

FACEBOOK USAGE IN PROMOTING THE ACADEMIA EXPERTISE

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ABSTRACT

This paper means to contemplate online social media usage on knowledge sharing among academia. In the past, numerous researches have been done to investigate how people in general make utilization of this innovation. However there are still restricted studies on how this technological advancement affects the scholarly world. Moreover, in Malaysia most research done in studying the effect of social media is focused on students rather than from academia perspective. For this study, Facebook is chosen as one of online social networking tool for knowledge sharing. Firstly, this study is begun with the exploration of factors that motivate the academia to share their insight through online networking. From the literature review analysis, ability to communicate with colleagues is the most cited reason showing the adoption of social media tools by academia. To understand more on how the Malaysian academia utilizes Facebook as a medium of knowledge sharing, a content analysis on a Facebook page is done. Content analysis is used to study the frequency of post as well as topics discussed among the academia. The findings reveal that there are four main topics regularly shared by the academia which are information and current news, motivational quote, personal advice from life experience and program promoted.

Keywords: *Knowledge Sharing, Facebook, Content Analysis, Academia Expertise*

1. INTRODUCTION

Every individual has their own inclination and technique in conveying information and sharing their knowledge to their friends, families and communities. [1] emphasized that knowledge sharing can be described as a process of communication whereby two or more parties are involved in the transfer of knowledge. Besides that, knowledge sharing can be referred as a social interaction where it consists of individual interactions and participation and when both of these important elements involved, knowledge sharing turn out to be more effective. Moreover, through social media the process of knowledge sharing has become easier and effective.

The utilization of social media such as wikis and social networking sites has expanded exponentially, where this advancement are ceaselessly turning out to be more coordinated into our daily lives [2].

Various topics are being discussed by means of social media, for example, legislative issues, life inspiration and including marketing of products. Despite that, there are limited studies done to explore how academia make a used of social media and even fewer focused on Malaysian academia. Most of previous research in Malaysia focused on the importance of social media to students [3][4].

Thus, this study aims to fill this gap by discovering the application of social media tools by Malaysian academia specifically in Facebook. Literature analysis is done to discover the factors that encourage academia to share knowledge with their peers through social media. Follow up with content analysis on Facebook page, the interaction of the academia is done to study its practicality.



2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

More academia and researchers come to comprehend the potential advantages offered by online networking and are consolidating them into their works. The use of social media in scholarly and research works meets expectations without a doubt in yielding successful outcome for their works. Besides, the action of engaging in social media is mostly motivated by the need to link with each other in an informal way. To begin with, in year 2007, few social networking sites that are focusing for academic and researches entered the market are Mendeley, Academia.edu and ResearchGate. The number of the members is linearly increasing by year showing a positive diffusion on social media usage by academician. For example, in 2008 there are approximately 150,000 members of ResearchGate and it reached to two million members by the end of September 2012[5].

In contrary, through social networking system, knowledge sharing behavior cannot be forced but can only be encouraged and developed as it concerns with the readiness of people in online social groups to impart the knowledge to others through dynamic cooperation [6]. The decision to share knowledge through social media can be perceived as a voluntarily behavior where this conduct is represented by the factors that encourage the implementation of this behavior. The scholarly world do confront a few difficulties in freely shared their insight through online networking. However, there exist numerous encouraging factors that urge them to take part in this conduct. At the point when an individual has successfully shared their knowledge through social media, he/ she is said to have overcome the barriers in implementing the desired behavior.

3. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Despite numerous advantages that can be gained from sharing knowledge, not everybody is willing to share their knowledge actively with others because of specific circumstances. In some cases, people are hesitant to share knowledge because insecurity feeling [7]. In addition, this issue can likewise affect the social media by means of weblogs when the users expect that their ideas or entries in weblog will be stolen [8]. Thus, successful knowledge sharing can be hard to accomplish when open offering of knowledge by web blogger is restricted crosswise over social media network. However, until today most of research regarding knowledge environment has

