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EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT TYPES ON ENGAGEMENT BEHAVIOUR AMONG YOUTH

Muhamad Kamal Arif Bin Muhamad[1], Melissa Shahrom[1]*

[1]*Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam Campus, Selangor, Malaysia*

Corresponding author e-mail: melissa@uitm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

In the context of the contemporary global business environment, the role of social media has increased drastically especially among youth who have been shown to spend a great deal of time on social media. The purpose of this study is to explore the effect of the elements in social media contents (informational content, entertaining content, remunerative content, and relational content) on social media engagement behaviour and whether or not social media contents are connected to social media engagement behaviour. The study was also conducted to determine the highest category of social media contents that contributes to social media engagement behaviour among youth. The students from the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam, Malaysia were chosen as the sample for this study because of their familiarity with social media various platforms. Online self-completion questionnaire was used as the main instrument and the data received from the respondents was analyzed using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 26.0. Findings from the study revealed that informational content is the highest category of social media content that contributes to social media engagement behaviour among youth. The Pearson Correlation indicated that the relationships between social media contents and social media engagement behaviour are significant. Moreover, Multiple Linear Regression analysis shows that relational content is the strongest predictor of social media engagement behaviour among youth. The implications of these findings are discussed for researchers and practitioners.

Keywords: Social media, social media engagement behaviour, informational content, entertaining content, remunerative content, relational content

INTRODUCTION

Social media has been acknowledged as significant instruments that enable big ranges of users to unite freely and readily exchange knowledge and communicate their ideas, feelings and opinions (Ahmed et al., 2019). A study by Go-globe (2015) revealed that social media users account for as much as 13.3 million or 45.5% of Malaysia's total inhabitants. As of January 2024, Malaysia had 28.68 million social media users which marks a significant increase from 2015 (Datareportal, 2024). The substantial growth underscores the expanding influence of social media in Malaysia over the past decade. From that amount, those aged 13 to 34 years old were Malaysia's largest social media users contributing up to 80.3 percent of Malaysia's 13.3 million social media users. Youth has also been identified as the age cohort that makes up the majority of online shoppers in many developed countries (Muda et al., 2016). Marketers are increasingly emphasizing engagement especially towards millennials on social media for campaigns purposes because millennials will dominate the consumption market on the Internet (Andersson & Arnvaller, 2017; Grau et al., 2019). With that being said, businesses who fail to engage with young people on social media platforms are being left behind (Goudie, 2018). Thus, the purpose of this study is to acquire a better understanding of youth engagement behaviour on social media so that businesses can utilize their social media content to facilitate the segmentation process and effectively reach out to the millennial generation. The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) was applied in this study to explore social media users' motivation to engage with certain types of media content including informational content, entertaining content, remunerative content, and relational content. Therefore, by investigating social media engagement behaviour in the perspective of uses and gratifications theory, the effect and relationship of the elements in social media content on social media engagement behaviour can be determined in order to indicate how youth would react to social media contents.

Informational Content

The informational content characterizes the degree to which posts on social media provide users with quick-witted and useful information (Laryea, 2017). Informational content can be described as the different types of information contained in the social media and is produced to exchange and disseminate thoughtful information that may be helpful to other users and influence information that may change or affirm an individual's views or stance on a particular problem (Egger, 2003; Wang, 2012).

H1   There is a positive relationship between informational content and social media engagement behaviour among youth.

Entertaining Content

Dolan et al. (2019) describe the entertainment construct as the extent to which the online media is enjoyable and pleasant for media users. It motivates users to try out and participate in social network platforms and content to meet their entertainment, leisure or time-consuming needs (Videgren et al., 2018).

H2   There is a positive relationship between entertaining content and social media engagement behaviour among youth.

Remunerative Content

Remunerative content refers to the extent to which the content of social media offers financial or incentive benefits (Dolan et al., 2019). It delivers economic benefits and gains attention using contests, coupons, and other offers in social media (Menon et al., 2019). Remunerative content also embraces the situations where people engage in social media use as they expect to gain some kind of rewards such as an economic incentive, job-related benefit or personal desires (Katsitadze, 2016).

