

IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES ON GENERATION Y: EMPERICAL FINDINGS FROM SELENGOR, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This present study conducts in province Selangor of Malaysia to find the impacts of social networking websites on the Generation Y. The sample of the study was the students of Multimedia University and Limkokwing University. The findings show that the 1) perceived usefulness of social networking sites 2) use of social networking sites 3) social networking skills 4) social network groups and 5) message of social networking sites formulate affirmative impact on image of Generation Y.

Keywords: *Social networking websites; Generation Y; Malaysia; Internet; Empirical study.*

Introduction:

Engagement with online social networking sites is proving to be an increasingly important communication and creative activity globally, especially among the young people. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Badoo allow users to create and manage their own online profiles and build social networks with friends and other users (e.g. by messaging, chatting, sharing photos, emailing and participating in discussion groups). The term "Generation Y" was coined in the early 1990s. Advertising Age, a marketing trade magazine, has been credited with first using the term in an editorial in 1993, as a way to distinguish the group from Generation X (Constantin, 2010). Moreover Constantin (2010) referred Gen Y "Millennials" and "Echo Boomers.". According to Noble et al., (2009) This is a group which is comfortable with new and ever changing technology, having been raised in the midst of the information revolution.

Authors opinion about innovative social networking sites will be an avenue where people are using new methods or ideas to communicate or interact with one another and within this social network, frequent changes are being made to improve on the manipulation activities. A good example of such social networking sites where changes occur almost on daily basis is Facebook. According to Boyd & Ellison (2008), social networking sites are web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of

connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.

From authors perspective, image transformation means creating and maintaining a reputation that is built on trust, sincerity and mutual understanding with others because these are the keys to successful leadership and successful organizations. According to NurrieStearns (1998), transforming our lives is necessary for well being and survival of life on this planet, and personal transformation is the most important for us as it gives us clarity of mind and steadfastness of heart to work for the betterment of all. Personal transformation is about revolutionary impulse responsiveness, in which a human must understand and obey, if he/ she want to exist.

Literature Review:

According to Gordon et al. (2007) Generation Y people use social networking sites for five main reasons: meeting people, information seeking, distraction, coping and e-mail. Jeniffer & Regina (2009) stated that the ambiguity of social network profiles allows Generation Y people to create an identity and find social acceptability without having to directly face scrutiny. Noble et al., (2009) posited that, this is a group which is comfortable with new and ever changing technology, having been raised in the midst of the information revolution. Much of the research to date has focused on various aspects of SNSs such as the nature of connecting with friends on these sites (Boyd & Ellison, 2008), and identity creation and management

(Doster, 2008). Govani & Pashley (2005) illustrated that Mellon University student joined Facebook because their friends pressured them, or that they felt a need to meet and socialize with others at their school. (Boyd & Ellison (2008) wrote about the websites like the facebook that , these sites are based on the premise of relationship creation and maintenance, either with existing members of a social circle or connecting people with similar or shared interests. Bono & Judge (2004) highlighted eight dimensions of transformational and transactional leadership. Thus, understanding the personality traits associated with transformational and charismatic leadership has important implications for the selection, training, and development of such leaders. For example, if charisma is linked to stable traits of the individual, organizations may wish to select leaders with these traits. Thus, an understanding of the role of personality can aid in determining which individuals might gain the most from such training and how training approaches might differ on the basis of trainee personality.

Ong et al. (2004) shown that high level of perceived usefulness of technology often result in a positive user-performance relationship. In the case of students, if Generation Y people perceive that social networking sites can help improve their or transform their image, they are more likely to participate in it, creating a positive influence among their friends. Venkatesh & Davis (2000) found that perceived usefulness has a positive effect on students' intention to construct and manage their identity online, suggesting that students are more likely to use social networking sites when they perceive it to be a useful and meaningful way to construct and manage their identity online effectively with a view to attain a higher performance in their careers.

According to Ramayah & Lo (2007) previous researchers have not found conclusive evidence about the significant influence of PU of technology by TAM. Some studies have linked Ease of Use to the success and quality of information Technology (IS) (Seddon, 1997) as well as to customer satisfaction (Wang et al., 2001).

