

Why New Media Communication? Exploring the motivation of female students in a new media communication programme

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Abstract: *Abstract: Motivation has been underscored as an important component of student learning in the educational sector. New Media Communication is important more today than ever due to the fast growing globalisation of all facets of life.. The current study explores female students' motivation in the New Media Communication programme. It is to be noted that , female students are lesser than male students every year, according to student admission statistics at Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). Since this programme is still considered new in UiTM, (which first started in 2017), the public domain have yet to learn of its contents and what this course could offer in the future. The foundation of the New Media Communication programme is the exploration of interactive, gamified, and animated media in the production of digital content. This study aims to attract female students to apply to the New Media Communication programme when they pursue their studies so that it has equality between the numbers of female and male students. The methodology used will be a qualitative research method. Several female students from the New Media Communication programme were interviewed to for the study. Findings from this study show that their motivations are a dynamic blend of personal passion, career aspirations, and the transformative potential of new media technologies. In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of fostering an environment that acknowledges these motivations and actively supports and promotes them, ultimately contributing to the advancement and innovation of the new media communication field.*

Keywords: *New Media, Communication, motivation, female students, New Media Communication Program*

1. INTRODUCTION

Motivation is typically described as the reason why people or animals commence, continue, or stop a certain activity at a specific moment. Motivational moods vary in intensity. The higher the degree, the more likely it is that the state influences behavior. Motivation is the ability to focus one's actions in the direction of a certain goal (Indahingwati et al., 2019). Motivation has been explained as an important component for student learning in the educational sector. Students who enroll in a New Media Communication (NMC) programme are frequently required to produce works of art on a regular basis, such as animation and games. However, there has not been enough or a significant amount of study on motivating students in New Media Communication education. Oh (2018) analyzed the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) framework used in the creative classroom and discovered that the SDT model is effective in inspiring, particularly intrinsically motivated, creative media students.

New Media Communication programmes are interesting in that they use several teaching methods such as studio-based learning and project-based learning, which require students to actively interact with their project. The essential principles of motivation in SDT are competence, autonomy, and relatedness, and it is necessary to identify and investigate how these characteristics might be utilized and aid in the motivation of New Media Communication students. Hence, many courses, including animation and media courses, have designed peer- and student-oriented learning activities that are more motivating and engaging (Oh et al., 2020). In particular with a blended learning environment, the researchers have noticed an increase in student participation while sharing their technical expertise during and outside of class activities. Students converse and support one another both in person and online.

In Malaysia, there are only a few universities that offer this programme. University Teknologi Mara (UiTM) and Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP) are among the public universities that offer New Media Communication programmes. The New Media Communication programme is founded on the exploration of the mediums of animation, gamification, and interactive media in the creation of digital content. This initiative pushes us to focus on themes such as animation, gamification, and interactive media for use in

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developing various platforms for digital content development. Time-based media, narrative, content development, and other emerging technologies used in the animation, gaming, and mobile industries are all covered in the curriculum. This programme encourages students to experiment with the creation of digital content through the use of animation, games, and interactive media. It also emphasizes creative and practical abilities as a reflection of comprehending the theoretical component and translating it to the practical aspect in developing a variety of end products. As the digital domain expands, the courses are designed to teach students the fundamentals of visualizing their ideas into finished products in a variety of ways.

New Media Communication programme was introduced in September 2017. The New Media Communication Bachelor's Degree Program introduced by Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in September 2023, has become a platform to produce more skilled and competitive graduates. (Berita Harian, 2017). The Dean of the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies (FKPM) UiTM in 2017, Datuk Professor Dr Azizul Halim Yahya, said that the program is in line with the needs and wants of today's interactive market. He also claims that the way we communicate with one another now differs from how it was 10-20 years ago. Tablets and smartphones are becoming more popular, and television is no longer just a means of entertainment. "As a result, students will be exposed to applications and translations that incorporate appropriate animation, game, and interactive media techniques," he explained. He also claims that graduates have the opportunity to fill a void that is based not only on the concept of new media technology boom, but also on entrepreneurship that can generate income. They demand the digital market because the elements that are applied are not just a shock on their own, but instead can inject variety in line with the development of technology.

For this programme, students will have a lot of opportunities since today is an era of globalization. Students can make their own money or side income at their fingertips. The opportunities they can think about include the roles of director, producer, scriptwriter, editor, sound designer, foley artist, production manager, cinematographer, production designer, art director, visual effects artist, digital content creator.

