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Tacit knowledge transfer and mentorship: the role of social media

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring facilitates the transfer of tacit knowledge from one individual to another within organisations. The effective transfer of tacit knowledge, through the mentorship process, provides organisations with a competitive advantage.

There are a number of challenges experienced by organisations in the tacit knowledge transfer process. Challenges such as time, impact on productivity, ease of transfer and storage of such valuable knowledge.

Social media provides a platform for communication, networking and capabilities that allow users to store multiple content such audio, video, image and text. Social media also consists of interactive networks which provide a learning platform that allows reading, editing or adding to existing content.

This report explores the role of social media and the transfer of tacit knowledge in mentorship through qualitative and exploratory methodology. The focus of the study was on a single, global, multi-cultural organisation with an established mentorship program and with tacit knowledge transfer as one of its strategic objectives while also using social media capabilities internally and externally.

A total of 14 in-depth Interviews were conducted with mentorship program participants and different influential structures in strategy, human resources, social media strategy, including knowledge management specialists within the organisation.

While there is no doubt that mentoring facilitates the transfer of tacit knowledge, it is also evident that social media is a powerful knowledge management tool that scaffolds an interactive, knowledge-sharing culture within organisations. In addition, social media is not formally used in mentorship, this presents a huge opportunity to apply social media as a secondary mechanism to transfer and store knowledge in mentorship.

Keywords: Mentorship, tacit knowledge, social media, knowledge transfer and sharing.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Signed----------------------- at ----------------- on this -----day of ---------------2014.

Zanele Mahlangu

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH PROBLEM

Social media fulfils some of the important requirements for tacit knowledge sharing. These include enabling synchronous communication through chatting, discussions, and storytelling. Social media can also be used by experts to share their knowledge and expertise, while providing opportunities for other forms of sharing like observation and imitation of best practice, locating experts, and informal networking. It is also viewed as a friendly space for informal networking and sharing ideas and ideals. (Panahi, Watson & Partridge, 2012).

Panahi *et al.* (2012) also indicate that there is not enough evidence in the literature pointing to the contribution that social media has in facilitating tacit knowledge sharing.

Mentorship and mentoring are defined and viewed differently by various theorists and authors. Hunt and Michael (1983) define mentorship as an important training and development tool for upward professional progression in organisations. Raabe and Beehr (2003), characterise mentoring as having three behaviours or intentions, namely career development, social support and role modelling. Mentoring is also seen as being "instrumental to the initiation and maintenance of an employee's socialization in an organization" (Payne & Huffman, 2005). Organisational socialisation is the process wherein individuals acquire the requisite behaviours, attitudes and knowledge required to participate as an organisation's members.

The importance of mentorship in its relationship with the acquisition and sharing of knowledge within organisation has been identified in a number of studies. These studies do not however seem to test the role of the tools, including social media, being used in the mentorship relationship (Eby, 2010), (DeRue & Ashford, 2010), (Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng & Dubois, 2008) and (Hannah & Avolio, 2010).

Organisations use social media and related technologies to engage with consumers directly, in an effort to generate consumer insights cost-effectively, and also to manage procurement and logistics. At the same time, organisations

are beginning to discover the enormous potential of social media technology in raising the productivity of knowledge workers.

The technologies hold the promise of extending the capabilities of these highly skilled workers, by streamlining communication and collaboration, lowering the barriers between functional silos and even re-drawing these boundaries to extend them beyond the current areas, resulting in a networked organisation bringing in additional knowledge and expertise (Chui , Manyika, Bughin, Dobbs, Roxburgh, Sarrazin, Sands & Westergren, 2012).

This study aims to explore the contribution of social media (if any) to tacit knowledge sharing, with specific emphasis on the role it plays in the mentorship relationship. The research conducted may also assist in providing a better understanding of the transfer of tacit knowledge from skilled knowledge workers and experts to other knowledge workers, in support of the main characteristics and purpose of the mentorship relationship.

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The basis of the research will focus primarily on exploring the role of social media in the tacit knowledge transfer in a mentorship relationship. This will include the benefits that can be derived by introducing social media in mentorship, what specific social media capabilities are needed and can be used to effectively transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

Given the above, it is equally important to understand the drivers of mentorship, the need for the transfer of tacit knowledge and the need to introduce social media as a mechanism in a mentorship relationship.

Effective mentoring programs benefit the participants and the organisation by promoting a culture of development, increasing knowledge sharing, driving performance and expanding networks. Mentorship has the following benefits:
- Acceleration of development cost-effectively
- Self-esteem and confidence enhancement
- Expansion of participants' professional network

- Increase in job-satisfaction, effectiveness, employee engagement and retention
- Increase perspective and knowledge of different functions and cross-organisational communication
- Creation of a culture of development
- Fostering productivity and performance

Mentorship provides a platform for knowledge transfer among group members through shared experience, observation, simulation and reflection, with the aim to create tacit knowledge. Due to a number of challenges, the tacit knowledge transfer process becomes difficultand may result in the loss of the benefits identified above.

Factors that inhibit the knowledge transfer process include time allocation or the availability of the knowledge holder to transfer knowledge. Other challenges include convenience and location. These are problems faced by organisations, which the study aims to explore further, establishing whether social media can play any role in overcoming such challenges and possibly provide more effective solutions in facilitating the transfer and capturing of tacit knowledge in a mentorship.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

It is important and beneficial to explore and investigate the role that social media can play in facilitating the transfer and capturing of tacit knowledge in a mentorship and how this captured tacit knowledge can be stored and disseminated to even larger audiences for future use through social media. This is the primary objective of this study.

The secondary objectives linked to the role of social media in the tacit knowledge transfer process in a mentorship are:

- To determine the types of mentorship activities in which can social media play a significant role

- Determine what benefits can be derived by using social media as a mechanism in the tacit knowledge transfer process in mentorship
- Determine social media capabilities that can scaffold knowledge management and cultivate a culture of knowledge-sharing in an organisation
- Determine the degree of tacit knowledge transfer in a mentorship
- Determine how social media can assist to overcome some of the current challenges in the tacit knowledge transfer in a mentorship relationship

1.3 CONCLUSION AND LAYOUT OF STUDY

This chapter introduced the background and the research problem. An overview of the research variables that is social media mentorship and tacit knowledge were presented. The research will focus primarily on the usage and effectiveness of social media in the transfer of tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

Chapter two will provide theoretical background to the research in the form of literature review which forms basis of this study and aims to highlight gaps and need for this study. The literature review will provide supporting and contrasting definitions of social media, mentorship and tacit knowledge. The literature review will also provide support for the need of this study.

Chapter three sets out concisely what will be explored through two research questions. The research questions specifically look at the effectiveness of social media in a mentorship relationship as a deliberate tacit knowledge transfer mechanism.

Chapter four focuses on the research methodology used. Details of the unit of analysis, sample size and sampling method will be discussed. The data collection methods and process along with research instruments are also included. This will be followed by both the process of the data analysis and the limitations of the study.

The sample and results are clearly presented in chapter five. The data presented will be clustered around the research questions identified in chapter three. Because this was a qualitative study, verbatim quotations and evidence will be cited within the framework of research questions. A model overarching model representing emerging themes will also be presented in this chapter.

Chapter six follows with a discussion of the results in terms of the research question and literature review. An in-depth insight into the findings in terms of the context of the study is presented. Chapter seven provides a conclusion and highlights the main findings of the research. Finally, recommendations to stakeholders on the findings and considerations for future research studies are presented.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 MENTORSHIP

2.1.2 MENTORSHIP DEFINED

The concept of mentorship can be traced back for many centuries and has been widely studied in the past. A number of definitions have been coined by different researchers and authors. Through these definitions it emerged that mentorship was used for different purposes.

(Hunt & Michael, 1983) defined mentorship as an important training and development tool for upward professional progression in organisations. (Raabe & Beehr, 2003) described mentoring as having three behaviours or intentions, career development, social support and role modelling.

In recent years, as more studies on mentorship were conducted, new revelations and findings around mentorship surfaced. (Payne & Huffman, 2005) concured with the previous authors' definitions of mentoring; and indicated that "mentoring can be instrumental to the initiation and maintenance of an employee's socialization into an organization. Organizational socialization is the process whereby individuals acquire the attitudes, behaviours, and knowledge needed to participate as organisations members".

These definitions suggested that mentoring was more beneficial for the individual rather than the entire organisation. Swap, Leonard, Shields and Abrams (2001) agreed with this observation and concluded that from a literature review perspective, there is little evidence of a direct positive relationship between mentoring and organisational performance, however, also highlighted that "mentoring does play a role in building up core capabilities of an organisation, as literature offers evidence for the transfer of skills, managerial systems, and values - including their tacit dimensions. The mentoring process fits the description of both socialization (sharing experiences) and internalization (embodying explicit knowledge into tacit and learning by doing)."

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From the above literature review and definitions, it can be concluded that mentorship was defined as a process where knowledge is transferred from one individual to the other. The intentions and benefits of such knowledge transfer should not be of concern. The most salient aspect was that knowledge was transferred between the holder of knowledge and the receiver.

2.1.3 BENEFITS OF MENTORING AND TECHNOLOGY

The abundance of the benefits of mentoring and technology were discovered within the research. Swap *et al.* (2001) highlighted the benefits of mentoring and stated that "people drink in knowledge informally and, at times, unconsciously. That is, they learn much incidentally, while eating in the cafeteria, chatting in halls, observing their colleague's and supervisor's behaviour – and through the vicarious experience of others. Therefore knowledge transfer can occur even in the absence of deliberate intention to teach each other, or learn. However, experienced individuals in an organisation can help newcomers or novices interpret events, understand technology and business processes, and identify the values and norms of an organisation. The process of internalization and socialization can be aided or hindered by such organisational experts."

Swap *et al.* (2001) observed that mentoring is a potential avenue or process to facilitate knowledge-sharing and learning, explored tools that can enable mentoring to be more efficient for both the mentor and the mentee and mentioned how storytelling can be beneficial in a mentorship relationship and how management involvement through incentive structures can assist to drive mentorship in an organisation.

Swap *et al.* (2001) identified technology as a role player in mentorship and stated: "simulations can extend the reach of the expert by providing opportunities for learning by doing in artificial environments. And computer systems can help the apprentice teach the novice (or the journeyman, the apprentice) by providing access to repositories of knowledge that may have little meaning to the uninitiated, but can be interpreted by someone with more experience. Information technology similarly is an indispensable tool for peer mentoring, as groups of physically dispersed individuals come together virtually to share knowledge in communities of practise. "

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This important observation made by the authors stimulated the appetite for deeper exploration on the invaluable role social media can play in mentoring. In the study of Swap *et al.* (2001), the role of social media in mentoring was out of scope and the intention of this study was to focus explicitly on what role social media plays in mentoring. The study aimed to indicate whether this observation had any merit or not.

2.1.4 HOLLARD'S MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Hollard Insurance was the organisation selected for research conduction. A giant in the financial services sector, Hollard Insurance was chosen because of its status as a multi-national organisation with its roots in South Africa and offices in 11 countries worldwide. Hollard's employed 1,500 employees in its Head Office in Johannesburg, South Africa and had a rich culture as a family-owned business. The Hollard website, stated that one of the key attributes of its culture was the term "Hollardites" which was commonly used to refer to Hollard employees, suggesting a close-knit community.

2.1.5 HOLLARD'S MENTORSHIP DEFINED

Hollard defined mentorship in three ways; 1) as a development tool, 2) a knowledge sharing opportunity and 3) an organisational culture enhancer.

Mentorship as a development tool enabled incumbents to grow their knowledge, networks and careers. The process allowed more experienced Hollardites to support and develop other talented Hollardites.

Mentorship as a knowledge-sharing opportunity improved cross-functional knowledge sharing and facilitated the flow of information and ideas throughout the organisation.

Mentorship as an organisational culture enhancer helped employees better understand the "Hollard Way" and the company operations, policies and culture.

Hollard's definition of mentorship also identified mentorship as a tool for knowledge transfer.

2.1.6 HOLLARD'S MENTORSHIP BENEFITS TO THE ORGANISATION

Effective mentoring programs benefited the mentee and the organisation by:
- Building bench strength
- Creating a culture of development
- Driving employee engagement and retention
- Fostering productivity and performance
- Increasing cross-organisational communication
- Providing a cost-effective development opportunity
- Driving performance
- Increasing knowledge sharing
- Expanding networks

2.1.7 BENEFITS TO THE MENTEE

- Accelerating development
- Enhancing self-esteem and confidence when interacting with senior leaders
- Expanding the mentee's professional network
- Increasing job satisfaction and effectiveness
- Increasing likelihood of career advancement
- Increasing perspective and knowledge of different functions

2.1.8 BENEFITS TO THE MENTOR

- Driving self-awareness
- Expanding the mentor's professional network
- Improving leadership skills
- Increasing awareness of available talent throughout the organisation

It was evident that mentorship had benefits for all participants, including the organisation. It was important explore ways that could make mentorship more effective to derive more benefits.

2.1.9 HOLLARD'S MENTORSHIP ACTIVITIES

Hollard recommended a number of activities that should occur in mentorship to build a solid relationship. Table 1 below illustrated the activities suggested in a mentorship relationship. It was evident that large responsibility was vested with the mentee to ensure substantial benefits from the relationship.

Table 1 Mentorship Activities

Mentorship Relationship Activities	
Skill Development	▪ Offer to teach one of your strengths or skills to your mentor, or impart knowledge around your role and function
	▪ Ask to observe your mentor while he/she presents to a group. Take notes and discuss what you learned
Knowledge Sharing	▪ Share a difficult decision you made recently and discuss what inputs you considered when making the decision and its outcome. Ask your mentor what he/she might have done differently
	▪ Ask for your mentor's advice about a project or problem on which you are working
	▪ Explain some of the "unwritten rules" you have learned about being successful at the organisation
	▪ Discuss an article or book that impacted your personal or professional life
Networking	▪ Occasionally call your mentor unexpectedly, just to check in
	▪ Link up with other mentoring pairs for lunch or another activity
	▪ Do volunteer work together
Career Advice	▪ Ask to look at your mentor's résumé and have him/her walk you through it
	▪ Offer to tell your career story in some detail. How did you start your career? What changes did you make along the way? Include high and low points and how these learning experiences helped you

2.2 SOCIAL MEDIA

2.2.1 SOCIAL MEDIA DEFINED

Panahi *et al*. (2012) examined the characteristics of social media in an effort to understand its usage and the role it played in an organisations' knowledge sharing. Social media was defined as "collaborative online applications and technologies which will enable and encourage participation, conversation, openness, creation and socialization amongst community of users."

Finkbeiner (2012) defined social media as "Internet based applications, which enable user to converse (interact with each other), to create and to participate in publishing User Generated Content (UGC) that have been developed under own creative efforts and are processed online by the collective of individuals by contributing own contents in a professional or non-professional environment. The participant functions as consumer and producer of information, knowledge and know-how, opinions and experiences that are acquired and disseminated via texts (comments, threats, ratings, reviews...), photos and graphics, video, movie and audio files."

Cromity (2012) was of the same view, and defined social media as "media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques on the web such as feeds from blogs, status updates, wikis, discussion boards, and other forms of web technology."

It was important to note that three definitions agreed that online technologies were present in social media and all indicated that in social media usage, there were one or more users enabling conversation, interacting and sharing knowledge. With this in mind social media can simply be defined as online tools enabling individuals to socialise, therefore sharing information and knowledge. The key characteristics in this definition were online tools, socialisation and sharing of knowledge.

2.2.2 SOCIAL MEDIA CAPABILITIES AND PLATFORMS

In his definition of social media, Finkbeiner (2012) indicated that participants functioned as consumers and producers of information, knowledge and know-how, opinions and experiences that were acquired and disseminated via different forms of web technology known as social media. This indicated that social media had many and different capabilities.

Panahi *et al.* (2012) mentioned that not all social media capabilities are required in the knowledge transfer process. Those required ones "are the capabilities of social media that encourage, support, and enable people to share their knowledge easily and effectively through different mechanisms". These were categorised into four features:

- User-generated content – social media allows for reading and editing or adding of content to what has been created by someone
- Peer to peer communication – ability to connect users to interact
- Networking – building a community of users
- Multimedia oriented – applications allowing user to store multiple content, such as audio, video, image and text which allow interaction.

These features were broad and it is important to dissect them further to fully understand the characteristics displayed by each social media tool and whether it was convenient to facilitate the consumption and production of information, knowledge, know-how, opinions and experiences.

Table 2 below illustrated the different social media tools. For instance, the key capability for the online tool for collaborations, Dropbox, linked back to the argument of Panahi *et al.* (2012) that social media allowed for reading and editing or adding of content to what has been created by someone. Internal social networks such as the Intranet were multimedia-oriented and allowed users to store multiple content, such as audio, video, image and text – which allow interaction.

