

Social Media Usage and Gender

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Abstract: This study aimed to investigate how social media usage between gender. The findings of this study will contribute to precautions that can be made for general public to navigate better on social media usage. This study applied the theory of media richness theory. The methods that were used in the research is quantitative method and the data were collected from 120 volunteer student from universities across Malaysia. The findings showed there is no relationship between social media usage and gender. Thus, this study contributes to communication field related to communication in new era.

Keywords: Social Media, Gender, Communication

1. Introduction

Internet have been created for more than four decades, and since then also, the users of internet have grown up until 3.8 billion. With such amounts of users, it is inevitable that people would further modify the internet as a tool of communication among us. According to Brugger. N et al., the internet has grown and spread to an extent where today it is an indispensable element in the communication and media environment of many countries, and indeed of everyday life, culture, and society (2017). This statement further emphasis that the users of internet have adapt the internet as one of the communication tools. In further development of technology, the internet has become more important towards global community. "While internet user growth is slowing, global innovation and competition continue to drive product improvements, new types of usage and monetization." (Meeker, M, 2019). The by-product of this vast and rapid change in the technology and improved network connection speed to internet is a sub-group under internet, social media. It is a platform to endorse interaction between users online. Through social media, information spreads even faster than traditional media. The burst of loads

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of new information contributes to the phenomena 'Global Village'. It is when internet user become more connected towards each other, through learning about each other culture, or when learning different languages. This phenomenon has created opportunities.

Naturally, in the modern age, long distance communication has also been evolved. With the creation of internet, modern communication also follows the trend. Nowadays, community on internet communicates through social media. It is a platform for people around the world to share their opinions on various topics regarding numerous aspects in civilization as a whole. Following that trend, it is not uncommon if the subjects that were discussed online could influence other internet user's thoughts and opinion on certain matters. This research is important to internet users. It will serve as a proof that could later be adapted as one of the rules or etiquette when absorbing information from other social media users. Social media is one of the platforms for other internet users to throw in their opinions, belief, and their stands on numerous subjects. Some of the numerous subjects that were being discuss could be touching on sensitive issues towards a country. For example, the need for monarchy system in this modern era toward developing country or first world country. In Malaysia, monarchy system is still being used and withheld accordance to our country's constitution. However, if the ideology that have negative connotation towards that discussion is mass-adapted by the citizens of Malaysia, it could threaten the harmony of the country. Therefore, the research is vital to internet users as a new netiquette to filter the ideologies that could threaten the peace of countries worldwide. There is also the need to explore the social media usage between gender.

1.1 Social Media

According to Van Dijck (2013), social media can be roughly referred to as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of the Web and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. The statement is supported by Yunis et al., (2018), by mentioning that social media nowadays have become a valuable platform for facilitating knowledge sharing and communication, not only on personal or individual level, but also for organizations. Followed by statement made by Kim and Ko, (2012) through social media usage, people who seeks knowledge, whether it is for personal benefits or organizational objectives can access to the internet to acquire the said information. Social media presents satisfaction to knowledge seeker through easy navigating process that is built with the social media. Based on these statements, social media is a great platform to enhance the interactivity with another user. It is also used for to spreading knowledge and information towards each other.

An extensive study has been done by Kawaljeet.K. K et. al. (2017) on evolution of social media studies academically in recent years. In the study, the authors discuss 132 publications that discusses on social media. From there, the authors made 6 conclusions based on their findings which gives social media new function and definition. One of the findings was users of social media no longer see social media as a medium for socialize only, but it is seen as a place for people to encourage clusters of same minded and ideology to be in the same interaction.

However, social media could also play a vital role in today's society. Shabnoor and Singh (2016) made research on the impacts of social media on society. In his research, he concluded that the merits of the social media are on the users, whether to use it positively or negatively. One of the negative impacts is recorded by O'Keeffe et. al. (2011), they mentioned that social media usage could become a problem to teenagers. Most of the teens have potential to fall into inappropriate content, lack of understanding of online privacy issues, and outside influences of third-party advertising groups. Research done by Asur et. al. (2010), social media could be used to forecast future events. This is done through observing the number of social media users towards specific topics. This is due to the fact that of correlation between the intensity of attentions and relevancy of the topics discussed could be the factor of the cumulative number of users interacting with each other using said topics.

