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## An Islamic Perspective of Social Network Sites Usability on Students' Academic Performance in Selected Higher Education Institution in Malaysia

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### Information

#### Keywords

**Social network site, academic performance, Islamic perspective, higher education institution**

### Abstract

The rapid development in internet technology has made the usage of social network sites become innovate ways for communication globally. In the study, researcher attempted to explore the influence of social network sites on students' academic performance according to Islamic perspectives in selected higher education institution in Malaysia. Only 219 students from Faculty of Business and Management were selected as respondents in this study. Based on statistical analysis, social network sites usability variables provide significant and postive relationship on students' academic performance. In addition, most of students also provide higher level of academic performance when they were engaging with social network sites for academic purposes.

### INTRODUCTION

In today digital era, the internet is more than just a means of seeking information only. The rapid development in internet technology has made the usage of social network sites (SNSs) become an innovative ways for people to communicate with others. According to Moreno, et. al. (2013), online social network sites can be defined as service based on the internet that grant people to connect with the other user for sharing the connection within the system while allowing people to design a profile within a limited system. Mainly, people use social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace to build and keep up relationships with others (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). The special feature of SNSs function enable people to provide communication service with others across distance, allow people to share information such as image, video, and having a conversation in a real time, make the social sites become a trend in today young generation. The popularity of social network has attracted numerous groups of people especially higher education students. Lenhart, et. al., (2010) reported that 72% of all college students have a social network profile, with 45% of college students using a social network site at least once a day. By using SNSs, students might use this platform to simplify learning session with friends and lecturers since it offer interactive communication either on-site or off-site campus. However, according to Islamic injunction, a Muslim student has to follow several guidelines in using SNSs especially for making friends between different genders or singing to unanimously. In addition, as a Muslim, it is prohibited in sharing any inappropriate contain of document, video, musical and song with unanimously. For those students who ignoring Islamic perspective in using SNSs, it will influence the student obligation toward Islam such as sharing

uncovered photos and videos, showing prohibited song, sharing inappropriate information with unanimously and delaying prayers time. Therefore, a balance in human endeavor is necessary to ensure social well-being and continued development of human potential (Ahmad, 1982).

### *Problem Statement*

Some expert in education highlighted the combination of conventional dialogue and interaction between lecturer and students in social network sites would be a greater solution to solve some difficulties and problem arise in higher education institutions (Lamuel, 2006). New development in the technological have made the internet an innovative way for students to communicate each other in the whole of the world. Without the technology such as Facebook, MySpace, and others, people unable to connect with others to sharing the knowledge and information, sharing picture, chatting and communicating. In addition, SNSs provides interactions of different people who share the same interests, and even real-life connections. However, the extent to determine students in higher education are using SNSs for academic purposes is still limited in Malaysia. In addition, students are using SNSs for following several guidelines according to Islamic injunction is still questionable. Therefore, the purpose of this study to investigate the influence of social networking sites usability on students' academic performance according to an Islamic Perspective in selected higher education institution in Malaysia.

### *Research Objective*

Specifically, this study is attempt to focus on the following objectives; to determine types of social networking sites preferred by student, to determine time allocation time spent by student for social networking sites, to the investigate relationships between social networking sites usability with students' academic performance and to examine level of students' academic performance in selected higher education in Malaysia.

Research Hypotheses of this study are stated as following:

- H<sub>1</sub>      There is a relationship between interactive with peers and student academic performance
- H<sub>2</sub>      There is a relationship between interactive with Lecturer and student academic performance
- H<sub>3</sub>      There is a relationship between students' engagement and student academic performance

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *Overview of Social Networking Usability*

A social media site brings significant impact for students especially in improving the academic performance. Students might use social media sites for facilities learning session with friends and lecturers since it offer interactive communication either on-site or off-site campus. The social networking usability is defined as the mobile-based and Internet tools that integrate and supporting the technology, telecommunication and social interaction. In addition, the audio and word has been promotes by this facilities with structure and broadcasting of content and as the alternative for the people to raise their voice (Dabner, 2012). In 2000, social network medium became wider and being the major online sited having the evolution including Windows Live, Facebook and Twitter. Adam M. H. (2014), stipulated 21% of students use social network sites for making friends and chatting, 17% for receiving and sending messages, 8% students use it for playing games and 7% use social networking sites to share files. Meanwhile, only 26% of students use social network sites for academic purpose like communicating with their lectures eight percent, conducting academic related discussion nine percent. Another 9% students communicate with their friends for academic interest, which is less than the time they spend on other activities unrelated academics. (Adam M. H., 2014). Some of the experts may welcome the capability of social media services to help lecture for simple positive networking with students (Lamuel, 2006). Meanwhile, students that are using online technologies can encourage online discussion among students outside the classes, beyond the traditional class education setting. (Gray, K., Chang S., & Kennedy, G., 2010). When interaction occurs within the learning process, students have positive value to understand and attentive, participating and more encourage to changing idea among fellow students. Consequently, interactions have effect on student learning benefit (Liu, 2013)