Table 2 Classification of Social Media Tools by Cann *et al.* (2011)

Social Media Tool	Platform
Social Bookmarking, News and Social Citation	Digg, Mendeley, DeLicio.us
Social Networking Services	Facebook, Linkedin, My Space
Virtual worlds	Second life
Blogging and Micro-blogging	Wordpress, Blogger, Twitter
Document and Presentation Sharing	Scibd, Slideshare
Audio, Photo, Video	Flickr, YouTube, Spotify
Collaboration	Dropbox, Google Docs
Project Management and Meeting	Adobe, Connect, Citrix, Skype
Information Management	RSS, iGoogle, Netvibes
Location	Foursquare
Internal Social Network	Intranet

Panahi *et al.* (2012) provided a solid foundation on which social media capabilities were deemed important and encouraged, supported and enabled people to share their knowledge easily and effectively. This study aimed to test and explore whether these social media capabilities and tools play any role in the transfer of tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

2.2.3 THE BENEFITS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN ORGANISATIONS

In the online article "HR derivatives examines impact of social media on employee productivity" by Abisoye (2014), Mark Abani, Country Director/Managing Director of Crown Agents, was quoted while speaking on "Challenges, Opportunities Implications of Social Media to Employee Engagement, Productivity, Learning and Development". Abani described the trio of LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter as three of the most powerful social networking sites in the world with a huge youth following and strong influence on the youthful population across the world. Abani noted that social media had become so powerful that its influence brought down three governments in Africa (Egypt, Libya and Tunisia) during what was tagged the "Arab Spring". Abani listed the benefits of social media for employees to include formal training, a learning community, opportunities for networking and collaboration, efficient

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communication, providing employees with a voice as well as learning and development.

These were social media benefits as noted by business people. These social media benefits to the business echoed what Panahi *et al.* (2012) discussed around the social media capabilities required in the knowledge transfer process. Table 3 below highlighted the benefits of social media.

Table 3 Benefits of Social Media

Capability category	Tool category	Purpose	Key end user functionality	Benefits
Peer to Peer communication/User generated content	Blogging Tools	Communication	-Post writings -Comment on writings -Share writings (external and internal) -Evaluate writings	- Active and passive exchange of professional information - Idea generation and problem solving - Creation - Codification - Sharing - Collaboration - Organisation
Networking/peer to peer communication	Social Networking Tools	Awareness, communication, sharing, collaboration, identification	Add/delete friends/ groups events share material information manage profile send direct messages	- Building personal networks leading to creation of organisational memory. Acquire/capture/create/store/apply/share alert. - Social presence in knowledge sharing - Expert finding - Socialisation - Combination
Networking/peer to peer communication	Time management	Collaboration, awareness	-Create and share calendars -Organise meetings/event - Make to do lists	- Scan/map - Awareness activities - Codification - Organisation
Multimedia oriented	Shared information spaces/media sharing(Video, audio, images, presentations	- Identification - Collaboration -Communication - Sharing	- Share information - Comment on information -follow users	- Knowledge sharing - Storage retrieval - Combination

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Table 3 combined the social media capabilities identified by Panahi *et al.* (2012) and followed what was identified by Pirkkalainen and Pawloski (2012) where the tool category, the purpose of the tool, key user functionality and knowledge management activities and processes were highlighted.

In this case, the knowledge management activities and processes were argued to be benefits derived from using social media tools. For instance, the table suggested that when a social media tool with multimedia-oriented capability (such as video or audio) was used for communication and sharing which provided the end user the ability to share information, the benefits were therefore knowledge sharing and the ability to store and retrieve the knowledge at a later stage.

2.2.4 CHALLENGES PRESENTED BY SOCIAL MEDIA

Organisations and employees derived a number of benefits from using social media but there were also challenges that social media tools presented that should not be overlooked by organisations.

Brooks, Richter & Lewis (2010) highlighted some of the social media challenges that organisation and employees should be wary of. Brooks *et al.* (2010) mentioned that companies may face liability when employees use social media to comment on their employer's services or products without disclosing the employment relationship; such liability may result even if the comments were not sponsored or authorised by the employer.

Brooks *et al.* (2010) also noted that organisations ran the risk of employees divulging sensitive organisation information to their entire social network. Organisations may face liability for defamation when employees use social media to disseminate rumours, gossip, and offensive false statements about their peers and leadership.

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According to Brooks *et al.* (2010) social media expanded an employer's potential liability outside its physical location and work hours. This implied that any relationship on the social media platforms was similar to a physical relationship. An example was if a manager made inappropriate remarks to a subordinate using social media, it was similar to the remark being made face to face. Table 4 below highlighted social media challenges.

Table 4 Social Media Challenges

Capability category	Tool category	Purpose	Key end user functionality	Challenges
Peer to Peer communication/User generated content	Blogging Tools	Communication	-Post writings -Comment on writings -Share writings(external and internal) -Evaluate writings	Creates cognitive distance Lack of interpersonal awareness Lack of company resources for staff
Networking/peer to peer communication	Social Networking Tools	Awareness, communication, sharing, collaboration, identification	Add/delete friends/ groups events share material information manage profile send direct messages	Lack of company resources for staff. Cultural distance between collaborators. Lack of compatibility between diverse IT systems and processes
Networking/peer to peer communication	Time management	Collaboration, awareness	-Create and share calendars -Organise meetings/events- Make to do lists	Lack of Policy or regulations. Lack of company resources for staff
Multimedia oriented	Shared information spaces/media sharing(Video, audio, images, presentations	- Identification - Collaboration -Communication - Sharing	- Share information - Comment on information -follow users	Privacy, security, misuse administration effort, unwillingness to share

Similar to the discussion around social media benefits, Table 4 combined the social media capabilities identified by Panahi *et al.* (2012) and then followed what was identified by Pirkkalainen and Pawloski (2012) where the tool

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category, the purpose of the tool, key user functionality and knowledge management activities and processes were highlighted.

In this case, the challenges identified by Pirkkalainen and Pawloski (2012) were kept the same. For instance, the table suggested that when a social media tool with multimedia-oriented capability (such as video or audio) was used for communication and sharing which provides the end user the ability to share information, the challenges included privacy, security, misuse, administration effort and unwillingness to share.

It was evident that these social media tools were capable of facilitating the transfer of knowledge; however there were challenges that needed to be overcome. It was important to explore whether similar challenges were experienced in mentorship and how they could be overcome.

2.2.5 HOLLARD'S APPROACH TO EXTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA

Hollard was active on external social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The company utilised Facebook as a marketing platform and to share any developments with external stakeholders and used Twitter to facilitate communication and engage consumers and prospective consumers on any Hollard or financial services-related matters.

LinkedIn was is used as recruitment tool to attract new talent as attracting talent was one of Hollard's aims. Vacancies were therefore advertised for everyone to view and apply on LinkedIn. Hollard was also developing a platform to allow for customer service through social media networks, where clients could be able to interact with Hollard on matters relating to their policies and even lodge claims online.

2.2.6 HOLLARD'S APPROACH TO INTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA

For the purpose of this study, the interest was on internal social networks, platforms and tools. Hollard adopted SharePoint as its main internal social media tool and named this tool OH. This central Hollard portal did not directly

contribute to generating income, but was a vital tool as the central information repository. It was high in business value as it was also the presentation place for business reporting and the central point for business knowledge.

Hollard adopted OH to address the following knowledge sharing challenges:

- Lost information

- Duplication of work because knowledge was not shared

- Wasted time searching for documents

- Lack of document control

- Loss of skill and knowledge when staff leave the organisation

Hollard addressed these knowledge-sharing challenges and promoted collaboration by using the following SharePoint functions:

- Using documents workspaces –allowed users to create, edit and share documents

- Innovation sites – capability which allowed employees to be creative and innovative

- Templates – easy access to user-friendly templates allowing employees to get jobs done efficiently and effectively

- Discussion boards – provided an opportunity for employees to ask questions and get resolution to their problems

- Departmental sites – departments displayed their mandates and objectives and allowed for all employees to learn about different divisions

- Intranet – this function was similar to the Internet, except it was limited to internal viewing and not the general public. Employees could navigate and learn more about different internal affairs. External information was sourced and housed on the intranet

- Blogs – this interactive function allowed employees to share information and engage on issues of their concern to the broader organisation

- Announcement sites – important information and stories were shared within organisation

- Customer sites – allowed for customer insights sharing, enabling thought for the creation of new products and opportunities to improve customer service

- Project management – this function allowed for different project participants to be kept in the loop on the status of projects. Even stakeholders not directly involved in the project could be kept informed

It was evident that Hollard used social media tools with the same capabilities identified by Panahi *et al.* (2012). These capabilities were the main focus of this study and it would be important to explore how Hollard used their internal social media to transfer tacit knowledge in mentorship or how best social media could be utilised as an effective mechanism.

2.3   TACIT KNOWLEDGE

2.3.1   TACIT KNOWLEDGE DEFINED

Knowledge Management (KM) was categorised into two main fields; explicit and tacit. Tacit knowledge was first defined by Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) as "personal knowledge embedded in personal experience and involved intangible factors such as personal belief, perspective and value system ". Koenig (2012) simplified the definition of tacit KM as "information or knowledge that one would have extreme difficulty operationally setting out in tangible form". Distinguishing between explicit and tacit knowledge was important for this study. Panahi *et al.* (2012) explained both phenomena in an interesting way which distinguished the two quite clearly. Table 5 below identified the properties of explicit and tacit knowledge.

TABLE 5 Tacit and Explicit Knowledge Properties

Tacit Knowledge	Explicit knowledge
• Resides in human minds	• Articulated, structured and documented
• Highlight individual and personal	• Learnt through instruction, recitation or repetition
• Learnt through experiences, skills observation, intuitive feeling, mental modes, beliefs and values.	• Easy to recognise, codify, formalize, store, share, communicate and use
• Unstructured, difficult to see, codify, estimate, investigate, formalize, write down, capture and communicate accurately.	• Can be found in books, journals, databases, etc.
• Unconscious knowledge (both known and unknown to the holder)	• Consciously accessible
• Job specific, context specific	• Know that, know what
• Experience based, knowledge in action	• Academic knowledge
• Transferred through conversation and narrative (storytelling discussions, etc.)	
• Know how	
• Experts knowledge	

Source: (Panahi, Watson, & Partridge, 2012)

Rice and Rice (2005) conducted some investigation and literature review and introduced the SECI model which distinguished explicit from tacit knowledge, and the application of both concepts in organisations. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) proposed four patterns of KM transfer:

- **Socialisation (tacit to tacit)** refers to tacit knowledge transfer among group members through shared experience, observation, simulation and reflection aiming to create tacit knowledge

- **Externalisation (tacit to explicit)** refers to the creation of explicit knowledge from tacit knowledge through metaphors, analogies, concepts, hypotheses or models

- **Combination (explicit to explicit)** refers to the process of systematically combining discrete pieces of explicit knowledge into a new form
- **Internalisation (explicit to tacit)** occurs through diffusion; individuals would convert or integrate shared knowledge or experiences and knowledge into tacit knowledge

Having observed and analysed the different definitions, classifications and simplifications of tacit knowledge, simply put, tacit knowledge was defined as knowledge that resides in each human, knowledge from past experiences, knowledge shaped by values and beliefs, knowledge that can be transferred from human to human through sharing experiences, through observation, simulation and reflection.

2.3.2 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PROCESS

The transfer of knowledge was defined as the method of moving knowledge from one source to the other. Provvidenza and Johnston (2009) described three models applicable in the knowledge transfer process; the producer-push model, the user –pull model and the exchange model.

Knowledge transfer research has gained momentum in recent years with the intent to impart knowledge from one individual to the other or from one individual to groups. According to Blumenberg, Wagner and Beimborn (2009) the intention was to increase the knowledge of one's knowledge domain and to increase shared knowledge through knowledge transfer processes. Bonner and Baumann (2012) investigated further and found that such transfer exchange was even more effective in group contexts.

Literature review highlighted that a link between knowledge transfer and tacit knowledge existed. Sapsed, Gann, Marshall and Salter (2005) found this link and that knowledge transfer was further aided by co-location. Co-location required two or more individuals hence this facilitated the transfer of tacit knowledge. Organisations used a number of tacit knowledge transfer tools of

which some are the producer-push model, the user–pull model and the exchange model.

2.3.3 JOB SHADOWING AND OBSERVATION

Job shadowing provided insight to "the resources, techniques, and short cuts that make older workers more efficient and productive. Organisations that are successful in managing the transfer of knowledge from older generation to the younger generation of workers will be least vulnerable to an exodus of retiring workers" Burke and Ng (2006, p.88).

Job shadowing and observation were seen as both the producer-push model and the user-pull model of knowledge transfer. Two individuals were required; one as the producer and one as the user of this knowledge. In this case the older and the new generation worker.

2.3.4 KNOWLEDGE DIRECTORIES, CORPORATE YELLOW PAGES

AND EXPERT LOCATORS

Knowledge directories, corporate yellow pages and expert locators in organisations were tools that helped employees identify each other especially based on expertise. Employees' work expertise and specialities were recorded and available for others to view when required.

An expert locator was defined as a "database tool which is used to find expertise in the organisation, a searchable database of expert profiles, so that people can find those with similar problems to the ones they have" (Sandrock, 2008, p.28).

The knowledge directories, corporate yellow pages and expert locators were classified under the user pull model as it required the user to pull knowledge from defined sources.

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2.3.5 DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PORTALS

Document management systems and portals were normally housed on the organisations intranet systems. These allowed for important documents to be saved for future reference. They also facilited learning and storage of knowledge and hence used as a knowledge transfer tool.

Portals supported knowledge transfer processes by allowing users to access information from a wide range of sources, providing the facility "for organisations or companies to share, create, exchange and reuse knowledge." (Mansourvar & Norizan, 2010, p. 969).

Document management systems and portals were classified as the exchange model type of knowledge transfer. Document management systems and portals facilitated the exchange of knowledge between one or a group of users.

2.3.6 CHALLENGES IN THE TACIT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PROCESS

Snowden (2003) discussed the possibility of codifying tacit knowledge and identified a number of challenges with simply trying to transfer tacit knowledge through scribing which is sometimes considered as best practice and concluded: "one of the basic rules of knowledge management is that we always know more than we can say and we will always say more than we can write." Evidently, the challenge was ensuring that all the knowledge is transferred.

Snowden (2003) continued to argue that "time pressures on staff mean that even where they can codify they often only able to do a partial job, it is also true that human knowledge is deeply contextual, it is triggered by circumstance, if the author of a document was not properly stimulated at the time of the codification they not remember all of the circumstances that should qualify the application of best practise". The challenge in this case was the availability of time and lack of stimulation from the holder of tacit knowledge.

What is deduced from this argument is that tacit knowledge or any form of knowledge can be shared, but there were challenges that hindered the process

of knowledge transfer, challenges such as lack of time, stimulation and adequate knowledge transfer tools.