However, social media have been found to be a contributing factor for jeopardized sleep pattern and mental well-being. This correlation has been found by Woods et. al. (2016). Further note on this research, people use and browses social media more intensely in night-time. This scenario ultimately disturbs the physical and mental well-being of a person.

1.2 Social Media and Gender

Chen et. al. (2016) claims that social media is a tool that if exploit properly, could become a platform for collaborative learning for students. The way to utilize it properly is enhancing the experience of the user to raise their satisfactions toward the uses of social media applied towards the application of social media usages as supplementary tools to get immersive experience. According to research done by Abdul malik and Ahmad (2019) the advancement of technology has enhanced people reliance on social media as it has significant effects on economy and connecting people and contacts. However, it also comes with consequences. For example, cyberbullying that would leave victims traumatized and have low-self-esteem.

Furthermore, Junco et.al. (2011) stated in their study, the correlations on increasing interactivity feature on social media and male violence towards woman have been found through arranged meetings with male on social media. According to Rafi et. al, (2019), he claims that although women are assumed to spend more time on social media, it is actually man who were more addicted than women. This claim is also backed by statistics produced by Pew Research Center which shows that man have increased engagement in social media by 13 percent. On the other hand, Mazman et al. (2011) mentioned that female and male have distinct difference on the purpose of using social media. The research is based on interaction observed on Facebook. It is observed that males use social media to find new relationship and making new friends while female use social media to find long lost friend or to maintain current relationship. Moving on, in terms of topics or manners that was frequently used by male is mostly on gaming and harsh language. It is observed from the data that men talk frequently about gaming consoles and games and men usually use strong language to communicate with each other. On the other hand, women tend to be more polite and adapts social interaction between their friends. This is because, the common words in female online conversation are “Shopping” and “Boyfriend”.

The study done by Mazman et, al. (2011) is supported by Valerie Barker, (2009), where in her studies, confirms that female content on social media is inclined to talk on relationships, deep feelings and hidden things that they kept on themselves. In the research done by Joshua C. and Precious C. (2017), it was observed that social media clarifies better on female students’ thoughts, action and communicates among each other. However, the setback that was suffered by female students were prone to addiction towards social media and female students must not take things on surface value as female students tend to believe everything they read on social media, and this could lead to misinformation and fake believes. Huang et.al. (2013) discovers that male users are less anxious when performing activity on internet compared to female user and due to that drawback, female users would always feel uptight when using social media for learning purpose. In terms of social media tools usage, L. Akman and C. Turhan (2017), found that male believes that social media is an efficient and easy source for learning and have been exploiting that more intensely than women. However, male and female acknowledge that by using social media could improve their academy performance and that motivates them to use social media. In other related study done by Geser (2008), male uses cellphone for the utilization that is featured in the cellphone, however, female motivation to use cellphone is mainly due to the intention to keep in touch with friends. The findings could be applied through usage of social media between gender as well and it confirms some of the studies that was made in recent years regarding gender and media social.

In terms of behavior and motive of female and male on social media, Haferkamp et. al (2012), male generally use social media to gain information on general or specific knowledge, while the motivation for female to engage in social media is more towards hedonistic nature and presenting

themselves to be more appealing. This condition is related towards women prioritize to be perceive well on social media. The study also points out that due to the hedonistic nature of female when using social media, they tend to compare themselves against another user. While male use social media to keep up to date with their friends and family.

H1: There are differences between male and female on using social media

2. Media Richness Theory

Media richness theory was introduced in 1984 by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel. The usage of this theory is mainly to describe and examining communication mediums within organization. Since the introduction of this theory, researchers have been substituting the organization towards more general groups such in new media communication mediums. For example, video and online conferencing. (Bergin. R, 2018). This theory could be adapted in this research by targeting and applying towards social media information spreads. The theory measures information richness that a group or a pair of people receive from the sender. In the framework, Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel suggests that information could be receive wholly when the people meet face to face and discuss the information. Meanwhile, numeric, and formal messages or information is perceived as the lowest level of information richness, meaning, the person could not interpret the message send by the sender in accordance with the sender. Therefore, this theory is fitting to be used in this research to understand better on how information in social media is interpreted and communicated from words to words, when conversing.