tend to concentrate more on identifying knowledge sharing in industry rather than in academic environment. [9] emphasized that, there is a few of exploration led to knowledge management in the education sector, although sharing information through social media resulted in expanding enthusiasm for the scholarly world and industry. Moreover in Malaysia, most of researches done aimed to investigate the impact of social media on students with less priority given to the academia. For example, a study has done to explore the influence and effects of social media tools to academic performance from student's point of view [3]. Besides, preliminary findings by [4] concluded that students and educators came to realize that social media technologies are helpful for learning and teaching purposes. The results are based on 331 responses gather from a survey done on informatics and non-informatics undergraduate programs. Other than that, research by [10] trying to discover the utilization of social media technologies that concentrated on identity traits of students. Furthermore, there is also study done to explore how top- performing students engaging the social networking sites[11].

Main questions rose here in how does professional utilizes this advancement of technology, what are the factors that encourage them to engage in this behavior and how their engagement in social media can for knowledge sharing is measured. This paper is trying to answer these questions by first exploring the factors of knowledge sharing. These factors are extracted from literature review analysis. Then, to understand more on the utilization of social media for knowledge sharing purpose, content analysis is done on one of social networking sites which are Facebook.

4. KNOWLEDGE SHARING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Past research by [12] said that knowledge sharing can be characterized as a methodology in which diverse units, groups and people can impart their experience to one another. Besides that, knowledge sharing needs collaboration and contribution of individuals in a group and if people in the group have common interest, then the communication will be effective [13] Previously, face-to face meetings and discussion in groups are among the most influential platform used to share knowledge. Nowadays through social media, people are easily connected to each other thus enhancing the



knowledge sharing process. Knowledge can be shared anytime, anywhere and with anyone by means of social media. Blogs, forums and social networking sites are among diverse applications of social media. Through social media, individuals get to talk and discuss on certain topic of interest anytime and anywhere.

Furthermore, by means of social media individual get to seek an explanation of current issues, discovering motivation for future ventures and learning the impact of past tragedy. In addition, there are many researches done previously to study the influence of social media towards knowledge sharing in specific organizations. For example, research by [14] emphasized on the creation of a specific network that could enhance the way information is shared via online knowledge management systems (KMS) in healthcare industry. Besides that, research done in Nielson, a global marketing and advertising research company tried to understand how these technologies help the company to assist a knowledge sharing culture [15]. Apart from that, there were also numerous researches done to study the usage of social media in academic setting. For example, the most favored social media sites among the scholars were non-academic social networking sites (Facebook and Twitter), wikis, online journal sites and institution repositories [16]. In another research conducted in year 2012, the aim is to understand why and how social media is used by scholars for knowledge sharing dissemination [17].

4.1 Scholarly Used Of Social Media

The emergence of social media has invited many researches done, concentrating on its implication and effect on how general society utilized these advancements. However, there is still there is still lack investigation into how the scholarly world are using these innovations [18]. To overcome this issue, numerous efforts have been done to utilize social media for academic purpose. These efforts include introducing social media tools that are beneficial for scholarly work. [17] cited that Facebook, Twitter, Academia.edu, LinkedIn, Google Docs, SildeShare and Skype are some example of tools used by academia that help them in their expert work. Besides that, social media assist academia in a way that it's facilitates the communication of colleagues at geographically different locations [19] [20]. Not only that, viral topics from broadcast media and popular websites

act as reading sources for research materials [21][20].

Aside from that, there are various dedicated blogging committed for academic reason, for instance, <http://scienceblogs.com> and <http://scientificblogging.com> [22]. Through this blog, academician does not simply look at current research, creating activities, and dissecting exploratory news, however, frequently tend to post individual stories about scientists starting their field work, or offering tips to new experts. With the interest of new researchers, these sites are effective in framing a gathering of scientists, along these lines rouses further joint exertion and relationship between friends. As a result of the development in scholastic blogging, a gathering has been formed, the Science Blogging Conference of which the last meeting pulled in practically 200 delegates [23][24]

5. FACEBOOK APPLICATION IN ACADEMIC SETTING

In 2014, the number of active Facebook users is 1.32 billion users with 30% of them only using it from their mobile phone [25]. Facebook is one example of social networking sites available with the emerging of Web 2.0. The birth of Web 2.0 allows internet surfers to modify the online content as well as increase the participation among them [17]. Nowadays, Facebook is seen as one of interactive tools use in communication between students and educators. Previously, there were numerous researches done in other to investigate the positive influence of Facebook for educational purposes. [26] rightly argue that utilization of Facebook helped in reaching out audience who less likely to be involved during the class. Furthermore, research done in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia concluded that Facebook serve as an effective platform of communication between students-supervisors [3].