2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

1. Women's involvement in new media industry

Women play an important role in the animation and video game industries. While the animation and games industry has reached new heights of success and made tremendous progress in recent years, the gender imbalance in the industry remains challenging and difficult to ignore. Women are represented in production roles, but not in directorial or technical positions. The creative leads in almost all of the top creative animation studios are always men, particularly composers, FX artists, and generalists. This wage inequality is specifically discussed, with the researcher attributing the problem to the greater concentration of women in lower-paying occupations like games and animation and the lack of female representation in engineering and executive positions. (Bailey et al. 2021). Although gamer girls are also interested in working with games, the perception that this is a predominantly male, sexist, and bigoted environment, which underestimates, discredits, and harasses women, makes them believe that being a woman would hinder a career in this field (Castanho et al. 2018)

2. Students enrollment and adjustment when they study new media course

According to the statistics given from Madam Norasyikin, Chief Coordinator of New Media Communication programme, the enrollment of female students in New Media Communication programme from 2017-2022 are not constant. , The numbers increase and decrease. The total number of students admitted from 2017-2023 are 221 students. Female students have lesser numbers than male students which is only 110 students rather 7 than male students which is 111 students. This numbers show that female students have not enrolled in this programme. They may also not know the job scope for the future

3. Literature review

2.1 Motivation

Motivation can be described as energized and persistently goal-directed behavior. Motivation is the ability to focus one's actions in the direction of a certain goal (Indahingwati et al., 2019). We move and take action

when we are motivated. Motivation is a self-motivating process. Motivation, whether defined as a drive or a need, is a condition within us that desires a change, either in ourselves or in our surroundings. When we tap into this reservoir of energy, motivation provides the individual with the drive and direction needed to interact with the environment in an adaptive, open-ended, and problem-solving manner. (Reeve, 2015). Psychological needs for autonomy, mastery, and belonging all influence our behavior in similar ways. Likewise, this is also true for the desires of success, power, closure, meaning, and self-esteem. Some of these needs and the intrinsic activities we engage in will become part of our motives. The truth is that no matter what job you have, we all struggle to stay motivated at times. Fortunately, we are not powerless in this situation. Understanding the various types of motivation can assist in avoiding procrastination and remaining focused. When one understands what motivates you, you can use it to get back on track when you get off track. It can sometimes be as simple as reminding yourself why you enjoy your job. You may need a reward system to keep your team motivated if you're a leader.

There are two types of motivation which are intrinsic and extrinsic. Both have associated subtypes. Intrinsic motivation that is also known as internal motivation, arises from within. It refers to doing something for the sake of doing something because it aligns with your interests, passions, or personal values. These motivators have internal rewards, such as knowing you're living and life's purpose. Intrinsic motivation motivates a worker to perform a task because the task is inherently interesting or enjoyable, naturally satisfying, and pleasurable (Wen Lim et al. 2018). As a result, they have a deeper significance than other motivators, which can frequently keep you concentrated on a goal for a very long time. Extrinsic motivation that is also known as external motivation, refers to outside factors that motivate you to do something. Extrinsic rewards or negative consequences, for example, could motivate you. How well or poorly you complete a task determines what you get. Extrinsic motivation develops when motivating factors are not internal to the employee, such as safety, working conditions, corporate policy, status, pay, and interpersonal

relationships (Mitchell, Schuster, & Jin, 2020). Extrinsic motivators are only effective for short to medium-term projects because they are transient. Studies have shown that when people are promised an immediate reward, their motivation increases. External motivation can be students striving for academic success because their grades reflect their performance. Students who try to achieve their academic goals because they are genuinely interested in the subject matter, on the other hand, are intrinsically motivated

2.2 New Media Communication

On the other hand, new media describes platforms that rely on digital technology to interact with an audience. New media is frequently referred to as digital media or multimedia in today's nomenclature, while traditional media does not rely on digital technology to connect with audiences, such as print newspapers TV ads, and billboards. Any internet-based communication, including websites, emails, mobile devices, and streaming apps, can be categorised as new media. New media communication is an innovative and creative programme in which the students develop, interpret, and effectively communicate complex information in the digital age. For billions of people worldwide, the internet, social media, mobile apps, and other digital communications technologies have ingrained themselves into daily life. 4.54 billion people, or 59% of the world's population, are active Internet users, according to data from January 2020 (Statista, 2020). Companies can cheaply achieve their marketing goals using digital and social media marketing (Ajina, 2019).

