectively, reinforcing their confidence in performing digital tasks (Venkatesh et al., 2013). Likewise, strong knowledge creation self-efficacy reflects a belief in one's abilities to pursue academic goals despite obstacles (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Subjective norms, shaped by peer and institutional expectations, also influence knowledge-sharing behavior. When individuals perceive that sharing knowledge is encouraged by their social group, they are more likely to engage in such behaviors (Lai, 2017; Cheung & To, 2017). A positive attitude toward sharing creates an environment that fosters innovation

and supports information exchange (Gremm et al., 2018).

The role of social networking site (SNS) usage is particularly notable in academic settings. While students demonstrate high usage intensity, the study also revealed that factors such as informativeness, entertainment, and social connectedness drive their engagement (Gupta & Bashir, 2018; Dhir et al., 2018). Students leverage SNS not only for personal interaction but also for academic collaboration and stress management (Raj et al., 2018). However, certain constraints remain, such as digital fatigue, privacy concerns, and the fear of missing out (Zhang et al., 2016; Hassan et al., 2019). Despite these concerns, the intensity of SNS usage reflects students' adaptability and their increasing reliance on digital platforms for both learning and leisure.

In terms of digital online media literacy (DOML), the findings indicate that students possess high levels of media access, awareness, evaluation, and production. They are capable of navigating various digital platforms, accessing information ethically, and critically evaluating content (Ptaszek, 2019; Everson, 2022). The students also demonstrated strong ethical awareness, acknowledging their responsibility to engage in respectful and fair digital practices (Türegün, 2018; Tilak, 2020). Furthermore, the ability to create and share content across different platforms highlights their readiness to participate in collaborative and academic knowledge-sharing environments (De Montfort University, 2022).

Importantly, the study confirmed the mediating role of digital online media literacy between

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knowledge sharing and SNS usage intensity. The presence of this mediating variable implies that while knowledge-sharing behavior directly influences SNS usage, a portion of this influence operates through the students' level of media literacy. In other words, students who are more literate in digital media are better equipped to maximize their use of social networking platforms for academic purposes. This supports the idea that digital literacy not only enhances knowledge-sharing capabilities but also deepens student engagement in virtual communities

(Alexander et al., 2016; Buckingham, 2019). In summary, the research highlights that students' knowledge-sharing behavior, supported by high self-efficacy, subjective norms, and positive attitudes, leads to increased SNS usage. The mediating influence of digital literacy further emphasizes the need for academic institutions to foster media literacy education. Doing so will enhance students' ability to participate meaningfully in virtual learning communities and cultivate habits that support continuous learning in the digital age.

5. Methodological Considerations for Using Conceptual Frameworks in MMR

The study concludes that the Bachelor of Arts in Communication students across all four colleges in Davao City generally exhibit high levels of knowledge-sharing behavior, digital media literacy, and regular use of social networking sites for various purposes such as academic, entertainment, and social activities. The knowledge sharing behavior of students got a high score where their attitude toward knowledge sharing got the highest mean interpreted as very high. The digital online media literacy of students got a high result where the media evaluation got the highest mean interpreted as very high. Social Network Site Usage of Students got high result where entertainment got the highest mean interpreted as very high. Confirming a partial mediation effect implies that while students who actively engage in knowledge-sharing tend to use social networking sites more intensively, this relationship is significantly influenced by their level of digital literacy. Furthermore, the study revealed a significant positive correlations across all indicators where knowledge sharing behavior got the strongest correlation than social network site. Also, all correlations are statistically significant indicating strong positive correlations between students' media literacy and knowledge sharing behavior. However, ethical awareness showed a moderate but significant correlations with attitude toward knowledge sharing. This mediation suggests that students do not merely engage with social

networking sites for passive consumption but use them meaningfully when supported by high levels of media literacy. Students who demonstrate strong digital skills like media production, evaluation, and ethical awareness are more likely to share knowledge actively and use social networking sites in a more productive and responsible way. These findings are in line with studies highlighting the role of digital media literacy in fostering effective and ethical digital engagement (Hallaq, 2016; Ng et al., 2020).

Based on the results, the researcher recommends that academic institutions integrate media literacy components into the curriculum to enhance students' academic and social media interactions. Educators are encouraged to design learning activities that align with students' existing social media habits to promote more educational and collaborative use of these platforms, including digital storytelling, critical media analysis, ethical use of information, and content creation such as blogs, vlogs, and forums. Institutions could also improve access to digital resources and support students through peer mentoring and workshops that promote ethical online engagement and purposeful knowledge sharing. Lastly, future research may consider broader populations and employ qualitative methods to deepen the understanding of how students navigate knowledge sharing and

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digital environments across different academic and cultural contexts.

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