Luckin et al. (2008) posited that managing an online state and being able to interact effectively online, becoming an increasingly important skill, specially for Generation Y. It is not particularly surprising that young people with social networking skills would adapt the spaces they frequent for their educational-related purposes, as school-related activities and concerns dominate much of adolescent life (Greenhow, 2011). Frías & Arquero (2009) stated social networking site effective in developing essential skills, such as:

- Creating knowledge in user-defined or negotiated contexts;
- Selecting relevant information,
- Critically interpreting and analysing the socio-cultural context;
- Working in groups and collaboratively;
- Enhancing communication and interpersonal skills;
- Sharing knowledge and information; and

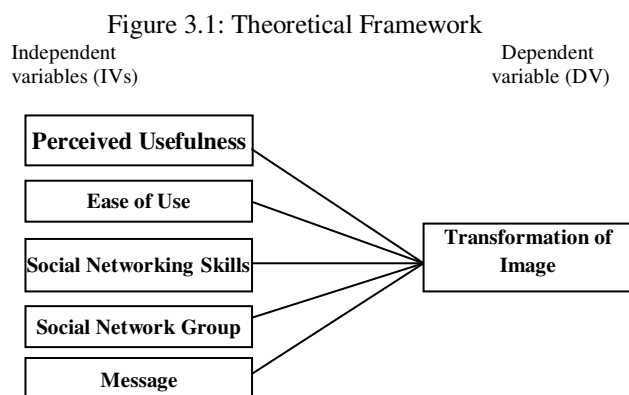
- Negotiating in horizontal contexts, avoiding hierarchical connections and exchanges of knowledge.

Games improve skills in social networks, communication and collaboration, problem-solving, and various number-related skills (McFarlane et al, 2002).

Jukka-Pekka et al, (2011) who studied on variation of geographical span for social groups of varying sizes, defines social network groups as a reflection of friendship, kinship, and work relationships. Ewers, (2010) suggested that frequent message on Facebook wall is an important factor for Generation Y people peoples' daily activity. These instant messaging systems can go a long way to transform the image of Generation Y people who know how to use it better. This is another area where social networking skills play another great role. Morris (2010) indicated that an investigation into what kind of message that users usually write on their wall and came up with the findings that, users asked questions on their social networking profiles. These questions often raise answers and some even led to a public debate.

Research Methodology:

This study investigated how social networking sites can transform Generation Y peoples' image. The model of the study is adopted from Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis, (1989) and more variables were added to measure which of them greatly influences transformation of image through social networking sites. The model shows the influence that perceived usefulness, ease of use, social networking sites, social network group and message have on transformation of image through social networking sites. Figure 3.1 below show the framework which expalin the influence of perceived usefulness, ease of use, social networking skills, social network group and message on transformation of image of generation Y.



Source: Davis, (1989), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Based on the model shown in the fig. above, the hypothesized relationships among the study variables are build:

H1: There is a positive relationship between Perceived Usefulness and Transformation of Image through innovative social networking sites.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Description	Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative
Gender	Male	118	59.0	59.0	59.0
	Female	82	41.0	41.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	
Marital Status	Single	191	95.5	95.5	95.5
	Married	9	4.5	4.5	100.0
Respondent age	15-20 years	79	39.5	39.5	39.5
	21-25 years	79	39.5	39.5	79.0
	26-30 years	30	15.0	15.0	94.0
	> 30 years	12	6.0	6.0	100.0
Respondent	African	46	23.0	23.0	23.0
Nationality	American	2	1.0	1.0	24.0
	European	13	6.5	6.5	30.5
	Asian	139	69.5	69.5	100.0
Level of	Foundation	29	14.5	14.5	14.5
	Diploma	20	10.0	10.0	24.5
	Degree	122	61.0	61.0	85.5
	Postgraduate	29	14.5	14.5	100.0
Social Network	Twitter	9	4.5	4.5	4.5
Site Most Used	Facebook	171	85.5	85.5	90.0
	YouTube	11	5.5	5.5	95.5
	Others	9	4.5	4.5	100.0
Social Network on	< 1 year	10	5.0	5.0	5.0
Site User Duration	1-3 years	84	42.0	42.0	47.0
	4-5 years	56	28.0	28.0	75.0
	> 5 years	50	25.0	25.0	100.0
Social Network	1-3 times/week	19	9.5	9.5	9.5
Site Usage	4-6 times/week	31	15.5	15.5	25.0
	7-10 times/week	45	22.5	22.5	47.5
	> 10 times/week	105	52.5	52.5	100.0
Social Network	Find new friends	38	19.0	19.0	19.0
Site Usage	Transform image	30	15.0	15.0	34.0
Purpose	Chatting	111	55.5	55.5	89.5
	Update profile	21	10.5	10.5	100.0
Image	Photos	84	42.0	42.0	42.0
	Message	47	23.5	23.5	65.5
	comments	59	29.5	29.5	95.0
	Others	10	5.0	5.0	100.0
University Currently Enrolled	Limkokwing University of creative technology	104	52.0	52.0	52.0
	Multimedia University	96	48.0	48.0	100.0