### *Interactive With Peers*

With the advancement of technology, students are more comfortable to interact with their friends through the SNSs such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Yahoo Messenger and also LinkedIn. According to Banks (2006), interaction is the ways of the student communicates with their peers to discuss about the assignment that they need to work in group. Moreover, using SNSs enable to help student in exchanging information and producing

brilliant ideas during any academic project discussion. According to Manocha (2009), social media sites is considered as one way to show off students' knowledge, talent and experience, whilst supporting each other in completing any academic project. Furthermore, students are having difficulties in expressing ideas and opinions in classroom, enable to use this platform to participate actively in the learning process. Besides, by using SNSs, students have opportunities to introduce Islam to non-Muslim members by creating specific group (Sharaf, G., Musa, M., Rahman, A, 2014), since social networking media is the most sufficient action for students to communicate with their peers (Francisco Brannan, 2014). Thus, social media sites are one of the supporters toward educational communication between student and their peers that can give benefits to their academic performance for future (Eke et. al. 2014).

#### *Interactive with Lecturer*

As proven by previous researchers, SNSs usability for academic purposes enable to improve interaction between students and educator/lecturer. An educator enables to make an announcement and update any important information to students such as sharing interesting website, multimedia content, updating schedule, posting homework assignment, posting lesson plans, sending messages, updates schedule and announce upcoming events (Karren Lederer, 2012). In addition, educator can cultivate imagination and creativity among students by encouraging them to explore the knowledge content in a new style (Frye, Trathen, & Koppenhaver, 2010; Lamb & Johnson, 2010). SNSs usability enable to increase the possibility of having greater learning because students are free to view different opinion and dialogue, including discussion that were originally posted by a moderator or educator (Hurt et al., 2012). Some of the experts may welcome the capability of social media services to help creating positive networking with students (Lamuel, 2006). By using this platform, educator enable to improve student interaction by enhancing discussion, meaningful conversation, and changing opinion. In other words, when interaction occurs within the learning process, students have positive value to understand and attentive, participating and more encourage to changing idea among fellow student whilst, increasing benefits on student learning session (Liu, 2013).

#### *Student's Engagement*

According to Kuh (2009), the engagement is refereed to effort and participation of students in university which is closely related with university outcomes. In addition, several considerations for encourage students engagement including interaction with peers, good interaction with faculty and participation in co-curricular activities (Kuh, 2009). As stated, engagement in class is important for student to improve their academic performance since, it enable to build a personal relationship with lecturer and also peers. Student's engagement important for creating two way communications between lecturers and students which enable to give benefits for the student in understanding what they have learned. When the students participate in class, the students can improve their critical thinking, knowledge acquisition and intellectual development. According to Pascarella & Terenzini (2005), student's engagement is important to have a good environment in class to do a discussion with lecturers and peers. According to Heiberger & Harper (2008), there are relationships in using social media sites such as Facebook and student's engagement. Facebook is considered as a platform to measure the students successful in terms of engagement that can relate with their studies. (Heiberger & Harper, 2008)

#### *Student's Academic Performance*

Academic performance is defined as accomplishment of students' tasks given by their lecturer through the process of learning in attempt to increase level of students' performance (Adam M. H. & Nor Zairah A. R, 2014). There are numerous factors influenced students' academic performances including demographic background such as gender and age, teaching faculty and social networking sites. Previous literatures stipulated that, there are negative relationship between time spent on SNSs and student academic performance (Paul, Baker, & Cochran, 2012). In addition, according to finding reported by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010), students who obsessed with SNSs consequently provide negative impacts on academic performance.