2.3.7   KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICE

There was no "one size fits all" approach to knowledge management. Different approaches have worked well for different organisations across the world. What was interesting to note was that all approaches were aimed at transferring tacit knowledge and gaining competitive advantage. A variety of best practices and the benefits were researched as below:

Accenture South Africa - Organisational memory

- Know where knowledge in the organisation lies, who has it, what they have, and how much they know

SUN Microsystems – Innovation repository on the intranet

- Employees jot down sudden bursts of brilliance or well thought out plans on product ideas or customer service improvement

Sainsbury – Interviewed small teams on what was working well and what frustrated them

- Mapped gaps and provided solutions

Skandia AFS, Sweden – Created a formalised procedure to capture experiences while starting new financial services products

- Reduced the time from start to profitability from 2 years to 6 months
- Measured processes using non-financial indicators. Publishes the world's first annual report supplement on intellectual capital
- Back office system developed by Skandia worldwide was sold to Swiss insurance companies

Boeing 777 USA - First paperless development of aircraft

- Included customers in design teams
- More than 200 teams with wide range of skills both designed and constructed sub parts, rather than usual organisation design team, construction team
- Suppliers worldwide used same digital databases as Boeing

Buckman Labs USA – a biotechnology firm reorganised itself to optimise knowledge sharing

- Created a knowledge transfer department to co-ordinate efforts
- Employee's best at knowledge sharing gain both financial rewards and management positions

Oticon Denmark – Created a 'spaghetti' organisation, a chaotic tangle of inter-relationships and interactions

- Knowledge workers had no fixed job descriptions, but worked entirely on project basis

WM data - No work unit allowed being larger than 50 employees

- Created sense of 'family' and belonging, which in turn increased trust and knowledge sharing

Xerox USA - Provided convenient places where people could congregate routinely

- Called 'distributed coffee pot' environments encourage cross-functional links

Ernst & Young – Centre for Business Knowledge

- A network of content, people, knowledge programmes allowing professionals to access latest information on companies, industry trends, benchmarking studies and leading practices
- Information generated is stored and delivered throughout intranet (Knowledge Web)

2.3.8 HOLLARD'S APPROACH TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Hollard's approach to knowledge management was influenced by global best practices, and most importantly, strategies that work. Hollard consistently provided analyses of how the organisation can revamp itself by reviewing its current position and setting new goals. The current initiatives below, aimed at knowledge management within the organisation, were identified:

- Corporate library – where Hollardites had access to a range of books
- Legal library – Legal-related material for sharing
- International research – a team dedicated at researching best practices that can be adopted

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- Diversity and culture – a team responsible for unifying the diverse community by adopting one culture
- Industry research - South African economics
- Information technology – IT department consistently looking for best technologies to adopt
- External information – co-operation with industry librarians, memberships of certain institutions viz. SAIRR; Wits Business School, Advertising agency, WWW, Subscriptions to certain journals
- Internet cafe – allowing Hollardites to access internet outside of their work areas
- Expert information on different aspects of the business – in various people's heads not documented anywhere

The above initiatives did not entirely yield best results, hence Hollard adopted a new approach. With this approach Hollard aimed to:

- Encourage a culture and environment of sharing tacit and explicit knowledge among Hollardites and their business partners
  (Tacit knowledge = know-how in people's heads, personal, context specific; Explicit knowledge = documented, archived, codified – patents, trademarks, business plans, marketing research, customer lists)
- Establish a facility which is *the* information resource contributing to the company's objectives
- Create physical space(s) for hard copies
- Be an information source for industry developments. Corporate strategy to be housed in a central repository, which is easily accessible to all Hollardites and business partners where appropriate
- House specialised, targeted, confidential information sources in identified designated areas, e.g. Legal library in the legal department
- Create physical space(s) for personal development and problem solving teams
- Create quiet areas for individual study and group discussions easily accessible to all Hollardites
- Have a multimedia resource area with controlled access for use by Hollardites who do not have access to online information resources in the normal course of their activities, e.g. Internet café(s), terminals for word processing, reading disks

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- Create physical space for historical information and artefacts about Hollard, Johannesburg, Arcadia, South Africa in separate area with controlled access (House library)
- Deal with culture change to share knowledge
- Reward and recognition
- Create problem solving teams
- Encourage personal development
- Assign responsibilities for the 'management' of information and knowledge resources
- Encourage culture to enhance and store knowledge
- Allow time and space for sharing to happen. Commitment to share knowledge even if it is not formally part of the job.
- Create a platform for mutual information communication
- Enable employees to capture, store and distribute information
- Develop policies and procedures with regard to distribution of information
- Use knowledge management for induction programmes
- Create a knowledge map
- To identify what we want
- To list what we have and where it is
- Conduct a Knowledge Discovery Workshop
- Drive the look, feel, message and content of the knowledge map.
- Output – Used as a basis for identifying and classifying the pockets of expertise within the business.

The aims identified above were not exclusive to mentorship; however mentorship was identified as a tool that could assist a Hollardite. This study aimed to explore if social media could effectively facilitate these aims, especially from a mentorship point of view.

2.4   CONCLUSION

Literature review has indicated that social media had capabilities that encourage, support and enable people to share their knowledge easily and effectively through different mechanisms. Features of social media included:

- User-generated content - social media allows for reading and editing or adding of content to what has been created by someone
- Peer to peer communication - ability to connect user to interact
- Networking-building a community of users
- Multimedia-oriented - applications allowing user to store multiple content, such as audio, video, image and text which allow interaction

There was a need to explore these capabilities and features further in order to establish whether they could assist in some of the challenges identified by Snowden (2003) in the transfer of tacit knowledge. Snowden (2003) highlighted the need to explore these capabilities. He mentioned that "too many people focus on managing knowledge rather than managing the channels through which knowledge flows." He further commented that "just connecting or linking people can be a major knowledge management activity."

This study explored the role of social media in connecting people and transfering of tacit knowledge.

Snowden (2003) acknowledged that mentors provided a functionality of connecting people and transferring knowledge; however; there are new tools that can allow us elevate the transfer of knowledge. This was a view shared by Swap *et al.* (2001) that "simulations can extend the reach of the expert by providing opportunities for learning by doing in artificial environments. And computer systems can help the apprentice teach the novice (or the journeyman, the apprentice) by providing access to repositories of knowledge that may have little meaning to the uninitiated, but can be interpreted by someone with more experience. Information technology similarly is an indispensable tool for peer mentoring, as groups of physically dispersed individuals come together virtually to share knowledge in communities of practise. "

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This highlighted that there was no doubt that mentoring facilitates the transfer of tacit knowledge. "The mentoring process fits the description of both socialization (sharing experiences) and internalization (embodying explicit knowledge into tacit and learning by doing)" asserted Swap *et al*. (2001). There was however a need to explore what role social media can play in the transfer of tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of the research as pointed out in Chapter one was to explore the role of social media in the transfer of tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship. Chapter three states the precise purpose of the research through research questions. According to Zikmund (2003), a research question is the researcher's translation of the business problem into a specific need for inquiry.

3.2   RESEARCH QUESTION 1

Is Social media an effective mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in mentoring relationship?

Swap *et al.* (2001) identified technology as a role player in mentorship. Swap *et al.* (2001) highlighted that "simulations can extend the reach of the expert by providing opportunities for learning by doing in artificial environments, and computer systems can help the apprentice teach the novice (or the journeyman, the apprentice) by providing access to repositories of knowledge that may have little meaning to the uninitiated, but can be interpreted by someone with more experience. Information technology similarly is an indispensable tool for peer mentoring, as groups of physically dispersed individuals come together virtually to share knowledge in communities of practise," (Swap *et al.*, 2001, p.98).

3.3   RESEARCH QUESTION 2

Is social media being used as a deliberate mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in the mentoring relationship?

Panahi *et al.* (2012) indicated that social media has capabilities that encourage, support, and enable people to share their knowledge easily and effectively through different mechanisms. Features of social media are:
- User-generated content - social media allows for reading and editing or adding of content to what has been created by someone

- Peer to peer communication - ability to connect user to interact

- Networking-building a community of users

- Multimedia-oriented applications allowing user to store multiple content, such as audio, video, image and text which allow interaction

There is a need to explore these capabilities and features further to establish if they can assist in some of the challenges identified by Snowden (2003) in the transfer of tacit knowledge. Snowden (2003) highlighted the need to explore these capabilities; he mentioned that "too many people focus on managing knowledge rather than managing the channels through which knowledge flows." He further commented that "Just connecting or linking people can be a major knowledge management activity" (Snowden, 2003, p.5).

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CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research design was defined by Zikmund (2003) as the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the needed information. Research design was described as the framework that plans the action for research projects.

The aim of this study was to explore whether social media is an effective mechanism in the tacit knowledge transfer process in mentorship.

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, the research design was qualitative and exploratory in nature (Zikmund, 2003). Qualitative research attempted "to answer questions about complex nature of the phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena for the participants point of view," (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p.101).

A case study method was used. "In a case study, the researcher collects extensive data on the individuals on which the investigation is focused on" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010, p.137). In this case, Hollard insurance company was used as an organisation to study. The case study method was suitable for this research because the intention was to learn more about a little known situation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

To fully achieve the aim of this study, an organisation with the following characteristics was required:

- Existing formal mentorship program
- Visible usage of social media within the organisation
- Existing formal tacit knowledge transfer process and division responsible for such a process

Hollard possessed all the required characteristics, hence it was used as a case study. A formal mentorship program meant that there should be a mentor and mentee. These were identified within Hollard and interviewed. A department or division that was responsible for the implementation of social media practices

and strategies existed within Hollard. Further, a knowledge and insights division which is responsible for tacit knowledge transfer process could be found within Hollard.

4.2   UNITS OF ANALYSIS

The units of analysis, according to Welman and Kruger (2004), were the elements or members of a population. In this research project, the unit of analysis was the Hollard mentorship program and its participants.

The study looked at the opinions and facts from participants in the mentorship program; further to that, facts and opinions from specialists in social media, mentorship, human resource and strategy within Hollard were used.

4.3   POPULATION

Knowledge management and the use of social media exist in the majority of organisations in the world. To conduct a study on these variables, a broad population was presented. "Population is the complete set of group members. The population need not necessarily be people or employees: it can, for example, be organizations, places or the complete track listing for a music CD" (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

For the purpose of this study, the intention was to use participants in mentorship program from one organisation: Hollard. In addition, the intention was to source specialists within Hollard on the three variables discussed in chapter two.

4.4   SAMPLING METHOD

In selecting the organisation to sample, purposeful sampling was used. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010), researchers select those individuals or in this case, organisations that will yield the most information about the topic under investigation. Similarly, in selecting specialists the same method was used for the same reason, to get the most information.

In selecting participants from the mentorship program, a random sampling method was used, contrary to the purposeful sampling, out of a pool of mentorship participants, random names were selected to participate in this study.

4.5   SAMPLING SIZE

According to Zikmund (2003) the sample size is a subset or relatively small fraction of the total number of elements in the population.

The intention was to focus on one organisation; this was achieved as Hollard was used as a case study. The intention was to interview five specialists: one from the office of the CEO, a mentorship program custodian, a strategy specialist, a social media specialist and one knowledge management specialist. This was achieved as all specialists responded and interviews were conducted with them.

A request for interviews was sent out to eight mentors and eight mentees, only four mentors and five mentees were interviewed. Time constraints were a large contributing factor to the poor response. Hollard was in the process of restructuring and a number of participants were affected by this and needed to acclimatise to the changes. Some staff were required to take on new roles.

4.6   DATA COLLECTION

According to Leedy & Ormrod (2010) interviews could yield a great deal of useful information and insights. Interviews allowed the researcher to ask many types of questions; from facts to people's opinions and behaviours.

Face-to-face, long interviews were conducted with the participants. The interview guide was designed in a way that allowed open questions and floating prompts. McCracken (1988) suggested that grand open questions – general and non-directive – allow interviewees to tell their own story with floating prompts or repetition of statements interviewees make to encourage elaboration.

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The interview guide was in the form of a questionnaire and respondents did not view these questions prior to the interview, or even during the interview. Two interview guides were used, one for the specialists and one for the mentorship program participants. Although questions were open-ended and generalised, their main focus was on specific variables. Both guides were divided into four sections, focusing on social media, mentorship, tacit knowledge and the three variables put together.

The mentorship section of the interview for the mentorship participants focused on their experiences, while the focus for the specialist participants included what mentorship should be. The social media section focused on knowledge, usage, preferences and opinions. The tacit knowledge section was similar to both groups; the difference was that it included questions around Hollard's vision to the specialists. The final section, which aimed at bringing all the participants together, was the source of opinions.

The interviews averaged 30 to 45 minutes in duration, and were recorded with the participant's permission. Both interview guides were pre-tested prior to the interview and a few changes were made to the original questions. The pre-test prompted the creation of a separate sheet which provided some of the definitions of the variables as discussed in chapter two. This was to provide the participants with a point of reference and departure. Some of the questions prompted the interviewee to either agree or disagree with a definition, and therefore, source their understanding of what was asked.

As the study was of an explanatory nature, interviews were conducted. In line with Leedy and Ormrod (2010) the interviews were more flexible and more likely to yield information that the researcher had not planned for over and above what they had planned for.

The questions were designed using unambiguous language (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). They were formulated with guidance from some of the findings from the

literatures review discussed in Chapter two. The guide used is presented in Appendix B and C.

A consent letter to use Hollard Insurance as a case study was provided by the Office of the CEO. Appendix A outlines the consent letter provided to participants. The consent letter provided participants with an option to exit the interview at any time, provided how long the interview will be and that anonymity will be applied to all participants.

4.7   DATA ANALYSIS

Each interview was recorded to ensure that accurate data was captured and could be retrieved at any point. A mindmap sheet was created and used during the interviews to capture themes as the interviews progressed.

The audio recordings were converted into written transcripts. A systematic data reduction simplified and reduced the data into clusters and themes. The guide was divided into section and questions were asked systematically based on these sections which made it easy to explore ideas attached to each section and theme as per (Silverman, 2011).

The mindmaps and notes capturing during the interviews made the translation from audio to written transcriptions easy as it allowed for great familiarity with the data and enabled the researcher to easily look for associations and relationships between responses to different questions. Relevant quotations to the central themes were selected and incorporated as results in Chapter five.

The interview guide allowed for the capturing of notes from the interview. During transcribing process the same guide was followed. The notes were verified to actual responses from the audio responses. Each question was put in a table format and each recording was listened to and responses were captured against each question.

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Closed questions (where a "Yes" or "No" response was required) were coded and presented in numeric format. All the responses were captured as per the guide, and then emerging themes were extracted from these responses. Supporting quotations were captured along these themes. Themes were first extracted by prevalence i.e. if a number of participants suggested similar observations, then a theme was developed. Themes were also extracted based on uniqueness, but also preserving the relevance.

The services of an independent scriber were used to ensure that all data from the recordings was captured and to ensure that the researcher findings precisely reflected recordings. This allowed for avoidance of marginal errors and researcher's bias. The researcher's bias was eliminated because this field of study was new to the researcher and the researcher had not participated in any mentorship program, allowing for the findings to be purely exploratory.

4.8   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The followng limitations were encountered during the study:

- A major limitation was that one organisation was used as a case study. Credibility of results might not be 100% because only one view is presented. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2010) researchers risk the credibility of results if there is no basis for comparison.

- The case study featured Hollard Insurance, a South African based organisation; therefore the findings might not be applicable to international organisations.

- The lack of availability of mentorship program participants resulted in only eight interviews conducted, compared to the planned 16. The sample size might not be enough to efficiently generalise the findings.

4.9   CONCLUSION

Chapter Four provided insight into the research methodology followed. A qualitative, exploratory case study method was used. Data was collected through 14 in-depth interviews with specialist and mentorship program participants.

Chapter five will present data gathered during the interviews and provide findings in relation to questions posed in chapter three.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES RESTATED

The primary objective of this study was to explore and investigate the role of social media in transferring tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship. The exploration included identifying the current usage of social media in mentorship and how it could be used for effective results.

This chapter provides a brief sample overview and a brief introduction into participant's roles. Raw results are presented and divided into three categories Mentors, Mentees and specialist responses.

5.2   PARTICIPANT ANALYSIS

The interviews were conducted with 14 participants whom are currently involved in mentorship program either as mentors or mentees and specialist in different fields which have a bearing to this study.

Table 6 below provides the participants analysis, by highlighting the role each participant plays and the frequency or number of interviews conducted in each role.

TABLE 6 Participants Analysis

Participant Roles	Number of Participants
Mentor	4
Mentee	5
CEO Office	1
Strategy Specialist	1
Knowledge management specialist	1
Mentorship custodian	1
Social Media specialist	1
Total respondents	14

5.3   ROLES ANALYSIS

Participants' roles differ for the purpose of this study and each role will be defined in this section.

5.3.1 MENTORS

Four mentors were interviewed. No demographic information was asked, but from observation, the participants are generally older than the mentees. They occupy senior management positions across the organisation and they report directly to an executive manager.

5.3.2 MENTEES

Five mentees were interviewed. The mentees are from different positions and levels within Hollard. Mentees operate either as middle or junior management levels. The observation made is that they are generally younger than the mentors. The mentees have been involved the mentorship relationship in the past two years.

5.3.3 CEO OFFICE

One individual was interviewed representing the CEO. This individual is fully involved with the CEO's office day-to-day running. They are more like the CEO's internal extension, responsible for attending to all matters requiring the CEO's attention in their absence. One the responsibilities include being a spokesperson.

5.3.4 STRATEGY SPECIALIST

This individual is the Head of Strategy responsible for Hollard's group strategy. Responsibilities include formulation, advice and implementation of all Hollard different strategies.

5.3.5 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

This individual is the custodian of all Hollard's knowledge management initiatives. Responsibilities include research in different fields, sourcing of new knowledge management initiatives and best practises.

5.3.6 MENTORSHIP CUSTODIAN

This individual is the Head of People; a function that sits in traditional human resources space. Mentorship custodian is not their full time position. Responsibilities as a mentorship custodian include setting up the program, identifying participants, inducting the participants, and ensuring its success.

5.3.7 SOCIAL MEDIA SPECIALIST

This individual is classified as a Social Media Manager (both internal and external social media platforms management). Responsibilities include sourcing best social media practices and implementing it within Hollard. Managing the social media platform including content, usage and performance are some of the other responsibilities.

5.4 RESEARCH RESULTS – MENTORS

The mentors and mentees were asked the same questions under the banner of mentorship participants. The results are, however, presented separately because of the observations made during the interviews i.e. the mentor and mentee have different frames of reference. It was important to gauge the

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difference or similarities in results and fully discuss them in Chapter six. Results are based on four mentors. Table 7 below provides mentors results.

