THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Social media has now become an integral part of a student's life. It may harm their productivity, especially their time management. On the positive side, social media provides students with learning opportunities and the chance to interact with others during online distance learning. This study focuses on determining whether the students' average time spent on social media is related to their CGPA results. In addition, this study highlighted either gender effects of social media use by students. In this study, a questionnaire designed by QuestionPro was adopted and revised. It was distributed through social media platforms and gathered 50 respondents. The relationship between average time spent on social media with CGPA results was analysed using the Chi-Square test of independence. In contrast, the independent sample t-test was used to analyse the effectiveness of social media use by students' gender. Based on the results, the Chi-Square test (p<0.001) shows that social media usage impacts students' performance, where students who get high CGPA results spend minimum average time daily on social media. The independent sample t-test shows that the effectiveness of social media used between males (M=3.526, SD=0.697) and females (M=3.645, SD=0.985) are not statistically significant t(48)=-0.459, p=0.648.SD=0.697).

Keywords: social media, online learning, academic performance, gender effectiveness

Introduction

Nowadays, social media is regarded as a necessity in life for many, particularly the younger generations. People can now be seen using laptops, mobile phones, or other smart gadgets to browse and surf social networking sites, read blogs, or communicate anywhere and at any time. Some people are even addicted to certain apps, such as online gaming. Undoubtedly, social media is one of the fastest-growing segments on the web (Parra-López et al., 2011).

Frequently used social media applications are weblogs or blogs (i.e. Blogger and WordPress), social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter and MySpace), photos and videos (i.e. Flickr and YouTube), online encyclopaedia (i.e. Wikipedia), online bookmarking (i.e. Delicious), virtual social worlds (i.e. Second Life) and virtual game worlds (i.e. World of Craft). These social media platforms

allow users to search, create, share, collaborate and organise content among them. They also provide virtual self-presentation and self-disclosure for their users.

Cheng & Cho (2021) studied social media use by concentrating on job needs and revealed why employees believe social media is crucial for them at work. According to their findings, employees use social media during work breaks to unwind from stressful work and job expectations. This study examines the influence of social media on students' performance by determining whether their CGPA results are affected by the average time they spend on social media. Next is to investigate the difference in the effectiveness of social media use among Malaysian students by gender.

Methodology

The questionnaire for this study was created using Google Form and disseminated through social media platforms, namely Twitter, Telegram, and WhatsApp online messenger applications. Altogether, 50 respondents participated in this survey.

The questionnaire was adopted from the questionnaire designed by QuestionPro. The questions in the questionnaire were adapted and modified to meet this study's needs. It was divided into two sections where respondents were asked about their gender, age, education level, and institution in the first section. The following section covers the social media used by the respondents, their average time spent on social media and their previous semester CGPA results. They also have to rate their level of agreement on social media effectiveness from 0 (not agreed) to 100 (most agreed). In addition, they need to determine their social media performance based on a five Likert Scale. Table 1 below describes each data from the survey analysed using SPSS.

The methods used to analyse the data obtained from the survey differ according to the objectives. The Chi-Square Test of Independence was used to determine whether the CGPA performance results in the online distance learning related to their average time spent on social media. This method was chosen because it meets the criteria to explore the association of two categorical variables. Next, to investigate the difference in the effectiveness of social media use by Malaysian students according to their gender, the independent sample t-test was used. We analysed the respondent demographic profile using descriptive analysis, where the data were combined into one chart.

Table 1: Data Description

Variable	Type of variable	Scale of measurement
Gender	Qualitative	Nominal
Age	Qualitative	Nominal
Education level	Qualitative	Nominal
Institution of study	Qualitative	Nominal
Social media used	Qualitative	Nominal
Average time spends	Qualitative	Ordinal
Previous CGPA result	Qualitative	Ordinal
Rate of social media effectiveness	Quantitative	Ratio
Social media performance	Qualitative	Ordinal

Finding

Figure 1 below illustrates the respondents' demographic profile consisting of four items which are gender, age, education level and institution of study. The result shows that most of the respondents who participated in this study are female, bachelor students, and public universities. About 40% (20 respondents) are students from certification, diploma, master and doctorate levels of education. Students between the ages of 21 and 22 less participated in this study, with most respondents being between the ages of 23 and 24.
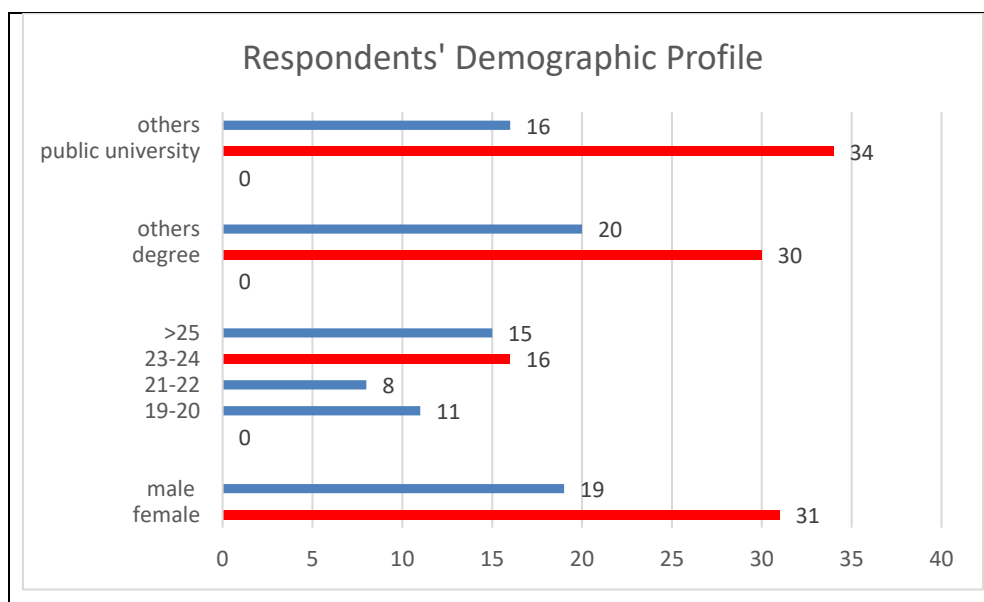