H2: There is a positive relationship between Ease of Use and Transformation of Image through innovative social networking sites.

H3: There is a positive relationship between Social networking skills and Transformation of Image of

Generation Y people through innovative social networking sites.

H4: There is a positive relationship between Social Network Group and Transformation of Image through innovative social networking sites.

Table 4.2 Pearson Correlation Analysis

		Perceived Usefulness	Ease of use	Social Networking Skills	Social Networkgroup	Message	Transformation of image
Perceived usefulness	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-Tailed)						
	N	199					
Ease of use	Pearson Correlation	.223(**)	1				
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.002					
	N	199	200				
Social Networking Skills	Pearson Correlation	.307(**)	.177(*)	1			
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.000	.012				
	N	199	200	200			
Social Networkgroup	Pearson Correlation	.171(*)	.170(*)	.181(*)	1		
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.016	.016	.010			
	N	199	200	200	200		
Message	Pearson Correlation	.201(**)	.267(**)	.339(**)	.174(*)	1	
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.004	.000	.000	.014		
	N	199	200	200	200	200	
Transformation of Image	Pearson Correlation	.353(**)	.322(**)	.503(**)	.339(**)	.569(**)	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	199	200	200	200	200	200

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

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

H5: There is a positive relationship between Message and Transformation of Image through innovative social networking sites.

Quantitative research was adopted in which questionnaire survey was used in this research because it generates a large amount of quantitative data from a respondent size of 200 students from two private Universities in Cyberjaya, Malaysia, that is, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT) and Multimedia University (MMU). Furthermore, due to resource constraints, a questionnaire survey is the most efficient method in collecting data and it is a cost effective method of questioning a large number of people. Generation Y people were encouraged to

participate and were given an assurance of confidentiality by the researcher. They were also persuaded to read the intentions on the questionnaire before answering it and to ask questions if they needed clarification. The questionnaire consists of three sections, to establish facts about respondents. This includes demographic and social networking facts, and transformation of Generation Y peoples' image.

In this paper, the results of a quantitative study on Transforming Generation Y peoples' Image through Innovative Social Networks will be presented. The survey data analyzed by linear and multiple regressions using the

Table 4.3: Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.576(a)	.332	.329	3.56355	.332	97.970	1	197	.000
2	.664(b)	.441	.435	3.26859	.109	38.160	1	196	.000
3	.693(c)	.480	.472	3.16142	.039	14.514	1	195	.000
4	.707(d)	.500	.489	3.10797	.020	7.765	1	194	.006
5	.715(e)	.511	.499	3.08003	.011	4.535	1	193	.034

a Predictors: (Constant), MESSAGE

b Predictors: (Constant), MESSAGE, SCIALNETWORKINGSKILLS

c Predictors: (Constant), MESSAGE, SCIALNETWORKINGSKILLS, SOCIALNETWORKGROUP

d Predictors: (Constant), MESSAGE, SCIALNETWORKINGSKILLS, SOCIALNETWORKGROUP, PERCEIVEDUSEFULNESS

e Predictors: (Constant), MESSAGE, SCIALNETWORKINGSKILLS, SOCIALNETWORKGROUP, PERCEIVEDUSEFULNESS, EASEOFUSE

f Dependent Variable: TRANSFORMATIONOFIMAGE

Summary Of Hypotheses Testing:

Table 4.4: Result of Hypotheses Testing

Hyp. No	Hypothesis Statement	Results
1	There is a positive and significant relationship between perceived usefulness of social networking sites and image transformation of Y Generation people.	Supported
2	There is a positive and significant relationship between ease of use of social networking sites and image transformation of Y Generation people.	Supported
3	There is a positive and significant relationship between social networking skills of social networking sites and image transformation of Y Generation people.	Supported
4	There is a positive and significant relationship between social network groups of social networking sites and image transformation Y Generation people.	Supported
5	There is a positive and significant relationship between the message of social networking sites and image transformation of Generation Y people.	Supported

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Data Analysis:

Table 4.1 below indicates there were a total number of 118 males and 82 females. Therefore 200 responses have to a large extent assist in properly answering the research questionnaire. The table equally reveals that majority of the respondents of this survey questionnaire are males with 59% as compared with females 41%. This could be attributed to the fact that there are many male students in these two Universities than females.

