GEN Y: SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND OUTCOMES AMONG KUIS FOUNDATION STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Social media usage has become the most popular activity on the web. There are a combined of 2.3 billion registered users for the ten most popular social networking websites worldwide (Socialnomics.net 2011). It is therefore to say the social media are technologies that have revolutionized the way people communicate and interact in their daily life. The purpose of this study was to examine the usage of social media among foundation students as they are considered the Y generation. It was also to show the usage of social media in a campus environment can have outcomes to the students. This study was developed based on the user and gratification theory (Blumler & Kartz, 1974). Two variables have been used; usage and outcomes. Relationships between usage of social media and the outcomes were examined. In this study, a survey was administered to a sample of 185 foundation students at Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (KUIS) on social media usage, purpose of social media usage and the outcomes of social media use specifically in academic performance. Findings indicated that all of the sampled foundation students were using at least one form of social media website. Findings disclosed that there is a positive relationship exists between purpose of social media usage and its outcomes on students' academic performance.

Keywords: Social media, usage and outcomes, generation Y, foundation students

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of social media usage is becoming an agenda and issue being concerned by many researchers globally. There are several researches have been done on this issue such as the study about outcomes of social media (Jacobsen and Forste, 2011), the youth and technology (Lenhart, Madden and Hitlin, 2005) and so forth. The social media has changed the landscape of people communication, from face-to-face communication to Computer-mediated Communication (CMC). Social media has become more than just how people keep in touch with their friends online rather it has changed the way people communicate and how they go about their daily lives. The utilization of social media offers a variety of outcomes including the opportunities, treats, interactive and the likes. Thus, social media has considered as a category of online discourse where people create content, share it and bookmark it.

Social media usage is not limited. University students increasingly join, spectate, comment, criticize, upload and share all the manner of social media to facilitate their academic success. It is therefore to say that university students form a large proportion of users on social media networks. Given the ubiquity of social media in today's environment, it should come as no surprise that students in connected places are drawn to using the technologies, even when they 'should' be doing other tasks (Block 2008 and Young, 2008). It is a common sense that a major drawback of this social media usage is the amount of time spent with it (Wang, Chen and Liang, 2011). The time they spent give an impact towards their activities and access to media is an indicator to the gap of the digital divide in communication technology (Van Dijk, 2005). It is therefore to look at the outcomes of social in the live of youth, related with their academic performances.

2. Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study is to explore the nature of social media use and its outcomes among KUIS foundation students. The specific objectives of the study are: (1) To explore the popularity of the social media sites among youth; (2) To determine the level of social media use among youth; (3) To find out the purpose of social media use among youth; and (4) To analyze the relationship between the outcomes of social media use in academic performance. Ali Salman, Mohd Yusof Abdullah, Mohd Safar Hasim and Latiffah Pawanteh (2010 as cited in Saodah Wok et.al, 2012) indicated that young generation heavily gratified to social media because they might think social media benefited them in various aspects, either positive or negative. Thus, the aim of this paper is to examine the usage of social media among youth and to show how the usage of social media in a campus environment can have outcomes to the students. Therefore, the following research questions are to be answered:

RQ1: What is the most popular social media site among foundation students?

RQ2: What is the extent of usage of social media among foundation students?

RQ3: What are the purposes of social media use among foundation students?

RQ2: What are the outcomes of social media use on students' academic performance?

3. Literature review

3.1 Social Media Use

Social media has considered as a category of online discourse where people create content, share it and bookmark it as well as focusing on creating networks or social relationships among people. These sites basically enable any information-sharing activities such as sharing interests and current issues as well (Saodah Wok et.al 2012). Facebook, for instance offers an online platform on which users create profile, leave comments, generate and share ideas, and interact with others (Byod and Ellison, 2008). Since its inception in 2004, Facebook is quickly has become a fundamental tool for social interaction, personal identity and the development of networks among students. This indicates a very advanced development of new technological innovations whenever there are a positive reaction and supportive from users of the Internet, particularly social media.

Besides, the popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blog and the rest gave an effort to develop an appropriate local social network that suits with the content and users in Malaysia (Siti Eizaleila and Azizah, 2010). This provides a new alternative in the interaction and communication through virtual space. Generally, the existence of social networking sites have been used by all strata of society including the students, housewives, workers in the public or private sectors. This indicates a very advanced development of new technological innovations whenever there are a positive reaction and supportive from users of the Internet, particularly social media. Furthermore, Rosmawati (2011) explains the advantages of social networking sites that make it a choice of Internet users today is due to easily create personal information in each user profile as well as communication with various activities. This allows users to be active in virtual communication and share ideas individually. In addition, the user is free to express their thoughts and ideas through their writings on social sites.