Apart from that, the rising usage of Facebook has also brought an impact towards scholarly field. Facebook is statistically proven to be among top five tools that are frequently used by academia [17]. The increasing popularity of Facebook in public community somehow influences academia to use it in their professional works. Besides, social media as Facebook has turned into a channel for advanced education academicians to share their insights. Not only that, Facebook serves as an effective platform for public relations where it assists in promoting professionals especially for the new members of



academia [5]. Next section of this paper will elaborate on the current initial result findings.

6. RESULT FINDINGS

There are two methods used for data collection and analyzing. Firstly, literature review analysis is done to investigate the factors that encourage academia in knowledge sharing by means of social media. The review is based on previous research that focused on the implication of social media towards knowledge sharing. Then, in order to show how Malaysian academia applies social media for knowledge sharing purpose, a content analysis is done. We choose this method because through content analysis, we get to view the social interaction between the academicians by looking directly at their communication via Facebook. Besides, this method allows both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The content analysis is done on a selected Facebook page administered by academia. In the process of selection, we first recognized several Facebook pages that are created for knowledge sharing purpose. Fishbowl technique is used through the selected Facebook page and it is made randomly. Content analysis is done through this Facebook page in which it analyzed the collection of the academicians' post from March to June 2015. The data collection is collected for four months because we want to analyze the consistency of the post. Based on rule in sampling, sample that is larger than 30 is acceptable and the overall post analyzed for this study are 75 posts. Firstly, we characterized the posts according to its date, post content and its respective number of like, comment and share. Secondly, we created a theme of topics discussed by the academicians by analyzing the post content. Then, the post contents are divided to four topics and the entry is recorded for each month. Lastly, by analyzing the number of like, comment and share we studied which topics that are more favorable to be discussed by the academicians. Excel is used in analyzing all the acquired data.

Through literature review analysis, we found that there are several factors that were agreed by various researchers from past studies. The most common cited reason that influenced the utilization of social media among academia is its ability in facilitating communication among peers [27][23][28] specifically among individuals from different geographical location [29] [30]. As we know, the world of research and academics required a lot of communication in order to gain understanding on the particular knowledge of interest. This reason is

maybe why the utilization of social media for knowledge sharing is expanded among scholars.

Moreover, social media acquire the ability to encourage information dissemination. As an example, blogging instruments are being utilized by numerous researchers to scatter data in their field and to their general users [24] [31]. In addition, the adoption of social media for scholarly work is believed to have an impact in generating new ideas for research work [29][32]. By having a direct interaction between the social media users, the ideas are easily spark among them. Sometimes, these ideas act as stepping stone for the development of their career.

Furthermore, in keeping up with newest and current research become as a value added in social media benefits for academia [17]. Besides, through social media tools, academia are able to maintain their networks of community [33][28] within people with the same interest in an informal way where they can examine unasked questions [34] [32]. The needs to belong to a certain community encourage them to engage in social media. In addition, social media tools act as promoting medium for scholars to share their work and professional opinion [35]. Not only that, social media is very useful for public relations, scholastic associations, academic organizations, insightful affiliations and most importantly for individual scientists himself [35]. Lastly through social media, the traditional way of publishing in paper publication is shifted to modern way that is by using online scholarly journals [36][32]. The benefits of these online journals include an easy access of reading material and also abundant information dissemination for the scholars.

As mentioned before, this study applied content analysis of Facebook page to explore the usage of this social media tool for scholarly purpose. The selected Facebook page account is meant for the academia to share her knowledge and experiences for postgraduate students and potential postgraduate students. Currently, a total of 4,238 members in Facebook liked this page till this paper is written. The members are academicians and lecturers from all parts in Malaysia. This page is meant for sharing the academia's knowledge and the experience for postgraduate student and also the potential postgraduate student with tips and tricks. It also can inspire the page audience and likers to finish their postgraduate or research journey. Figure below showed the number of post for each month started from March until June.