**Research Framework**

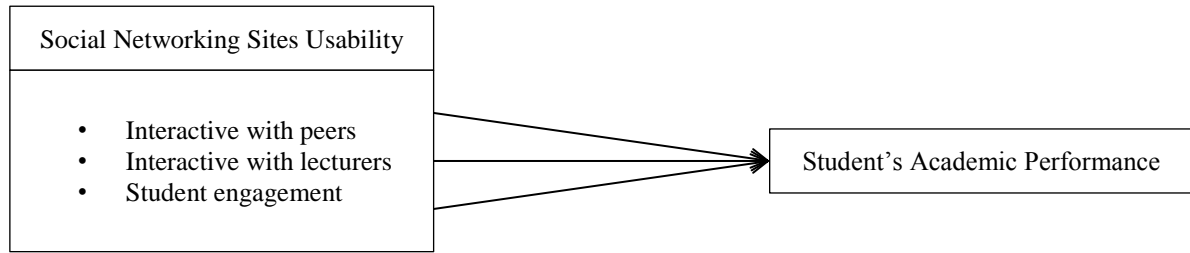


Figure 1: Research framework for social networking sites usability on student’s academic performance Waleed M. A. & Shahrizan O. (2014), Sharaf G., Musa M. & Rahman A. (2014), and Adam M. H. & Zairah A. B. (2014)

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study is attempted to explore the influence of social networking sites on students’ academic performance by focusing on descriptive and correlational study. The target population is consists of students from Faculty of Business and Management in selected higher education institutions in Malacca, Malaysia. There were only 219 sample size selected as respondents of the study as referring to Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The researcher used convenience sampling technique method to distribute questionnaire by giving respondents 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire given.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

*Demographic background*

The respondents of the study were consisting of students from Faculty Business and Management in selected higher education institution in Malacca, Malaysia. Majority of respondents consist of 153 female students (69.4%), while male students consist of 65 respondents (29.7%). Mostly the respondent age around 21 – 25 years old accumulated 86.8% (n=190), while respondent age from 26 – 30 years old are the lowest accumulated only 4.1% (n=9).

*Type of Social Network Site*

Table 2.1 showed the most popular social networking site preferred by respondents. Based on the following table, Instagram are considered type of popular social networking sites preferred by respondents comprise of 71.2% (n=156), while the less popular social networking sites preferred are MySpace comprise of only 2.3% (n=5).

| Type of social network | Frequency  | Percentage   |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Facebook               | <b>134</b> | <b>61.2%</b> |
| Instagram              | <b>156</b> | <b>71.2%</b> |
| Twitter                | <b>102</b> | <b>46.6%</b> |
| Google                 | <b>32</b>  | <b>14.6%</b> |
| Myspace                | <b>5</b>   | <b>2.3%</b>  |
| Yahoo Messenger        | <b>10</b>  | <b>4.6%</b>  |
| YouTube                | <b>75</b>  | <b>34.2%</b> |
| Gmail                  | <b>32</b>  | <b>14.6%</b> |
| Others                 | <b>9</b>   | <b>4.1%</b>  |

Table 2.1: Type of Social Network Site

*Time spent*

Mostly the respondent were use social network sites with average 1 – 2 hours which are 42.0% (n=92). Meanwhile, only 28 respondents (12.8%) stated that, they were using social network for 5 and above hours per day spent on social network.

| Time Spent                       | Frequency | Percentage  |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>30 minutes per day</b>        | <b>36</b> | <b>16.4</b> |
| <b>1-2 hours per day</b>         | <b>92</b> | <b>42.0</b> |
| <b>3-4 hours per day</b>         | <b>63</b> | <b>28.8</b> |
| <b>5 and above hours per day</b> | <b>28</b> | <b>12.8</b> |

Table 2.2: Time Spent on Social Network Site

#### Accessibility on Social Network Sites

Most of the respondent were use smartphone to connect with social network sites which are accumulated 96.1% (n=221), meanwhile the lowest frequency are tablet and PC with same percentage which are accumulated 9.6% (n=21).

| Type of Device           | Frequency  | Percentage  |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Smartphone</b>        | <b>221</b> | <b>96.3</b> |
| <b>Personal Computer</b> | <b>21</b>  | <b>9.6</b>  |
| <b>Tablet</b>            | <b>21</b>  | <b>9.6</b>  |
| <b>Laptop</b>            | <b>72</b>  | <b>32.9</b> |

Table 2.3: Accessibility on Social Network Sites

#### Correlations Analysis

As referring to correlation coefficient table, all variables of social networking sites usability have significant and positive relationship with students' academic performance. Student engagement provides strong relationship on students' academic performance with  $r$  value 0.614,  $p < 0.01$ . According to Kuh (2009), the engagement is student's effort and participation of students in university related with university outcomes. Engagement is important as student because it can be influence toward the academic performance. Meanwhile, interactive with peers and interactive with lecturer provide a moderate relationship on students' academic performance with  $r$  value 0.479 and 0.452,  $p < 0.01$  respectively. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are accepted.