3.2 Generation Y

According to Rosen (2011), those born between 1965-1979 ('Generation X') consumed approximately 13 hours of social media per day; those born between 1980-1989 ('Net Generation') consumed approximately 19 hours of social media per day; and those born between 1990-1999 ('I Generation') consumed approximately 20 hours of social media per day. This was based on a study done in terms of daily use of all social media collectively. Statistically, a child born between 1980-1990's was classified as Generation Y. However, there are many more terms have been used to describe the generation, for example, Millennial, Y Generation, Generation We.

Although, the term Generation Y is used worldwide, however defining the birth dates causes much debate globally. United State of America (USA), Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) all have a variety of year's difference when statistically analyzing this generation. The Australian Bureau of statistics class Generation Y as a child born between 1983 – 2000 whereas the UK & U.S tend to classify the generation as between 1980-1990's (Gibson, 2013). This generation was born into an emerging world of technology and these figures represent self-reported collective use of all forms of social media including television, cell phone usage, Internet usage, computer tablets, laptops, music iPads, texting, video games, and social media sites.

3.3 Social Media and Generation Y

According to Jacobsen and Forste (2011), the current college student population is more digitally active than any previous generation. They are connected to each other via electronic media such as the use of e-mail, instant messaging (IM), cellular phone communication, social-networking sites (SNSs), video or online games, and television or movie viewing. Thus, it is undeniable to say that the use of social media also very much related with youth and college students because they are the Y generation. This is correlates with Kohurt et.al (2011) in which they indicated that the Generation Next includes those Americans between the ages of 18 and 25 years old. Therefore, youth at this ranking age are the people who engaged with electronic media, specifically the social media.

Additionally, according to Chen and Bryer (2012), in a recent study, Facebook has over 750 million users worldwide in terms of membership and daily usage; LinkedIn over 100 million members; Twitter having over 177 million tweets per day; and YouTube having over 3 billion views each day. Amongst those to use social media sites were young adults between the ages of 18-29 (Rainie, 2011). Besides, social media sites have become a global phenomenon in the past few years. Boyd (2007), stated that social media sites were first started as a hobby to some computer literate people and latter has become a social norm and way of life for people around the globe. Teenagers and youth especially students have embraced these sites as a way to connect with their family, relatives and friends. With social media like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, they could share information, post and comment photos of their daily activities. Study has been repeatedly found to be the highest among students who spend a lot of time on social media site creating profile, updating or doing research concerning their career or academic work, while some just use it to chat with friends, post latest pictures of event they attended. Young et al., (2009) have examined these users interact with others, exchange information about their interests, and raise discussions about new topics, follows news about specific topics on different social media sites.

Meanwhile, youth in Nigeria also use social networking to suffice their social needs like friendship. They are motivated and goal-oriented to preserve their self-confidence. Their main sharing activities are mostly on entertainment and friendship. From statistics, about 1.7 million Nigerians are on Facebook. From most of the research it could be concluded that Facebook currently is among the most preferred social media site for the youth (Anderson, Fagan, Woodnutt, & Chamorro-Premuzie, 2012 as cited in Saodah Wok, 2012). In Malaysia, studies show that Malaysian youth primarily share thoughts and feelings through social media sites. A study by Saodah Wok et.al (2012) also indicated that almost all the youths, who have social media sites, 95.3% are subscribed to Facebook, followed by 75.1% closely to Yahoo mail and 42% to Skype. This means that the most popular new social media among youth is Facebook.

People use social media for several purposes and these purposes give benefits such as encouraging greater social interaction via electronic mediums, providing greater access to information and information sources, encouraging creativity among and between individuals and groups, creating a sense of belonging among users of common social media tools, providing more choices to promote engagement among different individuals and groups, reducing barriers to group interaction and communications such as distance and social/economic status, and increasing the technological competency levels of frequent users of social media (Connolly, 2011; Zwart, Lindsay, Henderson, & Phillips, 2011; Rosen, 2011). However, there are also potential drawbacks identified with the use of social media include risks of psychological disorders and health problems such as anxiety, depression, poor eating habits, and lack of physical exercise, increasingly short attention

spans (Anderson, & Rainie, 2012; Rosen, 2011; Connolly, 2011; Zwart, Lindsay, Henderson, & Phillips, 2011).

