THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNS) AND QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

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5.1 Executive Summary

Social networking site (SNS) is one of the fastest growing Internet use. It is also one of social media platforms that encouraged social interaction in a virtual environment. This study on the quality use of SNS and quality of work life was conducted among lecturers and administrative staff in private and public universities. The purpose of this study was to examine the motives of using SNS and its association with quality work life. The researcher developed two research questions based on the conceptual framework comprised of two variables. Independent variable which is motives of using SNS consists of information seeking, entertainment, social interaction and self-disclosure, and the dependent variable, quality work life is divided into two, which are interpersonal relationship and personal health and well-being. With the aid of a questionnaire, the instrument was distributed to 300 respondents among lecturers and administrative staff in private and public universities. Findings from this study indicated social interaction is the major motives of respondents in using SNS. In addition, the most influential factor for interpersonal relationship is information seeking and for personal health and well-being is entertainment. Findings obtained from this study has identified the critical motives of using SNS that lead to better quality of work life. In short, this study has provided significant contribution not only to the employees but also to the designers, developers, researchers, organization and society.

Keywords: social networking sites, quality work life, information seeking, entertainment, social interaction, self-disclosure, interpersonal relationship, personal health and well-being.

5.2   Introduction

One of the fastest growing Internet uses today is the social networking site (SNS). It is a popular platform where all the registered users share information with other registered users (Trusov, Bodapati & Bucklin, 2010). This popularity is mainly given by the fact that SNSs help to connect a person with other online users (e.g. friends, family members, colleagues), share information (e.g. blogs, photos, videos), and help individuals and organizations with other purposes (e.g. promoting new products, recruiting new members).

According to the Internet World Stats, the total estimated population for Asia in 2012 was 3,922,066,987 and total Internet users were 1,076,681,059 as of 30 June 2012 . In Malaysia, the number of Internet users was more than 17 million as of June 2012. In December 2012, Facebook users in Malaysia increased to more than 13.5 million users. This figure is imperative as the number of active Facebook users were more than 901 million as of 30 April 2012, and more than 75% of users are outside the U.S. (Facebook Facts and Figures, 2011). Definitely, the figures will keep increasing from time to time.

Looking at the figure above, it seems to suggest that Internet users spend a lot of time on SNSs. Hence, it is very important to understand the motives behind the usage of SNSs among online users. Relatively, many researches are interested in assessing the motives of using SNSs. Bolar (2009) highlighted several important motives that contribute to SNSs usage; self-reflection and image-building (i.e. expression of oneself on the SNS), utility (i.e. using features and functionality of the SNS), information-gathering and problem-solving, networking, simply-spending time, revisiting-memories (i.e. search for old friends) and peer influence (i.e. a friend invites a person to register on an SNS). However, other relevant motives for joining SNS were; i) finding and connecting to people (Brouns, Berlanga, Fetter, Bitter-Rijpkema, VanBruggen & Sloep, 2009) ii) social support and friendship (Ridings & Gefen, 2004) iii) communicate with friends (Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, 2009) iv) to make new friends (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007) and v) looking for fun and enjoyment from using SNS (Goh, Lada, Muhammad, Ag-Ibrahim & Amboala, 2011). On the other hand, Wong, Lean, and Fernandez (2011) found that the main reason for SNS usage among youth is peer-to-peer communication. In fact, Boyd and Ellison (2008), Hemple (2005), Pempek, Yermolayeva, and Calvert (2009), Hirst, Bednall, Ashwin and Icoz (2009) reported peer-to-peer communication is the main reason for SNSs rapid growth. Even several studies have focused on motives behind