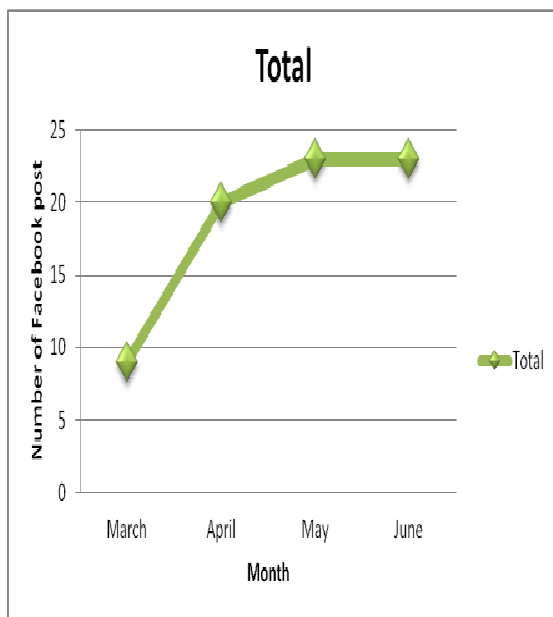


Figure-1. Entry Of Post Based On Month

Based on the graph above, there are a total of 75 post entry for four months with an average of 18

Table-1. Post Characterization Based On Months And Topics Post Per Month.

	Motiva tional Quote	Progra m	Personal advice from life experien ce	Informati on and Current News
March	3	2	4	
April	9	3	6	2
May	10	3	8	2
June	10	5	6	2

The lowest post entry is in March with a total of 9 post. The highest post is 23 post which are in month May and June. We can conclude from the graph that the number of post for each month is not fixed for any specific value. The details of what topics that are shared by the academia with other member of the Facebook page is shown in Figure 2.

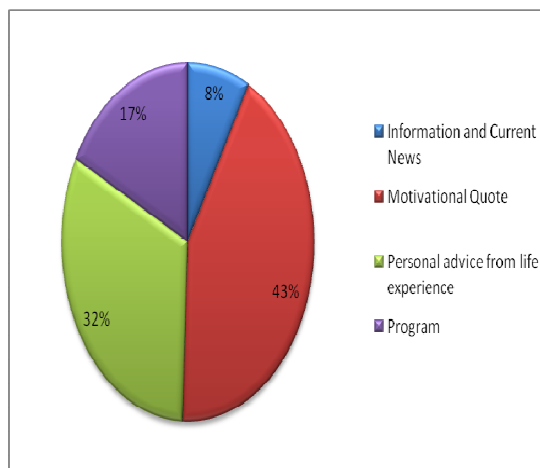


Figure-2. Topics Discussed In The Page

The knowledge shared in the Facebook page is divided to four main topics which are information and current news, motivational quote, personal advice from life experience and program promoted. The most discussed topic is on motivational quote with a percentage of 43% from overall post. These motivational quotes is mainly about the encouraging phrase to overcome the difficulties and challenge of becoming a postgraduates students. Personal advice from life experience of the administrator is the second most discussed topic in the page. The administrator not only shared her past life experience but also, give a suggestion on how to overcome all problems faced by other colleague. With a total of 13 post entry, program promoted through this Facebook page is basically about the event or workshop that are handled by the administrator herself. Lastly, 6 entry posts from a total of 75 posts are about information and current news noticed by the administrator. The informations include news on scholarship and research that are mentioned in the newspaper. Table below summarize the posts according to each months and their respective topics of interest.