TABLE 7 Mentors Results

Mentorship	Results
Definition of Mentorship	Two agree with definition and two disagree
Mentorship activities	- Guidance - Provide Solutions - Face-to-face meetings - Idea sharing - Networking - Source of information - Share experiences
Mentorship as a Knowledge Management Tool	Four agree
Mentorship Benefits	- Learning organisational culture. - Provides safe environment for new ideas. Career progression. - Gain information. - Assist in reframing perspectives. - Exposure to different level of thinking
Mentorship Challenges	- Time restraint - Lack of commitment - Not asking right questions
Social Media	**Results**
Exposure to Social media	Four participants know social media
Understanding of Social Media	- Platform to express and share views. - Creating a digital version of oneself - Open or close source where people share experiences, complain, learn and engage in new things
Social Media Capabilities	- Learning capability - Networking capability - User generated content capability - Data sharing - Peer to Peer communication capability Multimedia orientation capability
Hollard's Social Media Tools	- OH - Twitter - Facebook - YouTube - SharePoint - Linked in
Social Media Benefits	- Sharing Personal Photos, - Educational - Ability to reach a wide audience very quickly
Social Media Challenges	- Risky - Over communication - Losing audiences - Lack of privacy
Social Media as a knowledge management tool	Two agree and two disagree

	• Face to face communication • Telephonic conversation • Texts
Preferred Communication Medium	• Email
Tacit Knowledge	**Results**
Definition of Tacit Knowledge	Three agree with definition and one disagree
Best ways to transfer Tacit Knowledge	• Storytelling • Information sharing. • Through experiences • Creation • Conversation • Literature
Tacit know ledge Transfer in Mentorship	Three participants believe a lot of tacit knowledge is transferred in a mentorship
Tacit Knowledge Transfer Process Challenges	• Lack of trust • Lack of interest • Lack of curiosity. • Inability to directly transfer tacit knowledge. Work commitments
Mentorship, Social Media and Tacit Knowledge	**Results**
Usage of Social media in Mentorship	All participants suggest they haven't used social media directly in a mentorship relationship
Mentorship Activities Including Social Media	Sourcing reading material
Decision to use Social Media	Three participants suggested that the use of social media was incidental, only one participant suggested it was deliberate
Social Media capabilities used in Mentorship	• Multimedia, • Peer to peer communication, • user generated content
Benefits of Using Social media in Mentorship	• Social networking, • Instantaneous information. • Ability to retrieve later
Challenges of Using Social Media in Mentorship	• Unable to use information properly. • Slow connection. • Hard work to manage. • Time consuming
The transfer of Tacit Knowledge using Social Media	• Communication. • Referral to information rich sites
The effectiveness of Social Media in the Transfer of Tacit Knowledge	Three participants agree and one disagree
Social Media Capabilities Required in the Tacit Knowledge Transfer Process in Mentorship	• User generated content • Multimedia. • Peer to peer communication

5.5   RESEARCH RESULTS – MENTEES

The Mentors and mentees were asked the same questions under the banner of mentorship participants. Table 8 below encapsulates the results. The results are based on five mentees.

TABLE 8 Mentees Results

Mentorship	Results
Definition of Mentorship	All participants agree with definition
Mentorship Activities	• Solution formulation • Assignments • Meetings • Personal Problem solving • Relationship building
Mentorship as a Knowledge Management Tool	All respondents agree
Mentorship Benefits	• Gaining wealth of experience • learning from stories told • Exposure • Safe environment • Leadership • Different level of thinking • Help achieve goals • Motivation • New ideas
Mentorship Challenges	• Time management • Time availability • Lack of commitment • Changing Habits
Social Media	**Results**
Exposure to Social media	All participants are exposed to social media
Understanding of Social Media	• Various interaction tools helping to connect on social and personal level • Application on handheld device used for connecting and sharing things with people Interactive communication tools • A networking, communication and advertising tool on a technical internet platform
Social Media Capabilities	• Multimedia capabilities • Peer to Peer communication. • Interacting • Networking • Sharing Pictures • Building Personal relationships • Knowledge Sharing • Connecting people • Free information • User generated content

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Hollard's Social Media Tools	• OH • SharePoint • Text messaging • Email • LinkedIn, • Skype • Twitter • Facebook • Yammer • Intranet
Social Media Benefits	• Connecting with people • Networking • Reaching a wide audience very quickly Getting information • Update about Hollard events • Update CV • Storing Information • Connecting at any time • Insights on other people profiles
Social Media Challenges	• Not fully optimised • Addictive • Cloning of profiles • Being Ignored
Social Media as a knowledge management tool	All respondents agree
Preferred Communication Medium	Face-to-Face, Email, Internet, SMS
Tacit Knowledge	**Results**
Definition of Tacit Knowledge	All agree
Best ways to transfer Tacit Knowledge	• Face to Face communication Observation • Job shadowing • Transcribing • Literature • Exemplary behaviour • Training
Tacit know ledge Transfer in Mentorship	All participants believe that a lot of tacit knowledge is transferred during mentorship
Tacit Knowledge Transfer Process Challenges	• Difficult concepts to transfer • Lack of trust • Lack of consistency • Time constraints
Mentorship, Social Media and Tacit Knowledge	**Results**
Usage of Social media in Mentorship	All participants suggest that they have used some sort of social media
Mentorship Activities including Social Media	• Assignments set out by Mentor • Sourcing information • Communication
Decision to use Social Media	Three participants used it incidentally and two used it deliberately
Social Media capabilities used in Mentorship	• Peer to peer communication • User generated content • Multimedia orientation

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Benefits of Using Social media in Mentorship	• Reiterates information discussed during sessions • Transfer knowledge in real time • Keeps one updated on current matters Enhances communication • Allows networking • Instantaneous access to information • Ability to access it at own leisure
Challenges of Using Social Media in Mentorship	• Incorrect usage of information • Lack of privacy • Lack of exposure to social media • Inability to use social media tools
The transfer of Tacit Knowledge using Social Media	• Networking • Peer to peer communication • Information search
The effectiveness of Social Media in the Transfer of Tacit Knowledge	Four participants agree and one participant disagree
Social Media Capabilities Required in the Tacit Knowledge Transfer Process in Mentorship	• User generated content • Multimedia • Peer to Peer Communication • Networking • Building Community of Users

5.6   RESEARCH RESULTS – SPECIALISTS

The specialists were asked similar questions to the mentorship participants under the mentorship section. On the other three sections, some questions were the same but answers were obviously from a different frame of reference. Results are based on five specialists. Table 9 below provides specialist results.

TABLE 9 Specialists Results

Mentorship	Results
Definition of Mentorship	All participants agree with definition
Mentorship activities	• Assist with project management • Assist with responsibilities and achieving milestones • Provide sounding board for ideas • Sharing of ideas • Imparting Skills • Sharing experiences • Imparting Knowledge • Learning
Mentorship as a knowledge management tool	All participants agree
Mentorship Benefits	• Help mentee meet career objective • Exposure to a different thinker • Safe environment • Sharing of expertise • Provides structure for knowledge

	• sharing • Recognised as thought leader mentors
Mentorship Challenges	• Inability to store knowledge shared • Time constraint • Accessibility • Lack of trust • Lack of open communication • Lack of embracing social media
Social Media	**Results**
Exposure to Social media	All participants are exposed to social media
Understanding of Social Media	• Social media is communication enabler using technology • It Is a collaboration tool • A technology to build social networks • A tool for knowledge management
Social Media Capabilities	• Networking • Sharing Information • Multimedia capabilities • Sharing knowledge • Peer to peer communication Collaboration • Security management
Hollard's Social Media Tools	• Facebook • Twitter • Yammer • Linkedin • Dropbox • Intranet • SharePoint • Google plus • YouTube
Hollard's Social Media Vision and Strategy	• To be the largest insurer in South Africa in social media across Six big platforms, offer the best customer service on social media and thirdly, showcase Hollard lifestyle • Digital team which looks at cost effective social media tool • The digital team want Hollard to be exposed, currently working on getting a recruitment page with LinkedIn • Hollard has an online team whose focus is social media within the

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	business and their strategy is to communicate with its clients
Social Media Benefits	- Manages knowledge sharing - Efficient Client Service - Easy communication - Knowledge acquisition - Brand Exposure - Employee exposure to new technology
Social Media Challenges	- Reputational risk - Not frequently used - Lack of quality content - Non secure platforms - Always changing - Cannot be used in isolation
Social Media as a knowledge management tool	All participants agree
Preferred Communication Medium	- Face to face - Written communication - Intranet - SMS - Instant messaging - Telephonic communication
Tacit Knowledge	**Results**
Definition of Tacit Knowledge	All participants agree
Hollard's Tacit Knowledge Vision and Strategy	- Focus on leadership development through investment in mentorship and technical training - Ensure institutional knowledge is shared on SharePoint - Strategy directed on knowledge management rather that tacit knowledge management specifically
Employees willingness to Share Knowledge	All participants agree
Tacit Knowledge transfer Process Challenges	- Lack of maturity - Lack of courageous conversations - lack of practise - Lack of ability to capture knowledge organisational culture - Not personally inclined to share knowledge - Mindsets of individuals
Mentorship, Social Media and Tacit Knowledge	**Results**
Decision to use Social Media	Two participants suggest it is incidental, two unsure and one suggest it is deliberate
Social Media capabilities used in Mentorship	User generated content

	• Peer to peer communication • Networking • Multimedia usage
Benefits of Using Social media in Mentorship	• Ease of sharing information • Ability to refer to useful sites • Ability to tell stories • Ability to learn • Fast and efficient
Challenges of Using Social Media in Mentorship	• Privacy issues • Damage to personal brand
The effectiveness of Social Media in the Transfer of Tacit Knowledge	All participants agree

5.7   DEFINITION OF MENTORSHIP

Mentorship relationship was defined as a reciprocal and collaborative learning relationship between two individuals who share mutual responsibility and accountability for helping a mentee work toward achievement of clear and mutually defined learning goals (Wiley, 2005). Table 10 below captured the responses from mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 10 Definition of Mentorship

Mentorship relationship was defined as a reciprocal and collaborative learning relationship between two individuals who share mutual responsibility and accountability for helping a mentee work toward achievement of clear and mutually defined learning goals		
	Agree	**Disagree**
Mentors	2	2
Mentees	5	0
Specialists	5	0

Mentor 2: "Mentorship is where someone who has relevant experience in a particular business whether business or a subject shares that knowledge with a person who is trying to familiarise themselves with that environment and is largely a guiding relationship. It is owned by the mentee."

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Five out of five mentees agreed with the mentorship definition by Wiley and added that mentorship is about learning and development of goals.

CEO's Office: "I agree but there is a bit more to it but is somebody with more experience in a specific field mentoring somebody that would like that experience." As much as specialists agreed with the definition additional comments were made.

Mentorship custodian: "I agree but here at Hollard we would use that definition for coaching and for mentoring we would define it as to help a mentee work to toward achieving career objectives, It is knowledge sharing."

5.8   MENTORSHIP ACTIVITIES

Mentors and mentees were asked what activities do take place in a mentorship relationship and specialist where asked what activities should take place in a mentorship relationship. Table 11 below summarised mentorship activities and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialist.

TABLE 11 Mentorship Activities

Please describe what activities should take place in a mentorship relationship.					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Face to face meetings	4	Face to face meetings	3	Assist with project management	1
Idea sharing	2	Assignments	2	Assist with responsibilities and achieving milestones	1
Guidance	2	Solution formulation	1	Provide sounding board for ideas	1
Provide Solutions	1	Personal Problem solving	1	Sharing of ideas	1
Networking	1	Relationship building	1	Imparting Skills	1
Source of information	1			Sharing experiences	1
Share experiences	1			Imparting Knowledge	1
				Learning	1

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Mentor 2: "You can coach towards goals and objectives, a sounding board for ideas, means of departure for entering a new relationship, point of departure for networking, advocate for that individual and source of information for your mentee and you can also share your experiences. For me, I prefer face-to-face time with the person I will be mentoring so that we can set the goals and get to know each other better."

Mentee 3: "At first we get to know each other on a personal level, and then we define the objectives. We have regular one hour monthly meetings, we have assignments"

Knowledge management specialist: "There could be communication between the two parties , it is also important that there is a sharing of ideas because for me mentoring is a learning tool and the mentor is more knowledgeable and he/she is imparting skills or knowledge to the mentee. Idea can be shared by using articles from journals, listening to stuff which is published on information databases or both parties sharing their experiences. In the corporate environment you can also use technological tools to share information"

5.9   MENTORSHIP AS A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TOOL

All participants were asked the same question, on whether mentorship is a tool to scaffold knowledge management and cultivate a knowledge sharing culture. Table 12 below captured participants' responses to the above question.

TABLE 12 Mentorship as a Knowledge Management Tool.

Do you see mentorship as tool to scaffold knowledge management and cultivate a knowledge sharing culture?		
	Agree	**Disagree**
Mentors	4	0
Mentees	5	0
Specialists	5	0

Mentor 3: "Yes, it is a form of knowledge sharing but I do not know if the knowledge is captured during the mentorship. The process of mentorship is not

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about giving you the answers but it is about asking the right questions as a mentee. Mentorship helps you reframe your perspectives through asking questions."

Mentee 1: "Yes, my mentor had years of experience so there was a great transfer of knowledge based on my mentor's technical ability and years of experience.

Mentee 2: "Yes, because the mentor and mentee relationship is not always one way, one party can always learn from the other."

Mentee 3: "Definitely, it is a very important way of learning and sharing information, it is real life stories which you hear during those sessions. One gets more from mentorship than from reading a book."

Knowledge management specialist: "Yes, I see it as one of the tools because knowledge in itself is dead until it is put into action, that is what knowledge management is about and the most important component about sharing between people, is that people want knowledge to be managed."

Social media specialist: "Yes because during a mentorship a lot a knowledge is shared but is it also a process of discovery."

5.10   MENTORSHIP BENEFITS

All participants were asked what benefits can be derived from a mentorship relationship. Table 13 below summarized mentorship benefits and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 13 Mentorship Relationship Benefits

Please describe some of the benefits that you think are prevalent in a mentorship relationship.					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Learning organisational culture	1	Gaining wealth of experience	1	Safe environment	2
Provides safe environment for new ideas	1	Learning from stories told	1	Help mentee meet career objective	1

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Career progression	**1**	Exposure Safe environment	**1**	Exposure to a different thinker	**1**
Gain information	**1**	Different level of thinking	**1**	Sharing of expertise	**1**
Assist in reframing perspectives	**1**	Help achieve goals	**1**	Provides structure for knowledge sharing	**1**
Exposure to different level of thinking	**1**	Motivation	**1**	Recognised as thought leader mentors	**1**
		New ideas	**1**		

Knowledge management specialist: "I think for the organisation as a whole it provides a structured environment where expertise are shared because that is the problem that most organisation have, because you will have people that have been working for an organisation years and have no structure where they share their expertise. By having a mentorship program you will ensure that whoever has information is sharing it accordingly in a structured environment. Whatever information is being shared in a mentorship should be recorded whether it is in reports or wherever, so that it can be reused in future and this is usually a major benefit in a mentorship."

Mentee 4: "The benefits on being a mentee is that you have someone you trust that you can tell things that you cannot tell your boss and you will get the right advice".

Mentor 2: "The most explicit benefit is the interpretive information you will get, it gives you a solid foundation, the transfer of unique experiences into your pool of thinking, career progression."

5.11   MENTORSHIP CHALLENGES

All participants were asked what challenges are prevalent in a mentorship relationship. Table 14 below summarises mentorship challenges and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

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TABLE 14 Mentorship Relationship Challenges

Please describe some of the challenges that you think are prevalent in a mentorship relationship.					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Lack of commitment	2	Time management	2	Inability to store knowledge shared	1
Not asking right questions	1	Time availability	1	Time constraint	1
Time Constraint	1	Lack of commitment	1	Accessibility	1
		Changing Habits	1	Lack of trust	1
				Lack of open communication	1
				Lack of embracing social media	1

Mentor 3: "Real commitment from both the mentor and mentee, is a challenge if the other person isn't fully committed to the relationship. As mentee asking the right questions can also be a huge".

Mentee 3: "The person isn't doing the task therefore they are not learning and that is time wasting for the mentor. Time issues and availability are also a challenge".

CEO's Office: "Trust is a big element in a mentorship relationship because there must be open conversations".

5.12   EXPOSURE TO SOCIAL MEDIA AND UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL MEDIA

All participants have been exposed to social media and they had an understanding of what social media is.

