Influence of Social Media in Enhancing Positive Relationship among Youth

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ABSTRACT

This quantitative study which is conducted among students at the faculty of Mass Communication and Media Studies aim to explore the influence of social media in enhancing positive relationship among youth. The variables discussed in the research are the purpose of using social media, the social media frequently used, and the usage of social media in enhancing positive relationship among youth. The students used the social media for chatting, entertainment, and seeking news. The students agree that the most useful social media in promoting relationship is Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The students also agree that the social media can be used to enhance positive relationship among youth. The students shared that the social media can be used to share information and knowledge with other students, make friends, and stay connected. The study is done by distributing questionnaires to a total of 60 respondents. The results were analyzed by using IBM SPSS version 21.0.

Keywords: mass communication, social media, youth
INTRODUCTION

The growth in social media, particularly social networking sites, has created increased opportunity for media communications that have an impact upon institutions of higher learning and its students. The term 'social media' is used here to describe dynamic and socially-interactive, networked information and communication technologies, for example Web 2.0 sites, SMS text messaging and social networking sites (Social Networking University of Essex, 2008).

Social media networking sites allow youth real time conversations with someone from a distance. This provides the opportunity to continue relationships that in the past would have been too distant and to build new relationships with friends from around the world. This open line of communication builds new understandings and collaborations for youth from very different cultures (Jennifer, 2012). They can build worldwide coalitions around everything from special interests and hobbies to activism activities.

According to Nick (2010) Online social networking has helped solved problems within seconds. However, when we talk about influence of social networking I think we need to conduct in depth study of the social media impact. Huge numbers of youth online use the social media to chat with friends and even with strangers. They also do extra activities like uploading all sorts of photographs.

The argument is that if youth utilize the social media properly within a reasonable period then they can overcome problems usually associated with social media abuses. Studies have shown that the must ‘always connected’ mentality has led to a feeling amongst the 15 to 24 years old of having to be at the right place at the right time, accompanied by a feeling of panic that, if they aren’t connected, they will be left out of the next big event with their friends (Shafique et al, 2010).

This study is to determine usage of social media can improve relationship with others.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on social media impact on youth are fast becoming a trend. These studies are in response to the rapidly increasing social media usage by youth, especially students of higher education. The studies can range from a health perspective to social life or interactions among youth due to increasing usage of social media.

Most of the books and articles reviewed discussed the positive and negative effect of social media. Even online discussions on the social media impact on youth by youth referred to the plus and minus of social media effect on society and in youth specifically. There are also numerous studies to discover on how to minimise the negative consequences of excessive social media usage and exposure. A primary danger associated with an uncontrolled or overly liberal media usage is when youth start to communicate with unknown persons which can trigger serious problems in the future (Subrahmanym et al, 2008).

Youth
A literature search on what is youth find that it is generally defined as the time of life between childhood and adulthood (maturity). Definitions for the specific age for youth range vary. Generally, it refers to the common legal age that is under the age of 21 years. We can also conclude that an individual’s actual maturity may not correspond to their chronological age, as immature individuals can exist at all ages. Youth is also defined as “the appearance, freshness, vigour, spirit, etc., characteristic of one who is young”. Youth is a term used for people of both genders, male and female, of young age. Globally, the terms "youth", "adolescent", "teenager", "kid", and "young person" are
interchanged, often meaning the same thing, occasionally differentiated. Youth generally refers to a time also identifies a particular mindset of attitude, as in "He is very youthful" (Merriam, 2009).

The study also takes into consideration that youth is the stage of constructing the self-concept. The self concept of youth is influenced by several variables such as peers, lifestyle, gender and culture. It is this time of a person's life which they make choices which will affect their future.

In 2000, there were 10.1 million youth aged 15 to 40 years in Malaysia, an increase of 2.7 million since 1991. The proportion of youth in the population aged 15 to 24 years increased from 18.8 per cent to approximately 19.9 per cent from 1991 to 2000. The proportion of the 25 to 40 year age group grew slightly from 23.4 per cent to approximately 23.6 percent of the total population in those years. Malaysia’s corresponding total populations for 1991 and 2000 were 17.6 million and 23.2 million inhabitants, respectively (ESCAP 2000 and DOS 1995a).

In Malaysia “youth” are now referred to those whose ages are between 18 to 25 years old. Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Shabery Cheek said the proposal to change the current definition of “youth” from those aged 18 to 40 years old to 18 to 25 years old was in line with international standards. The United Nations' definition of youth is 15 to 24 years old while the Commonwealth's is 15 to 29 years old ( The Star, 2011). In the study, the respondents are students of Communication in Universiti Teknologi Mara between 18 to 25 years old.

