

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE IMPACT OF FACEBOOK ON
SOCIAL IMAGE, INTERACTION SKILLS
AND DISCOURSE:
A CASE STUDY OF UNIKL MICET STUDENTS**

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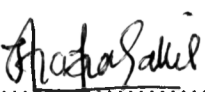
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Abstract

With 900 million account holders, it is without doubt that Facebook is the most popular social networking site the world has ever witnessed. The users come from all walks of life, without any discrimination on gender, ethnicity, age, religion or political affiliation – it is a cyber-state with citizens that can present themselves, their views and ideas to a select circle of friends, not strangers. Considered a dominant, vibrant social networking site (Khaddage & Bray, 2011) in youths' life today, Facebook allows its users to be the “centre of the world” in their own space (Dalsgaard, 2008, p.9). The study focuses on the impact of Facebook to its users' social image, interaction skills and discourse. The research utilized a set of questionnaire as the instrument to measure the influence and role that Facebook plays on 136 young undergraduates in UniKL MICET, Melaka. The findings of the study is very interesting as it can be perceived that Facebook does influence the construction of a positive social image of its participants, as many respondents claim that they will only reveal the positive side of themselves to their Facebook audience. Other than that, it is observed that Facebook has helped the undergraduates improve their interaction skills, especially with friends and relatives they were not familiar with before. Finally, it is also perceived from the findings that Facebook influences the use of discourse among the respondents, who feel that their English proficiency has improved due to the frequent use of the language on the social network. Therefore, it is hoped that with the findings, educators can engage young Facebookers to utilize the social network through activities that can improve their social image, interaction skills and discourse.

Abstrak

Laman Facebook (FB) telah dikenalpasti sebagai laman Internet yang paling ramai pengunjung di alam siber kini. Dengan 900 juta pengguna dari seluruh dunia, tanpa diskriminasi dari segi jantina, etnik, umur, agama, atau fahaman politik – Facebook bagaikan sebuah negara siber yang memberi kebebasan penuh kepada warganegaranya untuk menonjolkan diri, pandangan atau idea mereka tanpa sebarang kekangan. Sebagai laman sosial yang berpengaruh dan menarik dalam kehidupan pengguna dari golongan muda (Khaddage & Bray, 2011), FB turut memberikan ‘kuasa’ kepada seseorang untuk merekacipta dan mengawal dunia rekaannya sendiri (Dalsgaard, 2008, p.9). Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti samada penggunaan FB memberi impak kepada imej sosial, kemahiran berinteraksi dan penggunaan bahasa di kalangan pengguna FB. Borang soal-selidik telah digunakan sebagai instrument kajian, melibatkan 136 responden di kalangan pelajar UniKL MICET, Alor Gajah, Melaka. Dapatan kajian mendapati bahawa FB memainkan peranan dalam pembentukan imej sosial yang positif di kalangan pelajar, terutama dari segi menampilkan hanya perkara yang baik kepada rakan FB mereka. Selain itu, pengguna FB mendakwa bahawa kemahiran interaksi mereka semakin baik terutama dari segi hubungan dengan rakan-rakan dan ahli keluarga yang kurang dikenali sebelum ini. FB turut memberi impak kepada penggunaan bahasa, terutama dari segi kemahiran Bahasa Inggeris yang semakin baik kerana ia kerap digunakan di laman tersebut. Oleh itu, penulis berharap agar dapatan kajian ini boleh dijadikan panduan oleh para akademik untuk mengaplikasikan FB sebagai wadah dalam usaha meningkatkan imej sosial, kemahiran berkomunikasi dan bahasa di kalangan pelajar.