- H1: There is a relationship between social networking usability and students' academic performance  
H2: There is a relationship between interactive with peers and student academic performance  
H3: There is a relationship between interactive with teachers and social networking usability

| Correlations             |                     |                        |                          |                    |                      |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
|                          |                     | Interactive with peers | Interactive with lecture | Student engagement | Academic performance |
| Interactive with peers   | Pearson Correlation | 1                      |                          |                    |                      |
| Interactive with lecture | Pearson Correlation | .439**                 | 1                        |                    |                      |
| Student engagement       | Pearson Correlation | .551**                 | .428**                   | 1                  |                      |
| Academic performance     | Pearson Correlation | .479**                 | .452**                   | .614**             | 1                    |
|                          | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                   | .000                     | .000               | .000                 |

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2.4: Correlation Analysis

#### Level of Student's Academic Performance

According to table 2.5, the overall total mean score for student academic performance is 3.7666 (SD= .51842). It can be considered that most of student in selected higher education in Malacca have higher level of academic performance.

| Academic Performance | N   | Mean   | Std. Deviation |
|----------------------|-----|--------|----------------|
|                      | 219 | 3.7666 | .51842         |

Table 2.5: Level of Academic Performance

Most of the respondents agreed with the statement that “I believe that the social media help my studies because I can discuss my assignment with friends” with mean score 3.95 (SD = 0.718). Meanwhile, most of the respondents less agreed with the statement that “I believe that social medias are helpful in my studies because I can receive information from lecturer and faculty” with mean score 3.41 (SD = 0.896). This finding supported by Junco (2012) and Junco et. al. (2011), whereby students who engage in academic learning that accommodate social network sites, make out an improvement in overall GPA while compared with students who do not engage in social network sites.

|  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|------|----------------|
| I believe that group discussion can be arranged with my class mate using social media                              | 3.89 | .744           |
| I believe that an appointment can be fixed with lecturer by social media   | 3.82 | .742           |
| I believe that social medias are helpful in my studies because I can receive information from lecturer and faculty | 3.41 | .896           |
| I believe that my prayer time is punctual even I am using social media tools for academic purpose                  | 3.90 | .735           |
| I believe that using social media helps improve my interaction with classmate and lecturer                         | 3.68 | .816           |
| I believe that the social media help my studies because I can discuss my assignment with friends                   | 3.95 | .718           |
| I believe that my prayer time is punctual even I am using social media tools for academic purpose                  | 3.53 | .959           |
| I believe that using social media helps improve my intreation with classmate and lecturer                          | 3.88 | .771           |
| I believe that using social media facilitate academic activites and coordinate with friends                        | 3.84 | .723           |

Table 2.6: Descriptive analysis of students' academic performance

#### *An Islamic Perspectives of Social Networking Sites Usability*

As referring to the Islamic perspectives table, most of the students agreed with the statement that “I believe that my prayer time is punctual even i am using social media tools for academic purpose” with mean score 3.90 (SD = 0.735). Meanwhile, most of students less agreed with the statement that “I am using social media to introduce Islam to non-Muslims by creating specific group” with mean score 3.46 (SD = 0.925).

|  | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|------|----------------|
| I am using social media to introduce islam to non Muslims by creating specific group                         | 3.46 | .925           |
| am using social media to make any Islamic text in the comment to share the knowledge with my peers           | 3.79 | .769           |
| I am using the social media strength kinship relation  | 3.63 | .752           |
| I use social networking site to share educational multimedia video with lecturer                             | 3.57 | .856           |
| I feel that using social networking site to create dawah group have increase the awareness level about islam | 3.79 | .791           |
| I believe that my prayer time is punctual even I am using social media tools for academic purpose            | 3.90 | .735           |

Table 2.7: Descriptive statistic on Islamic perspectives of social networking sites usability

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The study provides important findings an Islamic perspective on the influence of social networking usability on students' academic performance which the variable of student engagement is considered a good predictor for future research since it provides strong relationship on student academic performance. In addition, the researcher recommends future researcher to specifically focus on the impact of Islamic perspective on social networking sites especially on Muslim student in term of cultural and environmental. Thus, future researcher enables to use these findings as a basic platform to explore the impact of social networking sites on students' academic performance.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, social networking sites are considered good platform for rapid development in the communication technology in influencing students' academic performance. All variables in social networking sites usability provide significant and positive relationship with students' academic performance, whilst student engagement contributed the highest coefficient and strong relationship. In addition, students in selected higher education institution also showed higher level of academic performance whenever they accommodate with social network sites especially for academic purposes. Besides, most of the students also enable to follow several guidelines according to Islamic injunction even though they are engaging with social network sites including pray on time, made Islamic text in the comment and create dawah group to increase awareness level about Islam. Therefore, social networking sites enable to provide significant influences on students in selected higher education institution in Malacca, Malaysia especially on academic performance.

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