Digital and social media technologies and applications have also been widely used to raise awareness of public services and political campaigns (Grover et al., 2019). New media in communication allows for a massive increase in communication volume. This gives people the option of accelerating communication and a chance to interact with one another. It enables previously distinct forms of communication to merge and connect. While it is acknowledged that the current trend of pushing digitalisation is rather uncritical (Castaneda & Swelyn, 2018), to enable students' "agency and identity in digital spaces," it is nevertheless necessary to provide them with digital skills as part

of their higher education experience (Kuhn Hildebrandt, 2019), and to get them ready for the change that comes with digital transformation, which will affect every aspect of societal and professional life (EDUCAUSE, 2018).

There are countless opportunities for researchers and practitioners to “listen” carefully to stakeholders, including customers, employees, suppliers, investors, regulatory authorities, and the media, thanks to the emergence of user-generated content in fora, newsgroups, social media, and crowdsourcing. The idea is that organisations can engage with stakeholders more effectively via digital media (Camilleri, 2019). Digitalization is the process of integrating digital technologies into daily life so that socioeconomic, environmental, sustainable development, and climate research applications are transformed (Ceipek et al., 2021). Digitalization is a defined process that transforms knowledge and information that has been physically gathered (like from sensors) into a computer-based language. The creation of digital technologies that can be incorporated into the Internet of Things (IoT) environment is made possible by this (Mondejar et al., 2021). Through embedded sensors, software, and other technologies that support data gathering and exchange, this IoT framework creates a strong network of physically connected objects across the internet (Mondejar et al., 2021; Rowan et al., 2022).

4. Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research technique to collect data by using interview methods. Many qualitative studies involve the collection of data through participant interviews. The most direct and easy way to gather rich, in-depth information about a particular phenomenon is through interviews. Qualitative interviews give researchers the chance to delve deeply into topics that are particular to the interviewees’ experiences and offer insights into how various phenomena of interest are experienced and perceived. Qualitative interviewing is a data-collection tool that can be used to answer a variety of research questions because it is useful in a variety of methodological approaches. However, qualitative research interviews are preferred when the researcher seeks to understand the interviewee’s subjective viewpoint of a phenomenon rather than producing generalizable

understandings of sizable groups of people. Interviews for qualitative studies can be more or less structured or open. Only one or a few predetermined questions may be included in an unstructured or semi-structured interview guide, allowing the interviewer to explore issues raised by the interviewee. Purposive sampling was used in this qualitative research to obtain accurate data, providing a better framework for answering the research question. Purposive sampling is a technique commonly used in qualitative research to identify and identify samples with a wealth of information and best use the limited resources available. Selective or purposeful sampling is the process by which a researcher selects the subjects for a study. The right participant who meets the research's goal may be difficult to find, even though this method is the most useful because researchers can pick who they want to respond to. In qualitative research with multiple phases and/or goals, purposeful sampling can be helpful (Berndt, A. E, 2020).

In this study, five female students from the New Media Communication programme, which is from part 5 from both class A and C. from the New Media Communication programme, UiTM Shah Alam, were interviewed. They also went through interviews to enter this programme where they had to design an interview video since they enrolled for the course during the pandemic era. They were interviewed individually to get their opinion and review the research questions. All the data analysis of the motivation of female students in New Media Communication is based on the research objectives and research questions in this study

3. FINDINGS

3.1 THE MOTIVATION OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN NEW MEDIA COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME

Motivation is crucial in deciding how much effort, commitment, and perseverance people put into their academic endeavours. In this section, we unpacked the main reasons or what motivates current female students in UiTM to enrol in the New Media Communication programme.

My motivation for pursuing new media communication is to learn how editing for content works and how to be good in editing and voiceover. I

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have a passion for editing but I need more skills. Nobody influenced me to take this programme, I love creating or editing something based on my own ideas and imagination. – Informant 1

In my opinion, female students might be motivated to pursue this programme because this programme has a lot of creative-based classes. I pursue this programme because my interests such as drawing, and games align well with the programme's outline which include the process of making these types of content. I was inspired by people I have seen from content creators in those industries. - Informant 2

Female students are usually motivated by the content-creating aspect of the New Media Communication programme. I choose this programme because I love both creative media and communication. I became inspired to join this programme after reviewing a list of uitm degree programmes -. Informant 3

I want to learn more about how to create an animation. I like watching animation and I wanted to learn how to make one. My friend influenced me to take this New Media Communication programme. - Informant 4

3.2 CHALLENGES IN NEW MEDIA COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME

Challenges can be defined as something that requires a great deal of talent, drive, and tenacity to handle or accomplish, particularly something you have never done before but will enjoy doing. For this part, we analysed the challenges faced by these students while studying in New Media Communication programme.