On the other hand, according to Barnes (2009), the social media also has changed the landscape of college admission. The current generation graduating high school has been exposed to the Internet since childhood. Thus, they are the generation of today that are constantly connected plugged into music players, cell phones, the Internet, instant messenger, perhaps all on the same device. This world of interactivity and hyper-communication has fundamentally changed how teenagers and young adults receive and process information. Other than that, a study by Jacobsen and Forste (2011) regarding the new generation and the use of electric media also showed a significant result. They found that the use of social media and academic performance among college students give an impact. About two-thirds of the students reported using electronic media while in class, studying, or doing homework. This multitasking likely increased distraction, something prior research has shown to be detrimental to student performance (Jacobsen and Forste, 2011). In fact, access to social media and cellular-phone as well gives students greater access to social situations in general. They provide students with additional mechanisms for meeting new people and keeping in touch with friends.

3.4 Uses and Gratification Approach

Theory is important in any form of quantitative research as the theory were able to give direction to the research (Babbie 2001). The researcher also makes the theory as a guide in the implementation of research and in this study the researchers use the theory of Uses and Uses and Gratification introduced by Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz in 1974. In addition to the theoretical aspects of the discussion, this study also contains the findings of the studies conducted on the use of social networking sites and virtual interaction spaces. Most studies of communication focused on the extent to which such information is disseminated through the media can influence attitudes and behavior so that people can have an impact on their personal and the environment.

Basically, this theory can be explained precisely since the approach is user-centered. In fact, it explains the power of users to use the media for their own advantages or needs. Generally, people achieve a certain level of satisfaction and gratification in using the media as an individual entertainment satisfaction, release emotional stress and so forth depending on the purpose of using it. Moreover, according to Vergerr and Pelzer (2009), people are likely to use social media to combat loneliness by finding new contacts through the website and from there they get great satisfaction in making the virtual space of interaction as the main medium of communication. Therefore, in this study the researcher can see the outcomes of social media used in line with their gratification.

4. Methodology

The study employs a quantitative research design using survey method. The questionnaire is used as the research instrument for data collection. Responses from 185 foundation students were obtained and it was distributed to all courses at Kolej Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Selangor (KUIS), Bangi, Malaysia. Students were informed that participation was voluntary and information they provided would be kept confidential. Questions in the survey included the following areas: demographics, purpose of usage of social media, and outcomes of social media. The data were coded according to the master code prepared by

the researcher. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS WIN 20.0) for the descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage.

4.1 Result

Table 1 *Demographic Information of Sample (N=185)*

Items	Information	n	%
Gender	Male	61	33
	Female	124	67
Age	18	3	1.6
	19	122	65.9
	20	38	20.5
	21	13	7.0
	22	2	1.1
	23	6	3.2
	29	1	0.5
Academic background	Foundation of Islamic Studies	45	24.3
	Foundation of Communication	1	0.5
	Foundation of Management	82	44.3
	Foundation of Arabic Language	49	26.5
	Foundation of Information Technology	8	4.3
Social Media register	Facebook	170	91.9
	Instagram	5	2.7
	Twitter	4	2.2
	Flicker	2	1.1
	My Space	1	0.5
	LinkedIn	1	0.5
	Others	2	1.1

The results show that there are 185 respondents responded to the questionnaire in this research. The demographic information of the respondents is presented in Table 1. Our sample includes more female students (67% compared to 33%), slightly more 19 years old students (66%) and fewer Communication and Information & Technology students (0.5% and 4.3%). About two thirds of the sample was female (67%), and the average age was about 19 years. Of the foundation university students sampled, 44% were management students. Facebook is currently the most commonly registered among students (92%), followed with Instagram (3%), Twitter (2%), Flicker (1%), MySpace (0.5%) and LinkedIn (0.5%).

Table 2 *Period of Social Media Use (N=185)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-3 years	39	21.1	21.1	21.1
	more than 3 years	146	78.9	78.9	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 shows the results of the periods for using social media. 78.9% of the respondents have used social media for more than 3 years. It shows that they were exposed to this kind of new media since they were young and might be at their secondary school ages. However, 21.1% of the respondents used social media around 1 to 3 years period only.