Mentors mentioned their understanding as follows:
- Any platform where groups of people can express or share their views
- Creating a digital version of yourself - it's your online personality

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- It's any technology enabled platform where people can share experiences, complain, and learn new things. It can be closed or opened sourced
- It's a platform that facilitates engagement – whether it's the sharing of information or putting things out there

Mentees mentioned their understanding as follows:

- Various tools that are out there to help us to interact with people which are close by or on the other end of the world. It is a tool to connect on a social or personal matter
- It's any type of application that's on a handheld device that is used to connect and share things with people
- They are interactive communication tools
- It's like when you are networking – it can also be a communication and advertising tool on a technical Internet platform

Specialists mentioned their understanding as follows:

- Yes, social media is a way to communicate one on one or one to many people across a user in multimedia and its being able to digitally share any piece of content to a targeted or interested audience
- Social media is communication enabler using technology
- It's using technology to build social networks to collaborate and converse
- "It's the three tools I use, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn"
- "Initially for me social media was Facebook and I also realised that social media is an important tool for knowledge management"

5.13   SOCIAL MEDIA CAPABILITIES

All participants identified certain social media capabilities while exposed to different social media tools. Table 15 below summarizes social media capabilities and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

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TABLE 15 Social Media Capabilities

What capabilities have you identified from social media tools?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Networking	2	Networking	5	Networking	3
User generated content	2	User generated content	2	Peer to peer communication	3
Peer to Peer communication	2	Peer to Peer communication	2	Multimedia capabilities	2
Multimedia capabilities	2	Multimedia capabilities	2	Sharing knowledge	2
Data sharing	1	Interacting	1	User generated content	1
Learning capability	1	Sharing Pictures	1	Sharing Information	1
		Building Personal relationships	1	Collaboration	1
		Knowledge Sharing	1	Security management	1

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Mentee 3: "On a personal level LinkedIn is good way to market yourself; it helps build good and valuable networks, where people can share knowledge. Facebook helps connect people. I also see it as a platform to get information for free."

5.14   HOLLARD'S SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS

All participants indicated that they understood what social media was and confirmed that they had been exposed to it. A question was asked to identify what social media tools are being used by Hollard. Table 16 below summarises social media tools used in Hollard and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 16 Social Media Tools used by Hollard

What type of Social media tools are used by Hollard and which ones do you frequently use?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
OH	2	Facebook	4	Facebook	4
Twitter	2	Twitter	3	LinkedIn	4
Facebook	2	OH	2	Twitter	3
You Tube	1	LinkedIn	2	Yammer	3
SharePoint	1	SharePoint	1	SharePoint	3
LinkedIn	1	Text imaging	1	Intranet	3
		Yammer	1	Dropbox	2
		Skype	1	Google plus	1
		Intranet	1	You Tube	1
		E-mail	1		

Mentor 2: "We have OH, Hollard on Twitter and there are a lot of Hollard people on LinkedIn. From a work perspective I use LinkedIn".

5.15   HOLLARD'S SOCIAL MEDIA VISION AND STRATEGY

This question was posed to only the specialists. Below are all the responses from the specialists.

Social media specialist: "Our aim is to be the largest insurer in South Africa in social media cross our six big my platforms, we would like to offer the best customer service on social media and thirdly, we would like to showcase lifestyle."

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Strategy specialist: "We have a digital team which looks at social media; it is a tool that can be cost effective." Mentorship custodian: "We have not explored it very much."

CEO's office: "The digital team want Hollard to be exposed, we currently working on getting a recruitment page with LinkedIn"
Knowledge management specialist: "Hollard has an online team whose focus is social media within the business and I am not sure what their strategy is but I think it is to communicate with its clients."

5.16   SOCIAL MEDIA BENEFITS

All participants were asked what benefits do social media tools provide. Table 17 below summarised social media benefits and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 17 Social Media Benefits

What are the benefits of using social media?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Educational	2	Connecting with people	1	Manages knowledge sharing	2
Sharing Personal Photos	1	Networking	1	Efficient Client Service	1
Ability to reach a wide audience very quickly	1	Ability to reach a wide audience very quickly	1	Easy communication	1
		Getting information	1	Knowledge acquisition	1
		Update about Hollard events	1	Brand Exposure	1
		Update CV	1	Employee exposure to new technology	1
		Storing Information	1		
		Connecting at any time	1		
		Insights on other people profiles	1		

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Knowledge management specialist: "I think it helps with building the brand and helps expose the staff to the latest technology which will assist the staff with being aware of what is happening out there and the challenges are that it cannot be used in isolation because it is always changing."

Strategy specialist: "The benefits are the amount of knowledge you can acquire. The challenge is the security risk that one gets exposed to on social media, like posting something that might bad for Hollard, the reputation risk."

Mentee 1: "It gives us a lot of insight on person's profile. I am able to connect at any time of the day and learn personal attributes."

Mentee 5: "Connecting with people and networking."Mentor 4:. "You can reach a wide audience very quickly."

5.17   SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGES

All participants were asked what challenges do social media tools present. Table 18 below summarises social media challenges and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 18 Social Media Challenges

What are the challenges with using social media?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Risky	2	Addictive	1	Non secure platforms	2
Lack of privacy	2	Cloning of profiles	1	Reputational risk	1
Loosing audiences	1	Not fully optimised	1	Not frequently used	1
Over communication	1	Being Ignored	1	Lack of quality content	1
				Always changing	1
				Cannot be used in isolation	1

Mentor 4: "I have reservation about putting things out there, it's dangerous because once you put something out there everyone will see it so people need to learn to use it safely and wisely."

Mentee 1: "It's not being used enough here at Hollard, we not optimising it fully."

Knowledge management specialist: "I think it helps with building the brand and helps expose the staff to the latest technology which will assist the staff with being aware of what is happening out there and the challenges are that it cannot be used in isolation because it is always changing."

Strategy specialist: "The benefits are the amount of knowledge you can acquire. The challenge is the security risk that one gets exposed to on social media, like posting something that might bad for Hollard, the reputation risk."

5.18   SOCIAL MEDIA AS A KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT TOOL

All participants were asked the same question, on whether social media is a tool to scaffold knowledge management and cultivate a knowledge sharing culture. Table 19 below captured all participants' responses.

TABLE 19 Social Media as a Knowledge Management Tool

Do you see social media as tool to scaffold knowledge management and cultivate a knowledge sharing culture?		
	Agree	**Disagree**
Mentors	2	2
Mentees	5	0
Specialists	5	0

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Mentor 2: "Yes it can but that's a generational question as the older generation will prefer face to face interaction, while the younger generation is more digital communication, short sentences."

Mentor 4: "It enables the sharing of knowledge but it doesn't drive the sharing of knowledge."

Mentee 1: "Yes, if you choose a particular topic you interested in, once you connect with people on that specific site, you will be sent helpful emails on that topic daily. So I think it's important from a technical perspective."

Mentee 3: "Yes, big companies and governments' are using social networks, with social media we get to know about the problems around very fast unlike ten years ago."

Social media specialist: "Yes, through social media lots of information could be saved since lot of information gets lost through email archives."

Knowledge management specialist: "Yes, but I do not see it enhancing knowledge management entirely. I see it as one of the tools that can be used in cultivating knowledge management. It should not be looked at in isolation."

CEO's Office: "Yes but it's a generation thing because young people are more active on social media while older people are a bit conscious about what we put up there."

5.19   PREFERRED COMMUNICATION MEDIUM

All participants were asked what communication medium they prefer using when they have a problem to resolve. Table 20 below summarises preferred communication media and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 20 Preferred Communication Medium

What communication medium do you prefer to use when you have a problem or question that needed to be answered?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Face to face	2	E-mail	4	Written communication	5
Email	2	Face to face	2	Face to face	4
Telephonic conversation	1	Telephonic conversation	1	Telephonic communication	1
Texts	1	Texts	1	Texts	1
		Internet	1	Intranet	1
				Instant messaging	1

Strategy Specialist: "If the problem is transactional then email or OH will do and if it's more personal or needs more explanation, I think face-to-face will work."

Knowledge Management Specialist: "I think it depends on the age on the employee, the older people prefer written communication and face to face while the younger people will prefer SMS and instant messages. Telephonic communication is also preferred the quicker the response the better for the younger generation and us as the older generation we tend to be more patient."

Mentee 1: "I prefer the telephone and secondary the email. With telephone, I can get immediate response and I can clarify and confirm things. I am also able to hear the person's mood over the telephone, while the email is ambiguous."

Mentee 2: "I prefer email and I also like to surf the internet for information."

Mentor 1: "I prefer face to face contact as, using email could turn a ten minutes conversation into a two hour long exchange of emails."

Mentor 4: "We set up meetings with consultants from Deloitte or PWC or where the knowledge resides and debate it out, or email questions or research it if it's a technically problem. I use the internet for easy matters, like leadership stuff

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and team dynamics, as for technical problems, I would go to lawyers and other experts."

5.20   DEFINITION OF TACIT KNOWLEDGE

Tacit knowledge was first defined by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) as "personal knowledge embedded in personal experience and involved intangible factors such as personal belief, perspective and value system." Table 21 below captured all participants' responses.

TABLE 21 Definition of Tacit Knowledge

Personal knowledge embedded in personal experience and involved intangible factors such as personal belief, perspective and value system.		
	Agree	**Disagree**
Mentors	3	1
Mentees	5	0
Specialists	5	0

Mentor 3: "Tacit knowledge is the stuff I can do instinctively."

Knowledge management specialist: "I agree but in my own opinion the knowledge might not be personal because this is based on your experiences, someone might share their experiences with me therefore that do not make it personal. Personal knowledge is different from tacit knowledge."

5.21   BEST WAY S TO TRANSFER TACIT KNOWLEDGE

Mentors and mentees were asked to indicate best ways to transfer tacit knowledge. Table 22 below summarised the best ways to transfer tacit knowledge and the frequency as provided by mentors and mentees.

TABLE 22 Best Ways to Transfer Tacit Knowledge

What do you think is the best way to transfer tacit knowledge?			
Mentors		**Mentees**	
Storytelling	1	Transcribing	2
Literature	1	Literature	1
Information sharing	1	Job shadowing	1
Conversations	1	Face to Face communication	1
Own experiences	1	Exemplary Behaviour	1
		Observation	1

Mentee 2: "I think through consistency and discipline you can transfer tacit knowledge."

Mentee 3: "Job shadowing is an important tool to transfer tacit knowledge in the workplace. Writing down what should be done is also another way of transferring tacit knowledge."

Mentee 5: "If it is a big organisation then it is better to get it into a textbook format and break it down and for a small group/team then personal training will be required and leading by example."

Mentor 1: "Firstly you have to understand where the person is coming from and what their personal beliefs are so that you can know what to share at the right time. Exposure and experience will help the individual but they also need to be very curious. So I believe storytelling is a very powerful tool for this."

Mentor 3: "The best way to transfer tacit knowledge is to walk the walk; you need to experience something in order to own it. A lot of tacit knowledge has to be built experientially, I can only guide you and you will add that to what you already know."

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Mentor 4: "There are different ways to share knowledge, for me I think a conversation works well because you can see when someone gets the concept or idea or to recommend books providing them with literature."

5.22   HOLLARD'S TACIT KNOWLEDGE VISION AND STRATEGY

This question was posed to only the specialists, below are all the responses from the specialists.

Social media specialist: "I know that in the past there was not enough emphasis on that but now it has been corrected and there is of role keeping track of milestones to makes sure they are not forgotten."

Strategy specialist: "Hollard has a big plan on leadership development and Hollard invests a lot in technical training and mentorship."

Mentorship custodian: "This knowledge can be transferred through shadowing, storytelling, documenting and learning through a case study format."

CEO's office: "I don't know it but I know that Hollard had a knowledge management team and part of their job was to make sure that the institutional knowledge is shared on SharePoint. So I honestly don't know what Hollard's vision on tacit knowledge transfer is."

Knowledge management specialist: "I do not think there is a strategy directed specifically to tacit knowledge but there is a strategy directed at knowledge management in general."

5.23   TACIT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN MENTORSHIP

Mentors and mentees were asked whether any tacit knowledge gets transferred during mentorship. Eight out of nine participants believe that a high volume of tacit knowledge was transferred in a mentorship relationship.

Mentor 3: "I think quite a lot of tacit knowledge is transferred and it's more in the quality of questions you ask. Tacit knowledge does not only give you answers, it gives you questions."

Mentor 4: "I share my experiences but not that much knowledge."

Mentee 1: "Yes, definitely a lot of knowledge is transferred as the relationship is very professional and confidential."

Mentee 2: "About 65% because, it is more about the mentors experience and supporting documents such as books and communicating."

5.24   EMPLOYEES WILLINGNESS TO SHARE

This question was posed to only the specialists on whether employees were willing to share their knowledge. All of the specialists agreed that employees are willing to share their knowledge, below are detailed responses from the specialists.

"I think so but it depends on the individual" Social Media Specialist.

"I don't know, some might be willing to share but do not know how to go about sharing or capturing the knowledge" CEO Office.

"Some employees find it difficult to share information. What the strategy for knowledge management at Hollard is trying to say is that, people move away from knowledge is power to knowledge sharing is power. This is to promote the willingness of employees to share knowledge" Knowledge Management Specialist.

5.25   TACIT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PROCESS CHALLENGES

All participants were asked what about what challenges are prevalent in the tacit knowledge transfer process. Table 23 below summarises challenges in the tacit knowledge transfer process and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

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TABLE 23 Challenges in the Tacit Knowledge Transfer Process

What challenges do you think are prevalent within the tacit knowledge transfer process?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Lack of trust	1	Lack of trust	2	Lack of maturity	1
Lack of interest	1	Difficult concepts to transfer	1	Lack of courageous conversations	1
Lack of curiosity	1	Lack of consistency	1	Lack of ability to capture knowledge	1
Inability to directly transfer tacit knowledge	1	Time Constraints	1	Lack of Practise	1
Work commitments	1			Organisational culture	1
				Not personally inclined to share knowledge	1
				Mind sets of individuals	1

"The knowledge can be easily passed but it might not be used properly or retained. There is no forum or regular time for tacit knowledge transfer, it is only transferred at that particular time when needed or required" Social Media Specialist.

"There is an element of maturity required, you need courageous conversations and it is something that needs to be practiced" Strategy Specialist.

"It is never captured, and it is usually shared verbally" CEO Office.

"The challenge can be the culture of the business, does the culture encourage sharing, not necessarily knowledge but other areas of how the business is run. There is also the issue that is the person naturally inclined to share because some people prefer to keep things to them. The challenge is also trying to change the mind-sets because for a long time people have always believed that the more knowledge you had the more powerful you were and now having to

change that mind-set, to sharing your knowledge makes you more powerful" Knowledge Management Specialist.

"It is time consuming, and trust relationship is important in the transfer of knowledge" Mentee 3.

"The challenge is the process as you cannot directly transfer tacit knowledge, might has a negative effect on the business especially if your job is very heavy" Mentor 2.

5.26   USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN MENTORSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

Mentors and mentees were asked to indicate whether they have used social media in any form during their mentorship relationship and if so, to specify what activities enabled it. All mentors suggested that they have not used social media directly in their mentorship relationship, while all mentees suggested that they have used social media in some way during their mentorship relationship.

"No we have never used social media in my mentorship but we have used it as a referral" Mentor 4.

"We used the email but I would have used LinkedIn to communicate with my mentor, if I had known about it during my mentorship. I find very useful" Mentee 1.

"We used it for sourcing of information and communication" Mentee 3.

"Meetings were scheduled using email; I also used the intranet to find certain things" Mentee 5.

5.27   DECISION TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA

All participants were asked whether the decision to use social media in a mentorship relationship was deliberate or incidental.

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Three out of four mentors indicated that the use was incidental while only one mentioned that it was deliberate. "With the first mentorship relationship I think it was incidental, but with my second mentee I formalised it" Mentor 4.

Three out of five used it incidentally and two used it deliberately. "It was deliberate; an agreement was in place from the start" Mentee 3.

All but one specialist believe it should be used deliberately. "We have not used social media that much in mentorship because the mentees and mentors are both on campus, but using it would be incidental" Mentorship Custodian.

"Currently it is used incidentally and it depends on how technologically advanced both the mentor and the mentee are, therefore they will be more open to the use of social media deliberately" Knowledge Management Specialist.

5.28   SOCIAL MEDIA CAPABILITIES USED IN MENTORSHIP

All participants were asked which social media capabilities if any are being used in a mentorship relationship. Table 24 below summarized social media capabilities being used in a mentorship relationship and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 24 Social Media Capabilities Used in Mentorship

Which social media capabilities did you use in the mentorship relationship?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Peer to peer communication	1	Peer to peer communication	2	Peer to peer communication	5
Multimedia usage	1	Networking	1	Networking	5
User generated content	1	Multimedia usage	1	Multimedia usage	5
		User generated content	1	User generated content	4

"It was for user generated content. I would send links to sites which I thought he would like to read at the point in time" Mentor 4.

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"We used peer to peer communication and networking capabilities" Mentee 3.