3. Methodology

This research focuses on the influence of social media towards its users in communicating with other users online and the effects towards initial opinion of the users, whether it change or not. Therefore, the research is conducted using social media users that used Twitter and Facebook daily. The research method that applied is quantitative method, where a survey is conducted through distributing the questionnaire to respondents. It is the method of gathering the data based on theories and hypothesis. The data that was collected would need to be quantified and analyze the outcome. It is to ensure that the outcome of this method could match and could be related to the objective of the research. The research aims to choose people who uses social media frequently in their daily lives. However, to understand the relationships of media social usage better and to achieve the objective of the research, it is preferable for this research to use teenagers and young adults. This is because according to Knoll (2017), teenagers and young adults are the most influential age group. Meaning, they could be easily influenced by outside stimulus. The sample is from volunteer students from different universities across Malaysia. This group of students is selected due to two reasons, firstly, the volunteer students consist of different age group, therefore, the usage of social media is different, depends on age group. Therefore, a variable could be analyzed. Secondly, the researcher has connections with the volunteer students from different universities in Malaysia, making it easier for the research to find respondents.

In sampling, the research used simple random sampling techniques. It means that every person from the sample population have a chance to answer the questionnaire. This method is favorable when collecting data from huge population sample.

4. Result

4.1 Demography profile of respondents

This subtopic is discussed about frequency of the respondents are participated in this study. Table 1 shown that 77 (64.2%) of the respondents were male respondents while another 43 (35.8%)

respondents were female respondents. Of the 120 respondents, 118 (98.3%) of the respondents were Malay. For the age category, 67 (55.8%) of the respondents were aged between 21 and 23 years.

Table 1 : Frequency of respondent

Demography factors		n	%
Gender			
i)	Male	77	64.2
ii)	Female	43	35.8
Age			
i)	18 - 20 years old	19	15.8
ii)	21 - 23 years old	67	55.8
iii)	24 - 26 years old	33	27.5
iv)	27 - 30 years old	1	0.8
Level of Education			
i)	Diploma	26	21.7
ii)	Degree	92	76.7
iii)	Master/PHD	2	1.6

4.2 Hypothesis: (T-test discussion)

This part will be discussed on hypothesis-based differences between gender and media social. Result shown that there are no differences between gender and media social. This result shown that gender will be no effect on media social. Result shown as below (Table 4.4.1). The results showed that there is no significant difference in media social based on respondents' gender ($t = .196, p > .05$) This indicates that there is no difference in the context of social media between male and female respondents. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. The result as below (Table 2).

Table 2: T-test analysis based on gender

Variable	Gender	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	Sig.
Social Media	Male	77	3.8633	.62014	-.498	.196
	Female	43	3.8057	.58098		

5. Discussion

Based on the finding, this research is success to achieve objective of the research. The objective is to examine the relationship between male and female on using social media. The hypothesis is there are differences between male and female on using social media. The result shown that there is no difference in the context of social media usage between male and female respondents. This is probably because, throughout advancement of social media and the capabilities to connect more on social media, the motivation to use social media becomes unanimous even between genders. The reason is strengthened more when social media is used as a medium to improve learning, economy and connecting people. These findings are similar with the past research like Chen et. al, and Abdul Malik and Ahmad. The

past research is found that there is relationship between male and female on using social media. For future research, qualitative method can be implemented to examine the depth of this phenomenon. This is to ensure that the information that was gained from qualitative method is better in terms of providing vital information. This can be done by having a group of people shares their experience and opinion. By doing this, the extends of information regarding social media usage and gender. Secondly, the demographics that were involved in the study need to be diverse in terms of occupation, age and types of social media used. This research main demographics were focused on students. Even though students are the main consumer for social media, the effects of social media usage on communication could not be observed further on different age groups. By having diverse group of demographics, this research would have a bigger picture on the effects of social media usage on communication on bigger demographics.

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