Table 3 *Level of Social Media Use (N=185)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	once every hour	53	28.6	28.6	28.6
	once every day	79	42.7	42.7	71.4
	once a week	49	26.5	26.5	97.8
	once a month	4	2.2	2.2	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

When asked how often you use the social media sites, many of them (42.7%) claimed that they use the social media daily or at least once in a day (see Table 3). Others indicated that they use it about once in every hour (28.6%) while quite a number use it for once a week (26.5%). However, there are four respondents who only visited and used social media sites for once a month. The results show that this young generation use and depend on social media for every day and it becomes their routine information sharing and surfing activities.

Table 4 *Popularity of Social Media Sites (N=185)*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Twitter	34	18.4	18.4	18.4
	Flicker	3	1.6	1.6	20.0
	Facebook	**74**	**40.0**	**40.0**	**60.0**
	My Space	4	2.2	2.2	62.2
	You Tube	32	17.3	17.3	79.5
	LinkedIn	1	.5	.5	80.0
	Instagram	29	15.7	15.7	95.7
	Blogger	7	3.8	3.8	99.5
	Pinterest	1	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 shows the ranking of social media sites among participants. Facebook is the most popular sites (40%), followed by Twitter (18.4%). This is correlates with the study by Saodah et.al (2012) which mentioned that 95.3% of the youth are subscribed to Facebook and it is clearly shows that Facebook is the most popular among youth or Gen Y. Therefore, lots of information can be shared and uploaded into Facebook because it might help to enhance the students' and young generation knowledge since this social media is closed related to them.

Table 5 *Purpose of Social Media Use (N=185)*

Items	Level of agreement (%)				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Latest news update	8.1	3.2	17.8	30.3	40.5
Communication	7.6	3.8	10.8	35.7	42.2
Finding social contacts	4.9	9.7	33.5	29.7	22.2
Updating status	5.9	10.8	43.8	26.5	13.0
Checking out what's going on with friends	3.8	7.0	27.6	34.6	27.0
Online learning	4.9	7.6	21.6	33.5	32.4
Research work	**7.0**	**5.4**	**10.3**	**33.0**	**44.3**
Finding communities	4.9	8.1	20.0	30.8	36.2
Sharing skills	3.8	12.4	36.2	29.7	17.3
For time passing	4.3	13.5	37.3	25.9	18.9
Leisure/fun/entertainment	4.3	3.2	35.1	33.0	24.3
Finding part time job online	6.5	16.8	37.3	27.6	11.9
For earning money	8.6	17.3	37.8	24.9	11.4
Advertisement	5.9	13.0	42.3	28.1	9.7
Tagging related resources	4.9	11.4	48.1	27.0	8.6
Product marketing	8.1	14.1	32.4	28.1	17.3
Playing games	8.6	16.2	34.1	21.6	19.5

Based on Table 5, reasons for using the social media are varied. Most of the respondents used social media for research work (44.3%), followed by communication activities (42.2%), latest news update (40.5%), finding communities (36.2%) as well as online learning (32.4%). This finding showed that most of foundation students used social media for research as it is relevant with their status as students. Furthermore, it is undeniable that students nowadays depend on new media to get more information and news, make it as reference to their tasks and assignment because of its features like easy, fantastic, interesting and faster.

Table 6 *Outcomes of Social Media Use on Academic Performance (N=185)*

Items	Level of agreement (%)				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Use social media in class & doing assignments	10.8	11.9	31.9	29.7	15.7
Helps in course assignments	**3.2**	**5.4**	**30.3**	**36.2**	**24.3**
Used an educational tool	**1.6**	**8.1**	**40.5**	**25.4**	**24.3**
Can develop connections with peers	1.1	10.3	44.9	33.5	9.7
Contribute and participate active with others	1.6	10.3	44.9	33.5	9.7
Increase GPA	1.6	16.2	54.6	18.9	8.6
Make students addicted to it	3.2	5.4	37.8	28.6	24.9
Creating anxiety	2.7	10.3	50.3	22.7	14.1
Forced to study much faster	4.9	18.9	44.9	21.6	9.7
Forced to do more work than can handle	3.8	18.9	47.6	21.6	8.1
Forced to work with tight time schedules	7.6	19.5	51.4	17.8	3.8
Forced to change study habits	8.1	18.9	45.9	23.2	3.8
Made students less productive	4.3	13.0	43.8	25.4	13.5
Have to miss study activities	12.4	18.9	40.0	17.8	10.8
Hard time concentrating on study	12.4	18.4	38.4	20.0	10.8
Tension weakens ability to do assignment	10.8	22.2	40.0	16.8	10.3
Difficult to balance online activities and academic preparation	2.7	15.7	34.6	28.1	18.9
Interfere responsibilities at campus	7.0	15.1	45.9	22.2	9.7
Have to put off doing things at college	13.0	19.5	38.9	17.8	10.3
Spend less time with family and friends	14.1	20.5	34.6	19.5	11.4
Sacrifice vacation and weekend time	25.9	14.6	31.9	20.0	7.6