5.29   BENEFITS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN MENTORSHIP

All participants were asked what benefits are and can be derived by using social media tools in a mentorship relationship. Table 25 below summarizes benefits of using social media tools in a mentorship relationship and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 25 Benefits of Using Social Media in Mentorship

What benefits do you experience with the use of social media in a mentorship relationship?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Social networking	1	Allows networking	1	Ease of sharing information	1
Instantaneous information	1	Instantaneous access to information	1	Fast and efficient	1
Ability to retrieve later	1	Ability to access it at own leisure	1	Ability to refer to useful sites	1
		Reiterates information discussed during sessions	1	Ability to tell stories	1
		Transfer knowledge in real time	1	Ability to learn	1
		Keeps one updated on current matters	1		
		Enhances communication	1		

"One gets to process the information in their own time and its instantaneous" Mentor 4.

"Through social media tacit knowledge can be transferred much faster, in real time, it enhances our physical meetings and reiterates the tacit knowledge that was just passed on "Mentee 1.

"Update on current matters, communication and networking" Mentee 3.

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"Information is shared much easily on social media and with social media your mentor could also advice to follow a particular person on LinkedIn because that could benefit you in a way" Social Media Specialist.

"It depends on which tool is being used; using videos could be beneficiary for both the mentor and mentee" Mentorship Custodian.

"The benefits of telling your story and making it accessible to people because, someone out there might be helped by that story" CEO Office.

5.30 CHALLENGES OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN MENTORSHIP

All participants were asked what challenges are and can be presented by the use of social media tools in a mentorship relationship. Table 26 below summarised challenges of using social media tools in a mentorship relationship and their frequency as provided by mentors, mentees and specialists.

TABLE 26 Challenges of Using Social Media in Mentorship

What challenges do you experience with the use of social media in a mentorship relationship?					
Mentors		**Mentees**		**Specialists**	
Unable to use information properly	**1**	Incorrect usage of information	**1**	Privacy issues	**1**
Slow connection	**1**	Lack of privacy	**1**	Damage to personal brand	**1**
Hard work to manage	**1**	Lack of exposure to social media	**1**		
Time consuming	**1**	Inability to use social media tools	**1**		

"The mentee might not use the information that been sent to him/her properly" Mentor 4.

"It needs to be managed, that is hard work and time consuming" Mentor 1.

"The user knowledge of how to use an application for the first time was a challenge for me in the beginning" Mentee 3.

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"I think there would be more benefits than challenges, for me the only problem would be the lack of privacy experienced on social media" Mentee 2.

"The challenges with social media are the privacy issue and personality brand" CEO Office.

"Both parties learn something from each other in a mentorship and I don't see many challenges besides the generational gap which could be a problem" Knowledge Management Specialist.

5.31 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE TRANSFER OF TACIT KNOWLEDGE

All participants were asked whether social is or will be an effective tool to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship. Table 27 below captured participants' responses.

TABLE 27 Social Media as an Effective Tacit Knowledge Transfer Tool

Social media is an effective tool to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.		
	Agree	**Disagree**
Mentors	3	1
Mentees	4	1
Specialists	5	0

"No, unless it is for communication purposes I do not think it will be effective but it is probably a generational thing" Mentor 1.

"For certain types of people, it is possible and that would be great to follow certain business icons especially if you do not like reading books very much, social media is a quick version" Mentor 3.

"Yes, its portal where people can get together and share information. The internet brings people from different forms of life together" Mentor 4.

"No, in my experience I think you can easily hide the emotions when using social media. With face to face communication, you can see the body language and facial expression. It can be easily falsified and manipulated but as a secondary mechanism, it can be very effective. For example you can use as a substitute in the case you are unable to make it to your meeting on a particular day" Mentee 2.

"Yes, as the links are great and you can read them in your time. Social media enhances the passing on of tacit knowledge but my preference is face to face meetings" Mentee 1.

"Yes, social media is an effective way to transfer tacit knowledge as it gives people more details on how one went about to get where they are today and it also transfers explicit knowledge" Mentee 3.

"It depends on the specific nature of mentorship relationship, if the relationship is more informal it could work" Mentee 5.

"It is effective because through social media information is better archived; it creates a larger opportunity for sharing, it helps break the hierarchical and social boundaries and information is easily shared on social media" Social Media Specialist.

"It is more effective if it is a tool used within mentorship and the use of social media also saves times" Strategy Specialist.

"By recording yourself for reflection, learning and presentation so that your mentor could give you feedback" Mentorship Custodian.

"Yes, because it is useful and accessible. So you just have to pick the relevant information on social media" CEO Office.

"Yes, because I think it offers a user friendly environment where people are comfortable with sharing and people tend to shy away from anything that is formalised. Social media can be a secondary tool used in mentorship but you cannot necessarily have a mentorship via WhatsApp" Knowledge Management Specialist.

5.32 CONCLUSION

This chapter illustrated the raw results from the participants. In some instances, the results were summarised to provide a broader picture and the exact quotes were recorded to strengthen and support the summary.

The results were presented in a manner that clearly depicted common and outlying themes. In the next chapter, further analysis of the results and supporting emerging themes with existing literature, will be presented where possible. Conclusions will also be drawn from the analysis.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1   INTRODUCTION

The following chapter discusses the results shown in Chapter 5 in light of the research questions proposed. The results will be explained against existing literature in order to highlight the key insights obtained through the research that supports the research questions.

The constructs that emerged from the results of the study were firstly examined for underlying perspectives. Next, constructs with similar perspectives were grouped together to form the main themes which are now discussed in detail in this chapter.

The data was collected from three different samples; mentors, mentees and specialists. Therefore, the discussion of results under each research sub-question is a combination of results from all samples. The chapter is structured in such that the research questions are used as sub-headings.

The structure of the chapter has been provided in Figure 1 below. The discussion is broadly divided into the two research questions. The discussion aims to explore the research questions from three perspectives.

The first provides a discussion of activities in a mentorship relationship as viewed by the three different samples as opposed to the literature. The second perspective aims to explore the social media capabilities, exposure to these capabilities and the usage. The final perspective discusses the understanding of the tacit knowledge process and the tools used. These perspectives are discussed under each research question.