Social Media Technologies
Social media technologies can be classified into many forms. Social media technologies take on many different forms including magazines, Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, social networks, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. By applying a set of theories in the field of media research (social presence, media richness) and social processes (self-presentation, self-disclosure) Kaplan and Haenlein created a classification scheme in their Business Horizons (2010) article, with six different types of social media: collaborative projects (for example, Wikipedia), blogs and microblogs (for example, Twitter), content communities (for example, YouTube), social networking sites (for example, Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft), and virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life). Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, vlogs, wall-postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, crowdsourcing and voice over IP, to name a few. Many of these services can be integrated via social network aggregation platforms. Social media network websites include sites like Facebook and Twitter.

Social Media Services
A 2010 study by the University of Maryland suggested that social media services may be addictive, and that using social media services may lead to a "fear of missing out," also known as the phrase "FOMO" by many students. The University of Maryland study noted that Facebook is now the primary method for communication by college students in the U.S.

Preliminary data from as early as the 2009 studies indicate that the use of social networking sites is expanding more significantly than any other online modality, including e-mail (Nielsen, 2009). Over half of all on-line American adolescents, ages 12 to 17, use some form of SNS (Lenhart & Madden, 2007). In a study of 18- to 19-year-old college students, 88% reported using a social networking site (Hargatti, 2008). Ninety-one percent of teenagers who use SNS use them to stay in touch with friends who they frequently see. Almost half of teens reported using SNS to make new friends, while 72% use SNS to make plans with their current friends (Lenhart & Madden, 2007). These numbers reflect the idea that while teens use SNS to find new friends, teens primarily use SNS to strengthen existing networks. These strengthened networks can easily translate into strong advocacy networks when used in an appropriate way. This study believes that similar development is happening among Malaysian youths. The conclusion is base on the fact that similar development is occurring in Malaysia.
The intensive use of interactive media has led to assertions about the effect of these media on youth. Rather than following the assumption of a distinct Net generation, many studies investigate diversity in interactive media use among youth. Results from those studies show that contemporary youth can be divided into clusters based on the use of interactive media. These results call for a better understanding of these clusters (Auer, 2011).

There has been much speculation, on and off the Internet, about the meaningfulness of human interactions created by social media. Some of these views are summed up in an Atlantic article by Stephen Marche titled "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?" Sherry Turkle explores similar issues in her 2011 book Alone Together

**Objectives**
The objective of this study to discover how youths are utilising the social media with regard to building, enhancing and sustaining relationships. The essential questions include: Are youths using it responsibly or irresponsibly? Where do the relationships lead to? How long do they spend on communicating to build relationships as oppose to other activities? Have the social media unite youth on issues relevant to them? The list can go on.

The research objectives are as follows:

1. To discover the extent of social media usage by students of the institute of higher learning.
2. To discover the types of activities students of the institute of higher learning are using the social media for.
3. To discover to what extent students of the institute of higher learning are using social media for interpersonal communication.
4. To discover students of the institute of higher learning views on the usage of social media for enhancing positive relationship.
5. To discover students of the institute of higher learning views on the usage of social media for enhancing unity among youths.

**METHDOLOGY**

**Research Design**
This chapter describes the methods used for this research. Research methodology is a set of procedures or methods used to conduct research. There are two types of research methodologies. These two types of methodologies are qualitative methodologies and quantitative methodologies. This study will conduct an opinion survey using the quantitative approach.

**Sample Size**
The sample size will be 60 students from the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, UiTM. This is from a total population of UiTM mass communication students in Shah Alam. The students demographic are basically homogenous and therefore it should not require a high number of respondents. However, it representativeness will be determined by the 60 students representing the total population.

**Instrument**
In this study, the researcher using Survey (Questionnaire Form). Survey (Questionnaire form) contain 20 questions. The Survey question created with supervisor.

**Procedure**
Data collection done by distributing questionnaire form to 60 students.
**Data Analysis**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will do the descriptive analysis. The raw data was analyzed using IBM SPSS software version 21.0. This is due to shortage of fund and time as well as the fact the number of respondents is just 60 students.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**Findings**

Findings In the section A, According to data that was analyzed using IBM Spss, 60 percent of the respondents grew up in urban areas while the rest in rural settings. Almost all respondent is Muslim Malays. 30 are male students and the rest female.

Findings on Section B, 100 percent of students spend more than four hours a day using the social media. 80 percent of the respondents said that they started using the social media between the ages of 15 to 20. 78.3 percent of the respondents first started using the social media at home and the rest at secondary schools. Friends or peers are the significant factor in introducing respondents to the Internet or social media. The students’ first impression when using the social media was very positive. That is 80 percent “like it very much”. However 55 percent feelings were neutral towards it. Nearly all the respondents reported Facebook as their first social media program. Only 3.6 percent of students claim their first social media program is blog. The two most popular programs are Facebook and Twitter. Facebook are the number one for 55 percent of the respondents and the rest Twitter.