Table 6 shows the result of the outcomes of social media on students' academic performance. Of the student's samples, they indicated that social media sites had affected them positively as well as negatively. The positive outcome were the social media helps in course assignments (36.2%), used as an educational tool (25.4%), can develop connections with peers (33.5%), use in class and doing assignments (16%), contribute and participate active with others (10%), and increase GPA (9%). Indeed, to seek for latest information people will depend on media regardless of broadcast media or print media. Today, the emergence of new media is enhancing the information seeking and it helps the students in their tasks. It helps to search more information for research activities easily. Whereas the negative outcomes were the social media made students addicted to it (24.9%), difficult to balance online activities and academic preparation (18.9%), creating anxiety (14%), made students less productive (13.5%), have to miss study activities (10.8%), hard time concentrating on study (10.8%), spend less time with family and friends (11%), forced to study much faster (9.7%), tension weakens ability to do assignment (10.3%), interfere responsibilities at campus (9.7%), forced to do more work than can handle (8.1%), sacrifice vacation and weekend time (7.6%), forced to work with tight time schedules (3.8%), forced to change study habits (3.8%) and have to put off doing things at college (10.3%). Thus, it depends on ourselves to control online activities and to manage time perfectly.

5. Discussion

The findings showed that the most popular social media site among youth is Facebook. The results are in line with the results of studies by previous researchers that Facebook indeed is the most preferable social media sites (Saodah et.al, 2012; Lenhart et.al, 2010). Because of the prevalence of social media sites, the students are increasingly aware of others' values through access to friends' posts and profile information.

Engaging with social media is proving to be an increasingly important communication and creative activity, especially in the lives of young people. Social media and youth cannot be separated. It is believed that those social media are not just increasingly important in Malaysia, but are also all around the globe. There are several reasons for using social media among youth. The most important reason given was to communicate with family and friends, latest news update and to do research work. These findings are supported by Sheldon (2008) who found that students use social media to pass time, be entertained and maintain relationship with others. It seemed that foundation students were using social media to communicate with others as well as to occupy free time when they are bored. In addition, this is correlates with Vergerr and Pelzer (2009) which mentioned people are likely to use social media to combat loneliness by finding new contacts through the website and from there they get great satisfaction in making the virtual space of interaction as the main medium of communication.

In terms of the level of social media usage, since the results showed that many of foundation students use social media daily, it proves that social media indeed give huge outcomes to them. They use and get access to social media at least once a day and it showed that social media is closed and give impact to their live. In fact, they use and get satisfaction. The students spend a majority of their time on social media looking at others' profiles, wall posts, and photos. Because this information is so readily available, it is possible that others' values as expressed on social media can be adopted as the standards by which users judge themselves. This is true as Rosmawati (2011) explains the advantages of social networking sites that make it a choice of Internet users today is due to easily create personal information in each user profile as well as communication with various activities. This suggests that the values displayed on others' profile pages can influence their friends' attitudes.

In sum, the results of this quantitative study suggest useful information on the social media usage among foundation students in Malaysia. It is reported that the students use social media for different purposes with different outcomes.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study showed that Facebook is the most popular social media among foundation students. Due to that, the students get access to social media almost daily. Social media are a new platform for students to express their true self and share information relevant to their daily activities. As for that, they used social media closely for research work, get latest news and to communicate. This is to show that as young generation and their students level, they were aware the purpose of using social media. Other than that, social media use also gives several positive outcomes towards their academic performance. It helped a lot in their course assignments and can be considered as an educational tool relevant with the current learning activities. However, there are also a few negative outcomes towards their academic performance such as the difficulties to

balance online activities and academic preparation. This suggests that these foundation students still need to be educating about the possibilities and risks of social media use and its outcomes.

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