Figure 1 Discussion of Results Chapter Layout

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                    ┌──────────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Research Question 1- Is  │        │ Unearthing Activities related │
                    │ Social media an effective│───────▶│ to Mentorship Relationship    │
                    │ mechanism for tacit      │        └──────────────────────────────┘
                    │ knowledge transfer in    │        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │ mentoring relationship?  │───────▶│ Exploration of Social Media   │
                    └──────────────────────────┘        │ Capabilities, Exposure and    │
                                                         │ Usage.                        │
┌─────────────────┐                                     └──────────────────────────────┘
│ Discussion of   │                                     ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│ Results         │─────┐                          ┌───▶│ Understanding the Tacit       │
└─────────────────┘     │                          │    │ Knowledge Transfer Process    │
                        │                          │    │ and Tools.                    │
                        │                          │    └──────────────────────────────┘
                        │   ┌──────────────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                        │   │ Research Question 2- Is  │ │ Unearthing the usage of       │
                        └──▶│ social media being used  │▶│ Social media in a Mentorship  │
                            │ as a deliberate mechanism│ │ Relationship                  │
                            │ for tacit knowledge      │ └──────────────────────────────┘
                            │ transfer in the mentoring│ ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                            │ relationship?            │▶│ Challenges of using Social    │
                            └──────────────────────────┘ │ Media in a Mentorship         │
                                                          │ Relationship                  │
                                                          └──────────────────────────────┘
```

6.2   RESEARCH QUESTION 1

The research question proposed earlier in chapter three was as follows:

Research Question 1- *Is Social media an effective mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in mentoring relationship?*

The following sections explore Hollard's mentorship relationships, the tacit knowledge transfer process and the effectiveness of social media as a mechanism to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

6.2.1   UNEARTHING ACTIVITIES RELATED TO MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP

6.2.1.1   DEFINITION OF MENTORSHIP

Mentorship relationship was defined as a reciprocal and collaborative learning relationship between two individuals who share mutual responsibility and

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accountability for helping a mentee work toward achievement of clear and mutually defined learning goals. (Wiley, 2005).

Table 10 indicates that the majority of respondents across all participants agree with the definition. The minority disagreements were based on the fact that, the responsibility and accountability should not be mutual, but rather the mentee should be responsible for the relationship "Mentorship is where someone who has relevant experience in a particular business, where the business or a subject shares that knowledge with a person who is trying to familiarise themselves with that environment and is largely a guiding relationship. It is owned by the mentee".

The notion that some mentors feel that mentees should be responsible and accountable for the mentorship relationship, can be seen in two ways. Firstly, one might argue that the mentee should dictate what activities should take place and own them. Secondly, the effectiveness of the relationship might be jeopardised if the accountability and responsibilities are not firmly discussed upfront.

6.2.1.2   MENTORSHIP ACTIVITIES

Table 11 indicates activities that take place in a mentorship relationship. The activity with the highest frequency across participants specifically mentors and mentees was face to face meetings. The results in Table 11 (mentorship activities) were analysed and constructs with similar underlying perspectives were grouped together in order to identify common. The following themes emerged and are discussed below.

Constructs	Themes
Face to face meetings	Meetings
Provide Solutions	
Solution Formulation	Problem Solving
Personal problem solving	
Networking	
Relationship Building	Networking

Idea Sharing	
Sharing of ideas	Idea Sharing
Provide sounding board for ideas	
Guidance	
Assist with project management	
Assist with responsibilities and achieving milestones	Guidance
Assignments	
Imparting Skills	
Source of Information	Facilitate Learning
Learning	
Sharing experiences	Transfer
Imparting Knowledge	Knowledge

The constructs are from mentors, mentees and specialists responses. Frequency was not a factor in determining themes, but rather underlying perspectives.

Themes	Hollard Mentorship Activities
Meetings	Skill development
Problem Solving	Knowledge Sharing
Networking	Networking
Idea Sharing	Career Advice
Guidance	
Facilitate Learning	
Transfer Knowledge	

The results suggest that meeting face to face is important in a mentorship relationship. The face to face meeting could be formal or informal. The results seem to concur with (Swap *et al.*, 2001) when they argue that "people drink in knowledge informally and, at times, unconsciously. That is, they learn much incidentally, while eating in the cafeteria, chatting in halls, observing their colleague's and supervisor's behaviour – and through the vicarious experience of others.

The results also seem to suggest a shift in activities in mentorship relationship; they infer a need to gain more out of the mentorship than traditionally envisaged. (Hunt & Michael, 1983) viewed mentorship as an important training and development tool for upward professional progression in organisations. (Raabe & Beehr, 2003) defined mentorship mentoring as having three behaviours or intentions, career development, social support and role modelling.

The results concur with literature but also add new dynamics to mentorship, idea sharing, problem solving, guidance, networking, learning and most importantly knowledge transfer.

6.2.2 EXPLORATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA CAPABILITIES, EXPOSURE AND USAGE

Table 15 indicates social media capabilities as identified by participants. The capability with the highest frequency across participants is networking.

The results in Table 15 were analysed, and constructs with similar underlying perspectives were grouped together in order to identify common themes. These are discussed below.

Constructs	Themes
Networking Building Personal relationships	Networking Capability
Sharing Pictures Multimedia capabilities Data Sharing Sharing information	Information Storing and Sharing Capability
Peer to peer communication Interacting	Communication Capability
User generated capability Collaboration	Collaboration Capability
Learning Capability	Learning Capability
Knowledge sharing	Knowledge transfer Capability

The constructs are from mentors, mentees and specialists responses. Frequency was not a factor in determining themes, but rather underlying perspectives.

Panahi *et al.* (2012) identified the following capabilities:

- User-generated content - social media allows for reading and editing or adding of content to what has been created by someone
- Peer to peer communication - ability to connect user to interact
- Networking - building a community of users
- Multimedia-oriented - applications allowing user to store multiple content, such as audio, video, image and text which allow interaction

The results concur and support what Panahi *et al.* (2012) have identified. Over and above the validation, new themes seem to have emerged. The results have yielded six themes. These themes are further supported by Table 17 (Social Media Benefits) which highlights the benefits derived from these capabilities. Table 16 (Social Media Tools used by Hollard) provides the tools which have been used by participants; these are the tools where capabilities and benefits have been identified and enjoyed.

I. <u>Networking Capability</u>

Networking capability was identified as the most beneficial capability. Results suggest that social media provides the capability to connect and network with people.

"It gives us a lot of insight on person's profile. I am able to connect at any time of the day and learn personal attributes" Mentee 1.

"Connecting with people and networking" Mentee 5.

"You can reach a wide audience very quickly" Mentor 4.

Pirkkalainen and Pawloski (2012) identified building personal networks leading to creation of organisational memory and social presence in knowledge sharing as some of the benefits of the social media networking capability.

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II. Information Storing and Sharing Capability

Panahi *et al*. (2012) identified and defined Multimedia orientation as applications allowing user to store multiple content, such as audio, video, image and text which allow interaction.

From the results it became evident that the definition is still valid, but required an addition. The definition highlights storage and interaction. It was identified, from the results, that social media provides the capability to store, interact and share information through different multi-mediums.

III. Communication Capability

Panahi *et al*. (2012) expressed communication capability as an ability to connect users to interact, this is still the case to date and the results have validated this. It is interesting to note that this capability is vital for internal and external usage.

"Hollard has an online team whose focus is social media within the business and I am not sure what their strategy is but I think it is to communicate with its clients," CEO's office.

Table 20 (Preferred communication Medium) highlighted the preferred communication mediums when there is a problem to be solved. It was interesting to note that apart from face to face and telephonic conversations, the rest of the communication methods are inclined to the use of social media.

IV. Collaboration Capability

Abisoye (2014) highlighted the benefits of social media for employees to include formal training, learning community, networking and collaboration, efficient communication, provides employees with a voice as well as learning and development.

The theme identified around collaboration encapsulates the user generated content theory of Panahi *et al*. (2012) who argued that social media allows for

reading and editing or adding of content to what has been created by someone. The results confirmed this.

V.   <u>Learning Capability</u>

The learning capability comes up as a new theme or new social media capability. It is new in a sense that none of the peer-reviewed literature identified this capability. The views of Abisoye (2014) mentioned that social media benefits for employees include formal training, learning community, as well as learning and development.

VI.   <u>Knowledge Transfer Capability</u>

The other new theme or capability is the knowledge transfer capability. Results suggest that social media has the capability to transfer knowledge. "*The benefits are the amount of knowledge you can acquire*. The challenge is the security risk that one gets exposed to on social media, like posting something that might be bad for Hollard, the reputation risk" Strategy Specialist.

This finding supports the ideology of Swap *et al.* (2001) noting that technology is a role player in mentorship and that "simulations can extend the reach of the expert by providing opportunities for learning by doing in artificial environments. And computer systems can help the apprentice teach the novice(or the journeyman, the apprentice) by providing access to repositories of knowledge that may have little meaning to the uninitiated, but can be interpreted by someone with more experience. Information technology similarly is an indispensable tool for peer mentoring, as groups of physically dispersed individuals come together virtually to share knowledge in communities of practise. " (Swap *et al.*, 2001)

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6.2.3 UNDERSTANDING THE TACIT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER PROCESS AND TOOLS

Tacit knowledge was first defined by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) as "personal knowledge embedded in personal experience and involved intangible factors such as personal belief, perspective and value system." Table 21 indicated that majority of respondents agree with the definition of Tacit knowledge.

Table 22 (Best ways to Transfer Tacit Knowledge) indicated the best ways to transfer tacit knowledge as identified by participants. Transcribing was the method with the highest frequency across participants. The results in Table 22 were analysed and constructs with similar underlying perspectives were grouped together in order to identify common.

The following were the themes that emerged and were discussed:

Constructs	Themes
Exemplary Behaviour Observation Job Shadowing Own experiences	Observation
Face to Face Communication Conversations	Communication
Literature Transcribing Information Sharing	Content Formulation and Reading
Storytelling	Storytelling

The constructs were derived from mentors and mentees responses. Frequency was not a factor in determining themes, but rather underlying perspectives. The responses were from a mentorship perspective only.

I. **Observation**

Observation encompasses job shadowing, where a mentee spends time with the mentor, observing how certain aspects of the job are done and therefore gaining tacit knowledge.

Job shadowing provides insight to "the resources, techniques, and short cuts that make older workers more efficient and productive. Organisations that are successful in managing the transfer of knowledge from older generation to the younger generation of workers will be least vulnerable to an exodus of retiring workers" Burke and Ng (2006, p.88).

The findings concur with Burke and Ng (2006) and indicate that observation through job shadowing is vital in mentorship. Through this process mentors will exhibit exemplary behaviour and mentees will also formulate their own experiences from the process.

"Job shadowing is an important tool to transfer tacit knowledge in the workplace. Writing down what should be done is also another way of transferring tacit knowledge" Mentee 3.

II.   Communication

The findings suggest that face-to-face communication and general conversations are best ways to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

"There are different ways to share knowledge, for me I think a conversation works well because you can see when someone gets the concept or idea or to recommend books providing them with literature". Mentee 4.

"One of the basic rules of knowledge management is that we always know more than we can say and we will always say more than we can write." Snowden (2003). Snowden had identified this as a challenge to the tacit knowledge transfer process. Referring to Table 20 (Preferred Communication Medium) where the preferred communication mediums were highlighted, various methods of communication where highlighted. What was vital to note was that communication could either be written or verbal. In any case, any form of communication is the best way to transfer tacit knowledge.

III. Content Formulation and Reading

Content formulation and reading refers to capturing knowledge from one party into a written format or transcribing and sharing it through literature. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) proposed four patterns of Knowledge transfer of which one of them was externalisation (tacit to explicit) which refers to the creation of explicit knowledge from tacit knowledge through metaphors, analogies, concepts, hypotheses or models.

There is tug of war between Nonaka and Takeuchi's concept and Snowden, where Snowden suggests that content formulation and reading may not be the best way to transfer tacit knowledge. Snowden (2003) argues that: "time pressures on staff mean that even where they can codify they often only able to do a partial job, it is also true that human knowledge is deeply contextual, it is triggered by circumstance, if the author of a document was not properly stimulated at the time of the codification they not remember all of the circumstances that should qualify the application of best practice."

The findings suggest that content formulation is actually one of the best way to transfer tacit knowledge. The reasons cited are that organisations are getting bigger and time constraints are becoming more of bottlenecks.

"If it is a big organisation then it is better to get it into a textbook format and break it down and for a small group/team then personal training will be required and leading by example" Mentee 5.

The conclusion is that content formulation is the best way to transfer tacit knowledge in mentorship relationship, although it has challenges which can be overcome through other resources.

IV. Storytelling

Storytelling is identified as one of the best ways to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship. "Firstly you have to understand where the person is coming from and what their personal beliefs are so that you can know what to share at the right time. Exposure and experience will help the individual but they

also need to be very curious. *So I believe storytelling is a very powerful tool for this*".

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) proposed four patterns of Knowledge transfer of which one of them was socialisation - (tacit to tacit) which refers to tacit knowledge transfer among group members through shared experience, observation, simulation and reflection aiming to create tacit knowledge. Panahi *et al.* identified one of the tacit knowledge properties as knowledge that can be transferred through conversation and narrative (storytelling discussions, etc.).

Swap *et al. (*2001) explored tools that can enable mentoring to be more efficient for both the mentor and the mentee. They mentioned how story telling can be beneficial in a mentorship relationship.

The findings therefore concur with different authors that storytelling is one of the best ways to transfer tacit knowledge.

6.2.4 CONCLUSION

The study aimed to answer the question *Is Social media an effective mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in mentoring relationship?* Table 27 (Social Media as an Effective Tacit Knowledge Transfer Tool) suggest that the answer is "Yes".

The affirmative answer to this question is supported by the findings discussed above. In summary, the study looked at the connection between the three variables, mentorship, social media and tacit knowledge.

In mentorship the findings suggested that meeting, problem solving, networking, idea sharing, guidance, facilitation of learning and transfer of knowledge are all activities that should take place in a mentorship. This is the expectation from mentors, mentees and specialists.

In social media the findings suggested that, social media provides networking capability, information storing and sharing capability, communication capability, collaboration capability, learning capability and knowledge transfer capability.

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In the tacit knowledge the findings suggested that observation, communication, content formulation and reading and storytelling and the best ways to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

Swap *et al.* (2001) identified technology as a role player in mentorship, they briefly point out that "simulations can extend the reach of the expert by providing opportunities for learning by doing in artificial environments. And computer systems can help the apprentice teach the novice (or the journeyman, the apprentice) by providing access to repositories of knowledge that may have little meaning to the uninitiated, but can be interpreted by someone with more experience. Information technology similarly is an indispensable tool for peer mentoring, as groups of physically dispersed individuals come together virtually to share knowledge in communities of practice".

Panahi *et al.* (2012) mentioned that not all social media capabilities are required in the knowledge transfer process; the required ones "are the capabilities of social media that encourage, support, and enable people to share their knowledge easily and effectively through different mechanisms".

One of the best ways to transfer tacit knowledge was identified as storytelling, which requires communication. Social media provides the communication capability, meaning that tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship can be transferred using social media.

Findings have provided evidence that Social media is an effective mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in mentoring relationship.

6.3   RESEARCH QUESTION 2

The second research question proposed earlier in chapter three was as follows:

Research Question 2- *Is social media being used as a deliberate mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in the mentoring relationship?*

The following sections explore the usage of social media as mechanism to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentoring relationship at Hollard.

6.3.1 UNEARTHING USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN A MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that social media is an effective tool to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship. Mentors and mentees were asked to indicate whether they have used social media in any form during their mentorship relationship and in what activities. All mentors suggested that they have not used social media directly in their mentorship relationship, while all mentees suggested that they have used social media in some way during their mentorship relationship.

 "*No we have never used social media in my mentorship but we have used it as a referral*" Mentor 4.

"*We used the email but I would have used LinkedIn to communicate with my mentor, if I had known about it during my mentorship. I find very useful,*" Mentee 1.

Where social media was used in a mentorship, the findings suggest that it was predominantly incidental, than deliberate usage.

Table 24 (Social Media Capabilities Used in Mentorship) highlights social media capabilities that were used when social media was used in a mentorship relationship. This supports the notion that social media capabilities provide benefit to the mentoring relationship.

Table 25 (Benefits of Using Social Media in Mentorship) reiterates that when social media is used there are multiple benefits that can be derived which escalate the effectiveness of social media in a mentorship relationship.

6.3.2 CHALLENGES OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN A MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP

Table 26 (Challenges of Using Social Media in Mentorship) indicate the challenges as result of using social media in mentorship relationship as identified by participants.

The results in Table 26 were analysed and constructs with similar underlying perspectives were grouped together in order to identify common. The following are the themes that emerged and are discussed below.

Constructs	Themes
Privacy issues	
Lack of Privacy	Lack of Privacy and Control
Damage to personal brand	
Inability to use social media tools	
Lack of exposure to social media	
Unable to use the information properly	Skills and Exposure
Incorrect usage of information	
Slow connection	
Time Consuming	Accessibility
Hard work to manage	

The constructs are from mentors, mentees and specialists responses. Frequency was not a factor in determining themes, but rather underlying perspectives. The responses were from a mentorship perspective only.

"The user knowledge of how to use an application for the first time was a challenge for me in the beginning" Mentee 3.

"I think there would be more benefits than challenges, *for me the only problem would be the lack of privacy experienced on social media*" Mentee 2.

"*The challenges with social media are the privacy issue and personality brand*" Office of the CEO.

In this case the challenges identified by Pirkkalainen and Pawloski (2012) are kept the same. They also identified challenges as privacy, security, misuse, administration effort and unwillingness to share. The findings suggest new themes around skills and exposure.

The observation made around skills and exposure is that is seems to be a generational gap. "Both parties learn something from each other in a mentorship and I don't see many challenges besides the *generational gap which could be a problem*" Knowledge Management Specialist.

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The demographic of the participants were not a determining factor, but from observations mentors were slightly older than mentees and their age is between late forties to early fifties, whilst the mentees were late twenties and early thirties. This finding suggests that older participants and generally older employees in the organisation might not be inclined to use social media.

When asked if social media is an effective mechanism to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship this response was provided "No, unless it is for communication purposes I do not think it will be effective but it is probably a generational thing" Mentor 1.