In table 4.2 above, the correlation coefficient for perceived usefulness is 0.353 and it is found to be significant at 0.001 levels. Therefore, it suggests that there is a positive

significant relationship between perceived usefulness of social networking sites and image transformation. Therefore, this suggests that the perceived usefulness of social networking sites can transform the Y Generation peoples' image through social networking sites.

In table 4.2 above, the correlation coefficient for ease of use is 0.322 and it is found to be significant at 0.001 levels. Therefore, it suggests that there is a positive significant relationship between ease of use of social networking sites and image transformation. The hypothesis on "positive significant relationship between ease of use of social networking sites and image transformation" is accepted. Therefore, this suggests that the ease of use of social networking sites can transform the Y Generation peoples' image through social networking sites.

In table 4.2 above, the correlation coefficient for social networking skills is 0.503 and it is found to be significant at 0.001 levels. Therefore, it suggests that there is a positive significant relationship between social networking skills and social networking sites and image transformation. Therefore, this suggests that the social networking skills in social networking sites can transform the Y Generation peoples' image through social networking sites.

In table 4.2 above, the correlation coefficient for social networking groups is 0.339 and it is found to be significant at 0.001 levels. Therefore, it suggests that there is a positive significant relationship between social networking groups and social networking sites and image transformation. Therefore, this suggests that the social networking groups in social networking sites can transform the Y Generation peoples' image through social networking sites.

In table 4.2 above, the correlation coefficient for message is 0.569 and it is found to be significant at 0.001 levels. Therefore, it suggests that there is a positive significant relationship between message of social networking sites and image transformation. Therefore, this suggests that the message of social networking sites can transform the Y Generation peoples' image through social networking sites.

Table 4.3 above, exhibits the adjusted R Squares for perceived usefulness, ease of use, social networking sites, social networking groups and message. The R Squares for message, social networking skills, social network group, perceived usefulness and ease of use are recorded as 32.9 %; 10.6 %; 3.7 %; 1.7 %; and 1.0 % respectively. The results suggest that message contributes to 32.9 % impact on transformation of image among Y Generation people. Next is social networking skills that contributes to 10.6 % impact on transformation of image among Y Generation people. Then followed by social network group that contributes to 3.7 % impact on transformation of image among Y Generation people. The next is perceived usefulness that contributes to 1.7 % impact on transformation of image among Y Generation people. Finally is ease of use that contributes to 1.0 % impact on transformation of image among Y Generation people. This indicates that message being the most important factor that contributes to transformation of image of Y Generation people and ease of use is the least important factor which affects transformation of image of Y Generation people.

Conclusion:

The research findings indicate that message is an important element in transforming Generation Y peoples' image through innovative social networking sites. Emma Ewers, (2010) suggest that frequent message on Facebook wall is an important factor for Generation Y people peoples' daily activity, and same is the case with other social networking website. The significant relationship that exists between perceived usefulness of social networking sites/ ease of use/ social networking skills/ social network group/

message and transformation of image indicates that the way Generation Y people perceive social networking sites is important for their image transformation.

Organizations that have integrated social networking sites in carrying out their business activities have proven to be successful in boosting their effectiveness and maintaining their customers. Potential leaders who believe that social networking sites can give a positive image of them to their target audience, can arrive at their dreams. Generation Y people who believe that social networking sites are easy to use or can be used with no cognitive effort are able to transform their image positively. Mastering social networking skills will have a high tendency of this generation of people to transform their image through social networking sites. This results implies that Generation Y people willing and wishing to transform their image through innovative social networking sites need to belong to a social network group by joining an already existing one or by creating a new group and inviting group members either from same school, family, political party or even same organization. Findings of study shows that, based on the premise that Generation Y people with good writing skills and good knowledge of the language in which they are communicating (depends on the country) are in a better position to transform their image than their peers.

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