Futhermore, Chatting was the most popular initial usage of the social media with 40 percent admitting so. Entertainments were at 35 percent while seeking news at 25 percent. No respondents reported it as a tool for doing their assignments. Since chatting was the most popular usage we can say that it can contribute towards enhancing relationships.

Zero respondents claim that they use the social media for doing assignments. Instead all say that it is for seeking news. respondents with a significant number say that they use the social media for doing their assignments. Furthermore, all respondents admit that they use social media for seeking news. All the respondents from all semesters say that they use the social media to make friends. About 42 percent of the total respondents say that they are seeking new friends using the social media. Another 30 percent say they are finding their long distance or far away friends. Another 15 percent say they are finding ex school mates, while the rest say to know each other better.

All the respondents say that the social media have helped them to make more friends. All the respondents admitted that the social media have improved their relationships with friends. Again, this proves the usefulness of the social media in improving relationships and unity among the young. All respondents also feel that the social media can improve interpersonal communication between friends. This again reflect the power of the social media for cementing friendship and uniting the people when use with responsibility.

The Facebook is said to be the most useful in promoting relationships with 46.7 percent of the respondents saying so. Twitter comes second with 26.7 respondents believing it. Tumblr come third with 15 percent saying so and the rest believing in Blog. Respondents like the visual capability of the social media in promoting relationships among students with 40 percent saying so. Another 36.7 percent say that it is because it is very user friendly, while 13.3 percent say it saves time to communicate with friends.

All the respondents believe the social media can be a powerful force to unite students and make them a powerful force in campus. University administrators must ensure that students interested are well taken care or otherwise can have a global bad publicity which can affect their reputation and enrolment. They must provide avenues for students to bring up their grouses so that it can be effectively handled.
All the respondents agreed with the ability of the social media to unite youth across the nation to make them a powerful force in enhancing national unity. This optimism is good for with proper guidance youth, especially university students can be enlisted to make the government effort of realizing 1 Malaysia to become a reality. The respondents are very positive about the ability of the social media to enhance positive relationships among university students.

Discussion

Based on the finding of this research, we can see that from the quantitative method, the researcher have distributed 60 questionnaire to the interpersonal students of faculty Mass Communication and Media studies. From there, it has shown that the interpersonal student use social media in their daily life because mostly there are using social media more than four hour. Most of them started using social media when they are on the age of 15 till 20. The interpersonal student started using the social media when they are at home because they have internet to access the social media.

Furthermore the students know about the social media from their friends. After knowing the social media the student first expression of social media is mostly neutral. First Social media that interpersonal student use is facebook and mostly the student like to use is twitter because The Twitter is said to be the most useful in promoting relationships. The student use social media for chatting because mostly interpersonal student using social media to make new friend and the least they use for social media usage is doing assignment.

All the interpersonal student say that the social media have helped them to make more friends. This again prove the effectiveness of the social media in enhancing social relationships. Also, all the student admitted that the social media have improved their relationships with friends. Again, this proves the usefulness of the social media in improving relationships and unity among the young. All the interpersonal student also feel that the social media can improve interpersonal communication between friends. This again reflect the power of the social media for cementing friendship and uniting the people when use with responsibility.

CONCLUSION

This research took a critical look at interpersonal students’ addiction to social media, specifically Facebook, Twitter, blog and tumblr, and how it is impacting their relationships when compared to previous generations who communicate on a more face-to-face basis. This generation has made social media their top priority and continues to need more usage in order to feel satisfied.

However, this study was limited because the sample consisted 30 male and 30 female from interpersonal student. As a result, this study should be replicated with a more students of interpersonal communication. Tying into this limitation was the particular way that this survey was distributed. by using social media as a way to access this population, a majority of the respondents were highly active social media users.

To research this topic further, more research should be done to investigate whether this social media can improve relationship and interpersonal communication between friend. In addiction, potentially interviewing and creating a case study following a group of students should assess mood modification and interpersonal conflict. By assessing these two aspects in an alternative way, a study may provide insight on how this group interacts in their tangible and interactive worlds. Also, future research should review how students is using social media as compared to the generations preceding and following. These answers may be found by conducting a wide-aged focus group.

This research assisted not only the technological world but also the psychological world. The younger generations are changing how society communicates on a variety of levels. Assessing addictions that are not necessarily common knowledge develops a basis for the future. The brains of the younger generations are growing and developing differently from those above them, and because
of this more research should be conducted on how specific aspects of the technological world will continue to alter human development. The researcher hopes that this study will lead more people to study and assess the power of social media and its ability to change the world in various ways.

REFERENCES


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