H3   There is a positive relationship between remunerative content and social media engagement behaviour among youth.

Relational Content

Relational content refers to the extent to which the content of social media meets the need for participation and personal communication of users and the willingness for social gains (Dolan et al., 2019). It refers to content that is person-focused, generated on social media to establish, sustain or develop personal relationships (Yang, 2017).

H4   There is a positive relationship between relational content and social media engagement behaviour among youth.
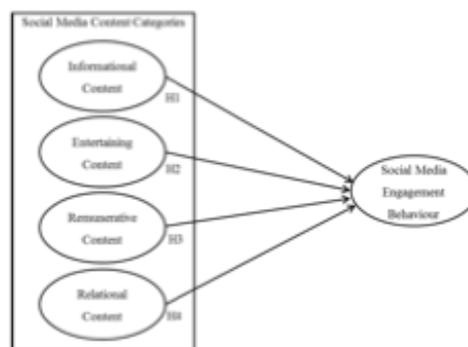

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Social Media Content and Social Media Engagement Behaviour
(Dolan et al., 2016)

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The correlational study was used to study the relationship between social media content and social media engagement behaviour. The sampling frame for this study consists of students from the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies at UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor. The population of this study consist of 2,365 students from the faculty and the sampling method that was used to obtain the sample was convenience sampling. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for deciding the

sample size for a given population of 2,365 is 331. The online self-completion questionnaire was created and a total of 331 responses were received. However, only 329 responses were valid for analysis. The data that was collected in this study was analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the highest category of social media content that contributes to social media engagement. Inferential statistics such as Pearson's correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were also used to investigate the relationship between the variables and to study the effect of the elements in social media content on social media engagement behaviour among youth.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study surveyed respondents, with 21.3% males and 78.7% females. The majority (64.1%) were aged 19-22, followed by 23-26 (31.9%) and 27-30 (2.7%) years old. Educational status showed 18.8% were pursuing a Diploma, 77.5% a Bachelor's Degree, 3.3% a Master's Degree, and 0.3% a PhD. Marital status indicated 1.5% were married, 98.5% single. 98.8% agreed social media is important for youth. Daily usage was high at 98.5%, with WhatsApp (97%) and Instagram (93.9%) being the most used platforms. Most (98.2%) browsed for entertainment, while 90.3% sought informational content, 86% for education, 49.8% for relational, and 18.2% for remunerative content.

Normality Analysis

Acceptable skewness and kurtosis value are in the range of +/- 3 (Hair et al., 2010). Table 1 shows that all of the variables were normally distributed since the value of skewness and kurtosis for these variables is in the range of +/-3. Nonetheless, two outliers were removed to ensure normality in the data set.

Table 1: Normality Analysis

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
Informational Content	-.724	-.031
Entertaining Content	-.699	.925
Remunerative Content	-.202	.238
Relational Content	-.715	-.133
Social Media Engagement Behaviour	-.194	-.483

Reliability Analysis

Table 2 indicates that the Cronbach's Alpha values. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2016), reliabilities less than 0.60 are considered to be poor, those in the 0.70 range, acceptable, and those over 0.80 good.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Informational Content	0.819	5
Entertaining Content	0.803	4
Remunerative Content	0.884	4
Relational Content	0.709	4
Social Media Engagement Behaviour	0.827	7

Descriptive Analysis

According to Table 3, of all the independent variable, the highest mean score for social media content is informational content with the mean of 4.4657 (SD=.48797) which is reckoned as the highest category of social media content that contributes to social media engagement behaviour among youth.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Independent Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Informational Content	3.00	5.00	4.4657	.48797
Entertaining Content	1.00	5.00	4.1884	.66389
Remunerative Content	1.00	5.00	3.4605	.84867

Relational Content	2.50	5.00	4.4347	.53132

Pearson's Correlation Analysis

Table 4 indicates the relationship between social media content and social media engagement behaviour.