The challenges I face are friends and time. I don't have enough time to fully focus on subjects that I really love because I have to focus on other subjects too. I face the challenges by being fully focused in class so that I don't need to find another time to study the same topics over again. - Informant 1

For myself specifically, my biggest challenge when taking this project is my own ability to divide my time properly. From a technical standpoint, I also had experienced some amount of challenges to learn and adapt to new technology as we go. While my time diving problems are harder to

overcome, I could theoretically overcome it by planning my schedule. Meanwhile, learning new technologies is a lot easier if I focus properly.- Informant 2

The challenges that I face would be unfamiliar towards software engines. It is hard to learn how to adapt with new tools but they are important in completing projects. I face the challenges by asking my lecturer for advice as well as dividing work in groups according to everyone's personal strengths. - Informant 3

The challenge is to learn something you need to become more familiar with. I overcame it by getting help from friends and lecturers. - Informant 4

Lack of motivation, lack of suitable equipment for the assignment required. I bear and face the consequences and follow the flow. - Informant 5

3.2 SUGGESTIONS TO ATTRACT FEMALE STUDENTS TO STUDY NEW MEDIA COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME

In this section, we highlighted the suggestions by our informants who could attract female students to pursue their studies in the New Media Communication programme. For the first respondent, her opinion to attract female students is to promote editing skills where they will learn in this course because most females love editing, and they also love games and animations. In addition, during the open day, they also can explain more about the software that will be used and give hints on what they will learn in this programme, plus suitable laptops and equipment to support the software engines and to complete the work.

Promoting editing skills that they will learn in this course, could attract female students, especially for those who love editing, games and animation. My main influence is Ruhiya, my ex-classmate during my diploma time because she is quite intelligent. She is also pursuing this program and currently doing an internship. There are benefits to attracting female students because our programme was always needed in markets. - Informant 1

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While, the second respondent thinks that showcasing previous female graduates in New Media Communication faculty, social media section, may open the eyes of potential female students outside to get attracted into this programme. It is because they will be able to relate to the people they see. The best target are women who are interested in the process of content creation and have the drive to create content. For example, animation, video games, and even video content.

In my opinion, maybe showcasing previous graduates who are women in New Media Communication faculty's social media pages may be able to attract potential female students. I believe the best target for this programme would be women who are interested in the process of content creation and have the drive to create content. I feel like attracting female students specifically for this programme does not actually provide much. - Informant 2

The current New Media Communication students should start expanding their level of creativity outside of children's entertainment and touch more on beauty and serious issues. For me, female students who have passion in making creative content and want to learn how to communicate effectively. Female students will be well equipped with creative skills.- Informant 3

I think the way to attract female students is by sharing about the benefits they can get from this programme. A female who loves to play games or watch anime will be the target person to pursue this program. There are a lot of benefits that the programmes offer to attract female students to pursue this programme in the future.- Informant 4

Having more women empowerment events in the programme is one of the initiatives to attract female students to take this programme. Creative women or female students who need a platform to show their skills will be targeted. Yes this programme does provide many benefits. - Informant 5

As a result, all the opinions and ideas from the respondents can be used to increase motivation among female students in this programme and open up other female students from outside of UiTM who want to pursue studies in this field. In the future, it is hoped that the number of female students in the New Media Communication programme will be equalised with the number of male students.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, exploring the motives of female students enrolled in new media communication programs has given us important new information about their aspirations, passions, and objectives. This exploration has shed light on the multifaceted factors that drive their choice of academic pursuits, demonstrating the significance of understanding individual motivations within the broader context of educational pathways. By recognising the diverse motivations that propel female students towards new media communication studies, educators and institutions can tailor their approaches to better cater to this demography structure which has unique needs and aspirations. This understanding not only enhances the educational experience for these students but also contributes to the overall enrichment of the field of new media communication. As we unravel the intricate tapestry of motivations, it becomes evident that empowering and supporting female students in their academic journey is pivotal for fostering innovation, inclusivity, and a dynamic future within the new media landscape.

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