7. DISCUSSION AND FUTURE WORKS

Firstly, this study aim to explore the usage of Facebook by Malaysia academia. We decided to narrow down the scope to Malaysia academia because currently, in our best knowledge, there are no spesific research that studied the engagement of this technology for this profession. Besides, this paper served as a premilinary research for more deep and extensive study in future. From the findings stated before, we can observed that there are many motivational factors found in encouraging the act to share knowledge publicly through Facebook among academia. The need to communicate with each other is undeniably important in scholarly world. Besides by means of social media, knowledge is easily shared with people with the same or across expertise where this scenario facilitate and enhance the discussion among them. As from the content analysis, we get to see how social media tools work as a medium of knowledge sharing. Facebook, as good platform for academician in interacting with each other in a relax mode. Moreover, this platform also acts as motivational forces that assist the academician in their challenging work. The significance of this study is expected to provide the Malaysian academia an understanding on the relevance of using Facebook as knowledge sharing tools. Not only that, this paper can give an overview to the people who are interested to design and come out with more interactive and engaging social media application. In contrary, the limitation for this study does exist. The limitation is that the content analysis for this study cannot be generally imply to all kind of academician. The findings might be different if to be compared between an average academician and celebrity academician. However, the outcome will be much the same because the main different is because of the popularity factor.

The decision to share knowledge publicly through social media can be regard as an voluntarily behaviour. The successful implementation of knowledge sharing depend on the degree of acceptance of this behavior. As the way forward, this paper is expected to come out with the measurement model that can define the successful level of knowledge sharing through social media. This study also will go deeper on analyzing the behaviours that encourage knowledge sharing among academia by associating it with some relevant theory focusing on human behaviour. These findings perhap will expand the research world regarding knowledge environment. To do this, some of selected theories are been analyse to

study its suitability for this study. Among them is Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). TPB perhaps the most compelling and a well known social psychological model for clarifying and foreseeing human conduct in particular connections[37]. The idea was proposed by Icek Ajzen to improve the predictive force of the theory of reasoned action (TRA) by including perceived behavioral control. This improvement is a result of finding a behaviour that appeared to be not 100 percent voluntary and under control. In our opinion, TPB serve as the best theory because of its major strength in broadly applicable for variety of behaviors in distinctive contexts. According to TPB, this behavior is guided by the behavioral intention where this behavioral intention comprised of six components that collectively represent a person's actual control over the behavior. Attention toward the behaviour refers to the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior of interest and it is determined by the motivational factors of behavioral beliefs. Subjective norm discuss whether most people approve or disapprove of the behavior and it is control by the customary code of normative belief. Laslty, percived behavioral control refers to a person's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior of interest. Figure below depicted the components associated with TPB.

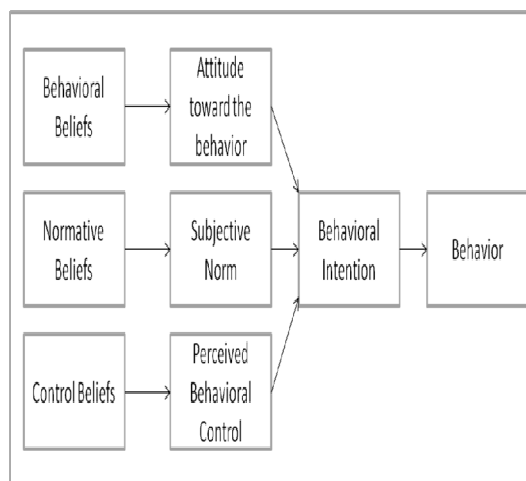


Figure-3. Components Of The Theory Of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

In dealing with this, uncertainty issue as in study by[38] might occur as we are working with knowledge representation. Refer to study on [39], to handle this problem, fuzzy logic is most suitable and reliable for adopt in this study. Beside this method, the other techniques that are maybe reliable are Markov Chain and Analytic

Hierarchical Process as in this study [40]. However, it have some limitation in rule of like, comment and share for ensure the accurate measurement of successful for this research context.

8. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, this study aimed to explore the usage of social media on knowledge sharing and how it affected the Malaysian academia. We can see social media do assist academia for their scholarly work especially in term of communication between peers. They can share ideas, information and knowledge in an informal way that facilitates active interaction among them. However, we cannot deny that there exist barriers to perform this action such as trust issues, insecurity feelings and time constraint faced by academia. Findings from this research will provide better understanding on the changing trend of social media used for scholarly work.

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