

Chapter 10

The Role of Social Networking in the Social Reform of Young Society

Emad Abu-Shanab
Yarmouk University, Jordan

Mushera Frehat
Al-Qassim University, Saudi Arabia

ABSTRACT

Social networks are virtual communication sites that allow its participants to connect, building relationships, and collaborate on social issues. It became part of our lives and spread rapidly among youth. Young people join these sites to keep strong relationships with friends and to make new ones. Therefore, it is important to investigate the factors that influence the intention to use social networking sites (SNSs) to gain better position in the social reform among young people. This study developed an integrated theoretical model which has five major factors that predict the intention to use SNSs. An empirical test was conducted, where a sample of 302 university students and an instrument containing 27 items was used. The results provide consistent evidence that all hypothesized positive associations exist except for the isolation variable. After taking into account different demographic and attitudinal variables, Facebook use still predicted respondents' social reform. The future work might focus on a specific context such as the effects of using social networks on education, and focus on students' environment in education and the influence of social network. Detailed results, conclusions and future work are stated in later sections.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current era, the social networking or “social media” like Facebook, and Twitter has become part of our lives especially young students. It is like one of the information media as television, newspaper, and radio but it is more than sharing information it has facilitated the creation and exchange of ideas quickly and widely than other media. Social networking sites are the most popular Internet communication forms among teenagers and young adults. It's a virtual communication that enables its users to

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-8900-6.ch010

make/ view public or semi-public profiles (Subrahmanyam et al., 2008). The biggest motivation to young people is to keep strong relationships with friends and to make a strong relation with new acquaintances (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009).

Research focused more on the organizational role of social media ((Leonardi, Huysman, Steinfield, 2013). Research on the role of social network sites within young adults is required, because keeping friendships via social networking sites like Facebook may play a significant role in the psychological development. However, the period of time between ages 18 and 25 as a stage of emerging adulthood, a luminal period between adolescence and adulthood, this phase is important to an individual's adult development because during this time a human makes long term social skills. Such skills are important for self-dependence, career orientation and relationship sustenance. Social network sites allow a new set of tools to enhance and maintain relationships and are thus of specific importance in emerging adulthood (Steinfield, Ellison & Lampe, 2008).

The previous research calls for some focus on how to attain social reform within the young people environment. Social reform is not only related to understanding the influence of Social Networks (SN) on young people, but also preparing them for a wave of massive utilization of such tool towards better socialization and improved performance. Governments in recent years started to open pages on Facebook and use twitter more to reach their citizens as they know that young citizens are on social media and they should approach them on social media to get the most of participation required (Khasawneh & Abu-Shanab, 2013).

This study tries to clear the contribution of social networking sites use in social reform especially to young society. Social networking sites offer services to users who are interested in taking action within their society to address big issues such as global warming, health initiatives, human rights, and poverty (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009). This study used survey data to test several hypotheses related to the relationship between social networking sites use and university students' social reform. A multidimensional concept that includes: life satisfaction, usage, social participation, individual's behavior like isolation, and social trust.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. History of Social Networks

Social networking sites allow its participants to connect with each other and build relations among people who have the same interests and activities (Das & Sahoo, 2011; Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social networking is defined based on three perspectives: 1) build public and semi-public profiles, 2) articulate a list of friends who share a connection, 3) and view and traverse friends' lists. These three characteristics make the social networking sites differ from previous media (Ahn, 2011; Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social networks enable users to share and upload different types of photos, music, and videos that they like to share with others. In addition, this type of site provides a resource of information and a relation with other people, and emotional and social support (Dogruer, Menevis & Eyyam, 2011). Social media tools allow people to develop and maintain social relationships in ways that appear to differ in quality and quantity than face-to-face relationships (Hemsley & Mason, 2013, p. 141). The first social networking

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