This highlights that the generational gap as a contributor skills and exposure is real. Further to these findings, emerging themes for not using social media in a mentorship is that social media cannot be used as a primary mechanism but rather as a secondary or supporting mechanism in the tacit knowledge process.

"No, in my experience I think you can easily hide the emotions when using social media. With face to face communication, you can see the body language and facial expression. It can be easily falsified and manipulated *but as a secondary mechanism, it can be very effective. For example you can use as a substitute in the case you are unable to make it to your meeting on a particular day"* Mentee 2.

"Yes, because I think it offers a user friendly environment where people are comfortable with sharing and people tend to shy away from anything that is formalised. *Social media can be a secondary tool used in mentorship but you cannot necessarily have a mentorship via WhatsApp*" Knowledge Management Specialist.

This is the same view that Snowden (2003) acknowledges that mentors provide a functionality of connecting people and transferring knowledge however there are new tools that can allow us elevate the transfer of knowledge and social media is one of them, but it cannot entirely replace the mentorship process.

6.4   CONCLUSION

The study aimed to answer the question *is social media being used as a deliberate mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in the mentoring relationship?*

The findings suggest that the answer is "No" social media is not used as deliberate mechanism for tacit knowledge transfer in mentorship relationship due to various reasons. Due to perceived lack of stringent measures around privacy and control, mentorship participants do not use the social media in their activities. Because of perceived efforts required to access social media, the deliberate usage is forgone. Most importantly lack of skills and exposure to social media hinders the deliberate usage.

Social media is not used deliberately in a mentorship relationship but used incidentally and when used the benefits are visible and acknowledged.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1   INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the results from the data against existing literature and the research question. This chapter revisits research objectives at the outset of the report and compares these against the findings. The chapter further aims to consolidate all the discussion and results into a set of key findings.

This chapter provides a view on the implications to business practises. The chapter concludes with limitations of the research, and provides implications and suggestions for future research in the current and corresponding domains.

7.2   RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Literature review has indicated social media has capabilities that encourage, support, and enable people to share their knowledge easily and effectively through different mechanisms.

There is a need to explore these capabilities and features further to establish if they can assist in some of the challenges identified by Snowden (2003) in the transfer of tacit knowledge. Snowden (2003) highlighted the need to explore these capabilities; he mentioned that "too many people focus on managing knowledge rather than managing the channels through which knowledge flows." He further commented that "just connecting or linking people can be a major knowledge management activity."

The objective is to explore the role of social media in connecting people and transferring of tacit knowledge, specifically in the mentorship relationship.

Snowden (2003) acknowledges that mentors provide a functionality of connecting people and transferring knowledge however there are new tools that can allow us elevate the transfer of knowledge. This is a view shared by Swap *et al.* (2001) that "Simulations can extend the reach of the expert by providing opportunities for learning by doing in artificial environments. And computer

systems can help the apprentice teach the novice (or the journeyman, the apprentice) by providing access to repositories of knowledge that may have little meaning to the uninitiated, but can be interpreted by someone with more experience. Information technology similarly is an indispensable tool for peer mentoring, as groups of physically dispersed individuals come together virtually to share knowledge in communities of practice. "

There is no doubt that mentoring facilitates the transfer of tacit knowledge. 'The mentoring process fits the description of both socialization (sharing experiences) and internalization (embodying explicit knowledge into tacit and learning by doing)," Swap *et al.* (2001). There is however a need to explore what role can social media plays in the transfer of tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship.

7.3   KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Two research questions were explored. The first, exploring the current usage of social media as a tacit knowledge transfer mechanism in a mentorship relationship. The second exploring whether social media is an effective tacit knowledge transfer mechanism in a mentorship relationship.

7.3.1   USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN A MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP

In analysing the research question on the current usage of social media as a tacit knowledge transfer tool in a mentorship relationship, it was found that social media is being used in a mentorship relationship.

The current usage of social media is not deliberate but rather incidental. Social media is not a formalised mechanism in mentorship relationship. Although the usage is incidental, there are various benefits that are derived. What is important is to note the reasons for not using social media in a mentorship relationship.

Lack of privacy and control were identified as reasons that highlighted the fear personal and organisational brand damage and misuse of personal information. Accessibility was another reason, it highlighted not having access to various

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social media tools and slow connectivity as major hindrances to the usage of social media.

Lack of skills and exposure was a major finding. It highlighted that certain participants in a mentorship relationship were not exposed to different social media platform and did not have the necessary skills or knowledge to use those platforms. The main contributor was also the generational gap. The younger generation in mentorship relationship are inclined to use social media, while the older generation had a rather lower appetite to facilitate mentorship using social media.

7.3.2 EEFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS TACIT KNOWLEDGE MECHANISM IN A MENTORSHIP RELATIONSHIP

In analysing the research question focusing on whether social media is an effective mechanism to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship, it was found that to effectively use social media, it was important to first understand all the variables.

These variables included understanding (1) mentorship activities, (2) social media capabilities and (3) Best ways to transfer tacit knowledge.

1. Mentorship Activities

The findings yielded the following mentorship activities:

- Meetings
- Problem Solving
- Networking
- Idea Sharing
- Guidance
- Facilitate Learning
- Transfer Knowledge

The characteristics of these activities are important to note. All activities require one or more participants. That is the activity is impossible to accomplish with only one party. The second characteristic is that in all activities an exchange or transfer exists from one source to the other.

Figure 2 below aims to summarise the characteristics of mentorship activities.

Figure 2 Mentorship Activities Characteristics

Mentee

Meeting

Problem Solving

Networking

Idea Sharing

Guidance

Facilitate Learning

Transfer Knowledge
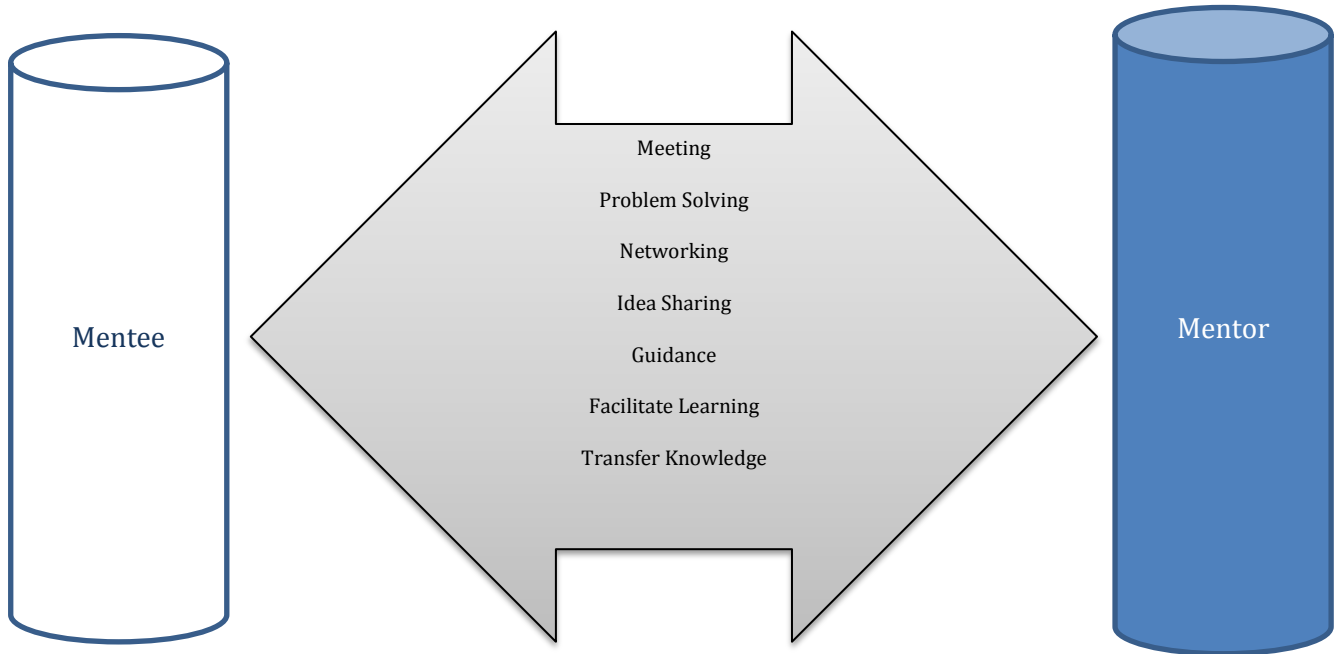
Mentor

In a mentorship relationship, a mentor and mentee exist and they engage in activities together. The direction of exchange is not one dimensional but happens to be from and to both directions. For instance the guidance can be provided by the mentor and also by the mentee in mentorship relationship. The findings indicated that these activities happen in vacuum, they are not stored anywhere. Using the example of guidance, what if has been shared between the two remains only between the two.

2. Social Media Capabilities

In analysing social media the finding yielded the following capabilities

- Networking Capability
- Information Storing and Sharing Capability
- Communication Capability
- Collaboration Capability
- Learning Capability
- Knowledge Transfer Capability

The capabilities display similar characteristics to the mentorship activities, especially around the existence of two or more participants. What this implies is

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that if social media is used in mentorship, both participants should use it. The information storing and sharing capability is important; it is visible in all capabilities. For example whether two participants are using the collaboration capability, information is shared and stored by social media.

Figure 3 below aims to summarise the characteristics of social media capabilities.

Figure 3 Social Media Characteristics
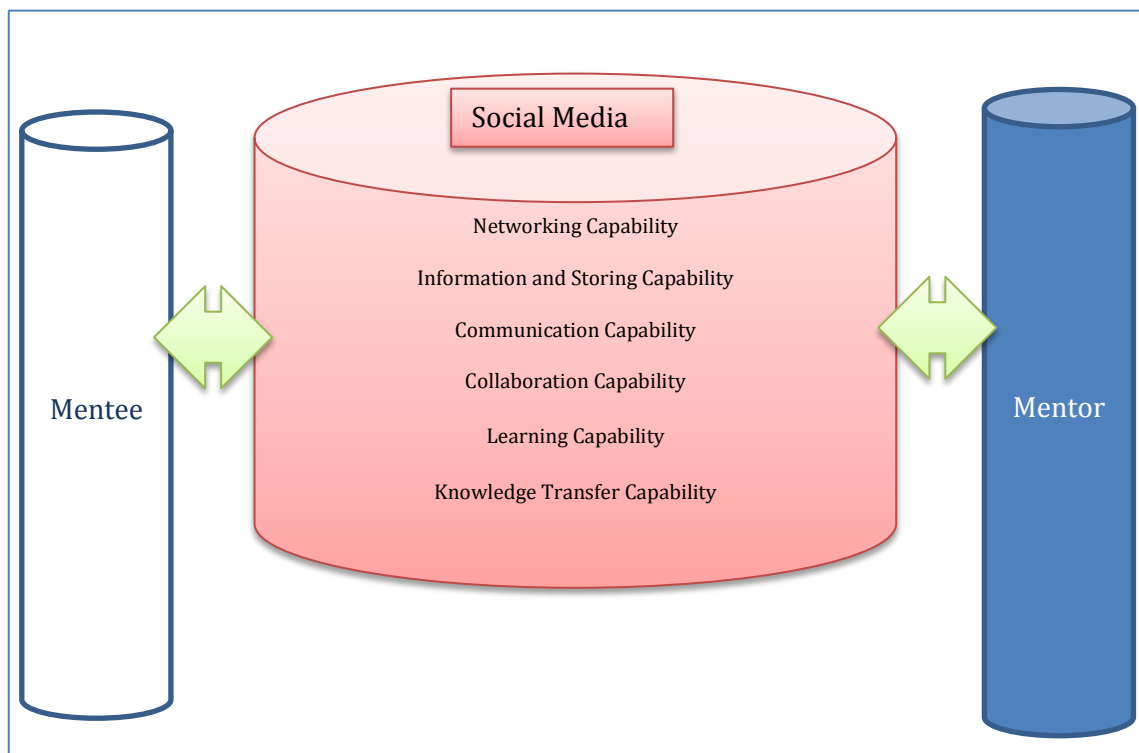
Social media provides the mentor and mentee with different capabilities in their mentorship relationship. These capabilities assist in facilitating the mentorship activities, but most importantly assist store information and knowledge for future usage. Future usage is not only limited to the mentor and mentee but other external participants. Social media provides easy access to knowledge captured by either mentor or mentee and also knowledge captured and stored by other. It is the effective in transferring tacit knowledge, either used as a primary or secondary mechanism.

3. Best Ways to Transfer Tacit Knowledge

In analysing best ways to transfer tacit knowledge, the following were identified:

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- Observation
- Communication
- Content Formulation and reading
- Storytelling

It is evident that these ways are already encapsulated in the mentorship activities. Therefore mentorship seems to be the best way to transfer tacit knowledge. All mentorship activities have the capability to transfer tacit knowledge.

Social media capabilities are able to facilitate mentorship activities, therefore while social media cannot independently transfer tacit knowledge, it is an effective mechanism in the tacit knowledge transfer process as it helps facilitate mentorship activities, which are best ways to transfer tacit knowledge.

Figure 4 below illustrates how social media facilitates mentorship activities and therefore becoming an effective mechanism to transfer tacit knowledge in mentorship relationship.

Figure 4 Social Media as an Effective Mechanism to Facilitate Mentorship Model
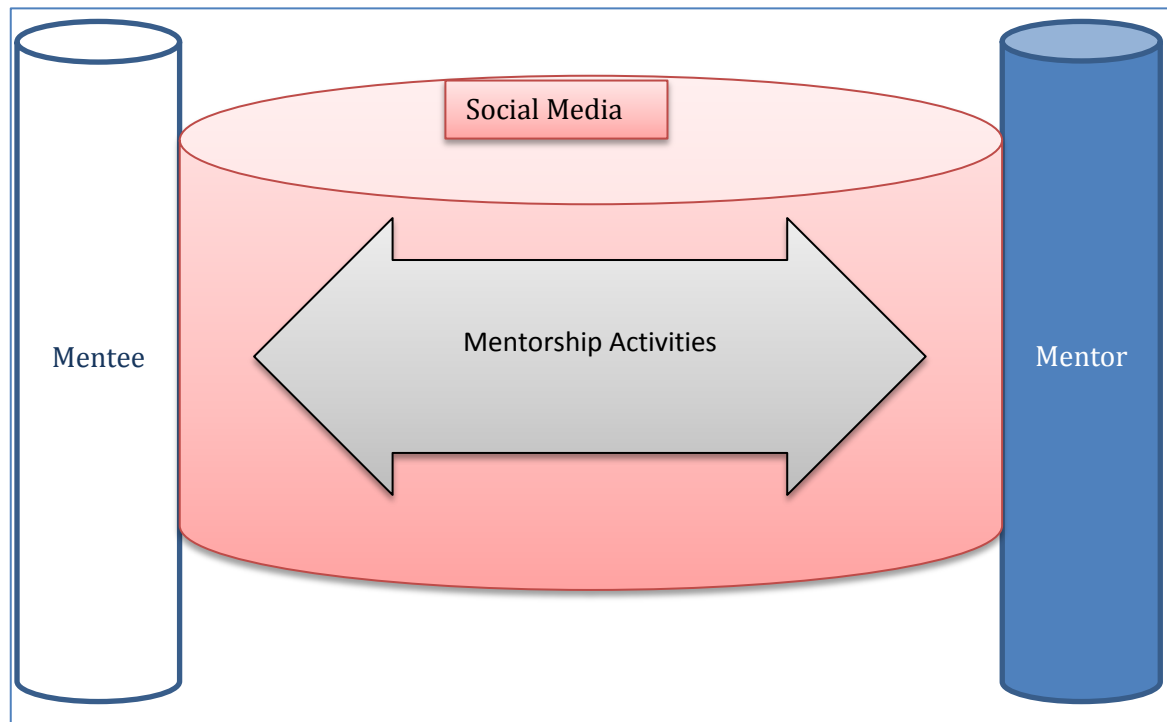
7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUSINESS

Social Media is an exciting phenomenon and platform for doing business; it provides significant capabilities that business can use, both externally and internally. Mentorship is one of the best ways to transfer tacit knowledge in an organisation. Combining social media and mentorship could prove very beneficial for individuals involved and for the business at large.

Figure 4 provides a framework that business can adopt to improve or implement their existing traditional mentorship programs. By adopting this model businesses will be exposed to social media as an effective facilitator of mentorship activities. Businesses will also be exposed to the benefit of storing tacit knowledge for future usage and exposed to sharing the tacit knowledge with the broader community. An example of this is with new recruits into the business, who may get accelerated exposure to the business culture and ways of doing things in their new environment, accelerating assimilation and integration into the business.

In addition to the framework, the other recommendations specific to business include (1) accelerating employee exposure to social media (2) identifying and addressing security concerns and privacy gaps.

The first recommendation is accelerating employee exposure to social media. There are a number of considerations for this recommendation. Business needs to identify and adopt social media platforms to use internally and expose employees to. Educate staff on the benefits of using such social media platforms in and out of the mentorship relationship. Bridge any generational gap between users and maybe introduce mentorship focusing on social media. That is the social media inclined users mentor the less knowledgeable users of social media.

The second recommendation requires business to review internal social media security to ensure participants are not exposed to any situation that might bring their career or right to voice ideas at risk. Mentorship was seen as a safe environment to generate ideas and speak freely, social media should provide the same platform. Business should look at user friendly and less time

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consuming social media platform to use internally to promote employee engagement and willingness to use social media platforms.

The final recommendation is around implementing a mentorship portal. The portal can be housed in the organisations internal social media platform. The portal will allow mentorship participants to engage, network share information and store valuable knowledge for future users. The portal will need to be secure and provide privacy where participants could remain anonymous or use different names to their real names. Non-mentorship participants can also be allowed limited access that could encourage them to participate in the mentorship program in future

7.5   LIMITATIONS

The findings provided in the research form a descriptive view of the phenomena surrounding mentorship relationship, social media capabilities and tacit knowledge transfer. With the nature of the research being qualitative, there are limitations on the ability to infer these findings onto a greater population. The findings describe the particular constructs that were evident in the research, but further quantitative analysis is required to test these constructs.

A further limitation is sample size. The sample size was restricted to one firm, in South Africa which is an emerging economy. This limits the extent to which the research can be generalised and used in other countries and markets.Using one organisation as a case study limits the extent to which findings came be used across other businesses, the reliability of the data could have been improved with additional organisations used as case studies. Organisations from different industries would have provided greater data diversity.

The final limitation is regarding the researcher's bias. Due to the exploratory and interview based design of the research, there is a risk of personal bias a result of personal perceptions, assumptions and interpretation. In order to minimise this bias, the interviews were transcribed and triangulation of findings across the sample with literature was used to support findings.

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7.6   IMPLICATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Following the limitations above are recommendations for future research. As indicated on limitations, broadening the sample size in terms of countries, markets, industries and organisations will be one recommendation.

Panahi *et al*. (2012) identified social media capabilities and this research validated and identified additional social media capabilities. The recommendation for future studies includes focusing on testing the applicability of these capabilities - conducting a study on whether these capabilities have been applied or not and establish if there would be any differences.

None of the literature identified generational gaps as a hindrance to the use of social media in mentorship. The recommendation is to explore whether the speed of social media development has any impact on the usage of social media, are people struggling to keep up with social media advancements or not?

The current research further validated Snowden (2003) acknowledgement that mentors provide a functionality of connecting people and transferring knowledge however there are new tools that can allow us elevate the transfer of knowledge. This is a view shared by Swap *et al*. (2001) that simulations can extend the reach of the expert by providing opportunities for learning by doing in artificial environments. Future research should focus on implementation, identify and review best practise, either best mentorship practises and/or social media practices.

7.7   CONCLUSION

Tacit knowledge has been identified as a difficult form of knowledge to transfer. Over the years, mentorship has been seen as an effective mechanism for the transfer of tacit knowledge. The emergence and advancement of social media has provided organisations with a pleathora of benefits, such as information storage and ease of sharing information. One subject that requires exploration was utilising social media capabilities to facilitate mentorship.

The scope of the research has specifically focused on the transfer of tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship and the role that social media plays in this process. A sample of 14 individuals, mentorship participants and specialist were used in this research and in depth interview based on qualitative design followed, to best understand how social media becomes an effective mechanism in the tacit knowledge transfer process in a mentorship relationship.

Through data and literature analysis, specific themes were discovered that support and build on the theory surrounding social media capabilities, mentorship activities and tacit knowledge transfer process. These findings were further distilled into a number of recommendations on how organisations can use social media as an effective mechanism in the tacit knowledge transfer process. Social media can be used as facilitator of mentorship activities, providing the benefits of storage and sharing.

Looking ahead, many opportunities exist to explore this area of research further. Organisations are encouraged to accelerate exposure and social media skills, improve accessibility and social media security. Organisations are encouraged not to only focus on the external usage of social media but also internal usage to facilitate employee engagement and tacit knowledge sharing.

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Dear Participant

Research Interview Guide

I am conducting a study into the role of social media in the transfer of tacit knowledge especially in a mentorship relationship. The research is driven by a need to understand the best methods of transferring tacit knowledge within the organisation, and to test if social media can play a role in the process. It is recognised that the experience and knowledge that is transferred through mentorship is extremely valuable.

Your participation in this research will lead to academic outputs that will help better understand the use of social media in a mentorship relationship.

Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and all information will be treated as confidential. The estimated interview period is one (1) hour. You have the right to withdraw at any stage of the interview. All data will be aggregated through statistical processes and no individual data will be reported.

The research will be conducted under the auspices of the Gordon Institute of Business Science of the University of Pretoria and will comply with the University of Pretoria's ethical requirements.

You may contact My Supervisor Roy Page- Shipp roy@pageshipp.co.za for further discussion or queries.

Yours Sincerely

Zanele Mahlangu

Section A – Mentorship- A tool /process used to transfer knowledge from one individual to the other

1. Do you agree or disagree with the above definition and why?
2. Please describe any activities in your mentorship relationship, and how frequent with these? E.g. meeting etc.
3. Do you see mentorship as tool to scaffold knowledge management and cultivate a knowledge sharing culture?
4. Please describe some of the benefits and challenges experienced in a mentorship relationship?

Section B – Social Media

5. Have you heard of the term "Social media" and what is your understanding of social media?
6. What social media tools have you been exposed to and have used? E.g. twitter. SMS
7. What capabilities have you identified from these social media tools?
8. What type of Social media tools are used by Hollard and which ones do you frequently use?
9. What benefits and challenges do you experience with social media tool?
10. Is social media a better tool in scaffolding knowledge management and cultivating knowledge sharing culture?
11. What communication medium do you prefer to use when you have a problem or question that needed to be answered?

Section C – Tacit Knowledge

Is the knowledge that resides in each human; knowledge from past experiences, knowledge shaped by values and beliefs, knowledge that can be transferred from human to human through sharing experiences, through observation, simulation and reflection?

12. Do you agree or disagree with the above definition and why?
13. What do you think is the best way to transfer tacit knowledge?
14. What is the degree of tacit knowledge transferred during mentorship?
15. What challenges do you think are prevalent within the tacit knowledge transfer process?

Section D – Social Media, Tacit knowledge and Mentorship

16. Please describe how have you used social media in your mentorship relationship?
17. In what activities in your mentorship did you use the social media?
18. How would you describe the use of social media in your mentorship relationship, is/was it deliberate or incidental?
19. Which capabilities of social media did you use in the mentorship relationship?
20. What benefits and challenges do you experience with the use of social media in a mentorship relationship?
21. In what way have you been able to transfer tacit knowledge in mentorship using social media?
22. Did/ do you find social media as an effective mechanism for the transfer of tacit knowledge? In what way?
23. In your opinion which social media capabilities do you think are needed to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship?

Section A – Mentorship- A tool /process used to transfer knowledge from one individual to the other

1. Do you agree or disagree with the above definition and why?
2. Please describe the organisations vision on mentorship?
3. Please describe what activities should take place in a mentorship relationship?
4. How frequent should these activities be?
5. Please describe ideal nature mentorship? Should it be formal or informal?
6. Do you see mentorship as a knowledge transfer tool? In what way?
7. What challenges do you think are present in a mentorship relationship?
8. What benefits are derived from mentorship?

Section B – Social Media

9. What is your understanding of social media?
10. What social media tools have you been exposed to and have used? E.g. twitter. SMS
11. What capabilities have you identified from these social media tools?
12. Please describe the organisations social media vision and strategy?
13. Please describe your own organisations internal social media tools that you familiar with?
14. Please describe the organisation's social media activities?
15. What challenges do you experience with social media tool, personally and as an organisation?
16. What benefits do you derive from social media, personally and as an organisation?
17. Do you see social media as a knowledge transfer tool within the organisation? In what way?

Section C – Tacit Knowledge

18. What is your understanding of tacit knowledge?
19. What would you say are the differences between explicit and tacit knowledge?
20. What is the organisation's strategy and vision around tacit knowledge transfer?
21. What is the degree of tacit knowledge transferred during mentorship?
22. What challenges do you think are prevalent within the tacit knowledge transfer process?

Section D – Social Media, Tacit knowledge and Mentorship

23. Please describe how social media is being used in mentorship relationship?
24. In what mentorship activities do you think social media is being used?
25. How would you describe the use of social media in a mentorship relationship, is it deliberate or incidental?
26. Which capabilities of social media are being used in a mentorship relationship?
27. What organisational challenges do you experience with the use of social media in a mentorship relationship?
28. What organisational benefits do you derive from using social media in a mentorship relationship?
29. In what way has the organisation been able to transfer tacit knowledge in mentorship using social media?
30. Did/ do you find social media as an effective mechanism for the transfer of tacit knowledge? In what way?
31. In your opinion which social media capabilities do you think are needed to transfer tacit knowledge in a mentorship relationship?

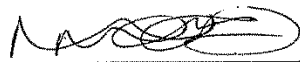Hollard.

Consent Letter

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

This letter serves to confirm that Zanele Mahlangu (Researcher) has been granted permission to use Hollard Insurance as a case study as part of his research in fulfilling the requirements of the **Masters in Business Administration Degree**

The topic of the research is **Tacit knowledge transfer and mentorship: The role of social media**

Any information gathered by the researcher will be used for research purposes only.

Yours sincerely,

LAURETTE MAKHUBELE(MS)

HR MANAGER