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Analysis

		Informatio nal	**Entertaini ng**	**Remunerati ve**	**Relation al**	**SME B**
Information al	Pearson Correlatio n	1	.394**	.360**	.453**	.382**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	329	329	329	329	329
Entertainin g	Pearson Correlatio n	.394**	1	.323**	.303**	.282**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	329	329	329	329	329
Remunerati ve	Pearson Correlatio n	.360**	.323**	1	.322**	.412**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	329	329	329	329	329
Relational	Pearson Correlatio n	.453**	.303**	.322**	1	.452**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	329	329	329	329	329
SMEB	Pearson Correlatio n	.382**	.282**	.412**	.452**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	329	329	329	329	329

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

Multiple Regression Analysis

According to Table 5, the adjusted R square of .295 implies that all of the independent variables explain 29.5% of the variance in a dependent variable while 70.5% of the variance in the dependent variable is not explained by the independent variables in this study.

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis (Model Summary)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.551ᵃ	.303	.295	.60679

a. Predictors: (Constant), Relational, Entertaining, Remunerative, Informational

Table 6 shows the result of the Multiple Regression Analysis (ANOVA) for the independent variables. The result indicated that it was statistically significant with F value of 35.294 (p<0.05).

Table 6 Multiple Regression Analysis (ANOVA)

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.979	4	12.995	35.294	.000[b]
	Residual	119.294	324	.368		
	Total	171.273	328			

a. Dependent Variable: SMEB

b. Predictors: (Constant), Relational, Entertaining, Remunerative, Informational

Table 7 indicates that the p-value of informational content is 0.015 (1.5%) which is below the 5% significant level. Therefore, informational content is positively related to social media engagement behaviour. However, entertaining content is not related to the dependent variable since the p-value for entertaining content is 0.255 (25.5%) which is above the 5% significant level. Whereas both remunerative content and relational content have a p-value of 0.00 (0.00%) which lead these two variables to be related to social media engagement behaviour among youth. The result suggests that relational content is the largest beta coefficient with a beta value of 0.291 which makes it the strongest predictor to the social media engagement behaviour among youth. The second would be remunerative content with a beta value of 0.251 followed by informational content with a beta value of 0.136. The weakest predictor would be entertaining content with a beta value of 0.059.

Table 7 Multiple Regression Analysis (Coefficients[a])

Coefficient[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.209	.355		.589	.556
	Informational	.202	.082	.136	2.449	.015
	Entertaining	.065	.057	.059	1.141	.255
	Remunerative	.213	.044	.251	4.859	.000
	Relational	.396	.073	.291	5.456	.000

a. Dependent Variable: SMEB

CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to investigate social media engagement behaviour among youth. The descriptive analysis indicates that informational content is the highest category of social media content that contributes to social media engagement behaviour. Moreover, Pearson's correlation analysis reveals that there is a positive relationship between the variables. The findings of this study indicate that social media content predicts social media engagement behaviour among youth with relational content as the most influential factor followed by remunerative content and informational content while entertaining content is the weakest predictor. This aligns with the findings of (Laryea, 2017), who highlighted that content fostering interpersonal connections significantly enhances user engagement on social media platforms. The strong influence of relational content also reflects the cultural tendencies among youth to prioritize connectivity and personal relationships, as highlighted in (Yang, 2017). However, the weak predictive power of entertaining content differs from previous findings by (Videgren et al., 2018), who suggested entertainment as a dominant factor in certain demographic or cultural contexts. This discrepancy could be attributed to differences in sample characteristics or the evolving preferences of youth towards more meaningful or value-driven interactions over purely entertainment-focused content. The results for remunerative and informational content are consistent with (Dolan et al., 2019; Laryea, 2017) who found that tangible incentives and informative posts significantly impact engagement behaviour. Future studies should explore the role of

mediators (e.g., trust and perceived value) or moderators (e.g., personality traits, platform algorithms) in the relationship between content types and engagement behaviour.

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