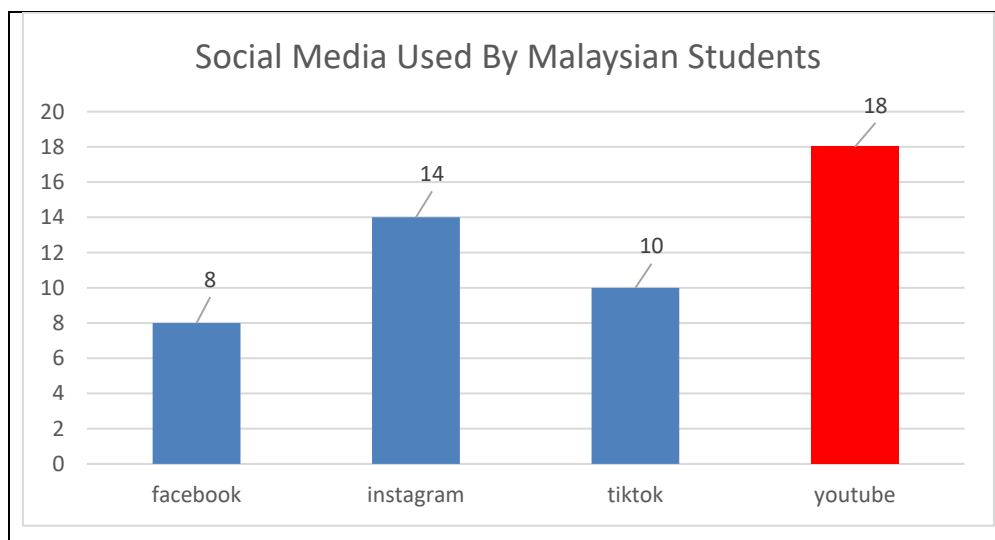Figure 1: Chart of Demographic Profile

Figure 2: The social media used by Malaysian students.

Figure 2 above shows the types of social media Malaysian students utilise regularly. Four popular social media platforms were shortlisted in this study. The study found that YouTube was the most social media chosen by the respondents. This finding supported the article written by Aliyah (2019) in slamxhype.com, where the author listed out five reasons why YouTube is the best social media platform. In other words, this platform has evolved into one of the most effective ways for people to engage, whether it is for watching shows or sharing information.

The Chi-Square test was conducted to investigate the relationship between average time spent on social media and CGPA results during online distance learning. Average time spent on online learning consists of a choice of '1-3 hours', '4-6 hours', '7-9 hours', and '10 hours and above'. Meanwhile, CGPA result ranges from '2.00-2.19', '2.20-2.99', '3.00-3.49' to '3.50-4.00'. The hypothesis statements are as follows:

H_0: There is no relationship between university students' average time spent on social media and CGPA results.

H_1: There is a relationship between university students' average time spent on social media and CGPA results.

The Chi-Square test indicates a relationship between average time spent on social media and CGPA results among university students where the test value p is less than 0.001. It reveals that the

number of time students frequently spend on social media impacts their academic performance. Furthermore, most students who scored high CGPA results spent minimum average time on social media daily.

The independent sample t-test was performed to examine whether there is any difference in the effectiveness of social media use by Malaysian students according to their gender. An independent sample t-test indicates that the difference in the effectiveness of social media use by Malaysian students between males (M=3.526, SD=0.697) and females (M=3.645, SD=0.985) is not statistically significant resulted t(48)=-0.459, p=0.648. It shows no difference in the effectiveness of social media uses by Malaysian students between gender.

Conclusion

From the findings, clearly, there is a correlation between the average amount of time students spend on social media and their CGPA results. Hence, it is a reciprocal relationship because students with better CGPA results use fewer social media daily. Furthermore, there is no gender difference in the effectiveness of using social media among Malaysian students. Male and female students spend similar average hours on social media, and their CGPA results' efficacy is also identical.

Undoubtedly, today's social networking sites are frequently utilised by students to connect with others and keep up with current news and hype. According to a study by Rahman M.S.A. et al. (2021), many students experienced high-stress levels during current online distance learning. It can be assumed that the students are likely trying to release their stress by spending hours on social media. However, the effects of spending too much time on social media on their CGPA results should not be overlooked. Students need to manage their time wisely and study diligently to obtain a good CGPA.

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