The Social Networking Services as Knowledge Sharing Tools

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The Social Networking Services as Knowledge Sharing Tools

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This paper has highlighted the level of social networking services (SNS) usage as part of knowledge sharing tool at Faculty of Information Management, University Technology MARA (UiTM). Social networking environment covered a wide range of functionalities and support of different sets of knowledge sharing activities. This is lead to the difficulties to identify the level of usage on social network services among the postgraduate student. Thus, it is also to proof the significant impact towards the knowledge sharing tools. Using questionnaires survey and data analysis, this paper has includes the aspect on demographic influences and level of social network usage in terms of knowledge sharing. Then, as a finding, level of social networking usage shows the social networking is part of knowledge sharing tools. As a conclusion, based on the findings and dimension driven in this study, it has show the social networking services has contribute to knowledge sharing activities.

Keywords: Knowledge management, knowledge sharing tools, social networking services (SNS), information management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is being known as a valuable asset and towards rich of innovation initiatives with knowledge-based economy until to date. From the expert point of view, knowledge was defined as "the most strategically-important resource which organizations possess"[1]. On the other hand, knowledge is a principal source of value that has been created[2]. In this study, it was stated that knowledge as the sensible meaningful resources in the society compared to capital or labor. However, most organizations were unable to operate as an outstanding of knowledge based organizations.

It is tantamount to say that knowledge management could bring several advantages to the organization. Though, the return of investment on knowledge based activities should not be looked only from dollars and cents point of view.

Since information and knowledge management is encompassing to data, information and knowledge in organization, one has to look at the benefits of knowledge management holistically as a continuous efforts and processes of achieving organizational efficiency and effectiveness as well as promoting better products and services to the market. In the context of educational institution, the benefits of knowledge management varies from achieving better organizational administration to producing well qualified and skillful graduates in the field they embark on.

2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The ICTs are providing data, information and knowledge sharing using a new dimensions each times[3]. However, the integration of knowledge management techniques and new set of search engines has major influence on knowledge sharing in terms of learning purposes. On top of that, the evolvement of new search engines has segmented the huge amounts of information

online. This can be seen to be more useful and meaningful for users compared to result filtering methods that rely on keywords.

On top of that, away from the tremendous changing path of ICT infrastructure, the growth of Social Networking Services (SNS) has increased without noticed. Moreover, the Social networking has completely changed the internet landscape. Thus, this followed by the report from media that continuously reporting extensive growth of social networking sites usage. This is because the willingness of the investors to invest over millions of dollars in this fields. Even though the user generated content has grown-up aggressively, the websites still enabling the function for the users to share their content that obviously increased. The listed companies that carry the social networking products and services that valued a millions of pounds are also increased. These include the Facebook, Friendster, MySpace and Twitter. Such as Google, 1.5 billion dollar has been paid to the YouTube with an intention to enable the user to generated content[4].

Besides that, the Social Networking Services (SNS) has provided the primary services. This includes the possibility of connecting the people even in a different location. Thus, the people have allowed generating the information in education and business either it is informal or formal form. Rather than that, the users are able to share the entire knowledge with others.

The learning organization emphasizes aspects of the organization operate to facilitate and encourage individual learning actively[5]. There seems to be a consensus among researchers of treating knowledge management as a process that facilitates knowledge exchange/sharing and establish learning as a continuous process within the organization[6]. The factors which many enthusiastic companies have in common seem to be the degree to which they are capable of exploiting the skills and experience of their workforce[7].

3. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The Social Networking Services (SNS) over knowledge sharing has been the course of many debates recently. Based on the previous research, there was limited research that has been completed in terms of knowledge and technology relationship. This has also showed that the most of research and studies in terms online knowledge sharing was concerning on the companies, universities, and organizations intranet networks. Thus, the research has not focus on the knowledge sharing and transformation for the general Internet user.

4. METHODOLOGY

Data were collected using questionnaires, and from direct interviews with the subjects. Surveys were used to measure the impact. This study used quantitative approaches which carry the objectives in determining the user's perceptions in terms of the social networking services. Thus, the used of SNS determination need to be proven as part of the knowledge sharing tools.

As for data collection, the set of questionnaires have been distributed to the post graduate students in the Faculty of Information Management, UiTM. By using a purposive sampling technique, this questionnaire was being distributed to the entire post graduate student.

Once the questionnaires being collected, the analysis of this study has been conducted by using the Statistical for Social Science (SPSS) version 16.0. Through this analysis, it has resulted the findings of this study which has being explained in the next section.

5. FINDINGS

As for the findings, this paper has presented the demographic analysis and level of social networking services usage.

Demographics

The demographic questions were indicated demographic details of respondents. The demographic segment had included gender, age, academic background, ongoing semester and study mode. However, this paper only presenting the respondent gender that act as an introductory part of this study. As for the gender question (Question 1 (a)), the respondent were being asked to fill in the checkbox column with stated by the question "What is you gender?" Therefore, the Figure 1 below has illustrates the gender distribution of respondents.
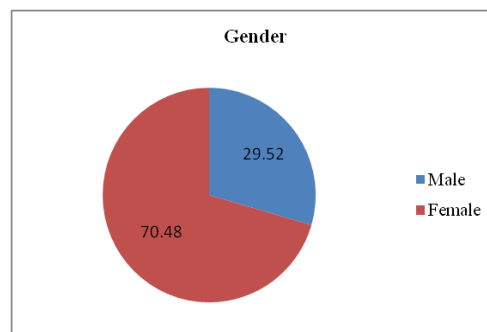

Fig.1. Gender

Based the Figure 1 above, this has shown that, there were only 31 respondents out of 105 respondents were male (29.52%) and 74 respondents (70.48%) were female. This has also shown the difference (40.96%) of female was more than the male respondent registered.

Instead of the gender segment, the result collected has also reflected the ages of respondents. By bearded 105 number of respondent, the result has showed that 22 (20.95%) of respondents were between the age of 27-30 and 20 (19.05%) were between age of 21-23. This followed by 61 (58.10%) respondents were between age of 24-26 and only 2 (1.90%) respondents were aged 30 and above. By having all those analysis, the next section has presenting the findings and analysis of the second study objectives which was "identify the level of usage of Social Networking Services (SNS)".

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Level of Social Networking Services

Table.2. Level of Social Networking Services Usage and Factors Effecting SNS Usage to Share Knowledge

Statements	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)
1. I prefer to communicate and share ideas with members via ICT facilities (e.g. email, YM messenger) rather than face-to-face meetings	62.9	14.2	22.9
2. I prefer to locate information from the internet rather than directly asking for help from other members	83.8	9.5	6.7
3. Social networking services help me much and less time consuming to share my knowledge	100	0	0
4. I feel comfortable with the social networking services and features to share or transfer knowledge	100	0	0
5. I frequently used social networking services in daily work	100	0	0
6. High speed internet connection encouraged me to use social networking services to share my knowledge	100	0	0
7. UiTM online discussion platform such as I-LEARN was convenient as knowledge sharing tools	88.6	11.4	0

The table 2 showed that (62.9%) respondents agreed, 22.9% disagreed and 14.2% were neutral in terms of communicating and sharing ideas with members via ICT facilities compared to face-to-face meetings. The 83.8% analysis shows that they agreed to locate information from the internet rather than directly asking for help from other members, 9.5% were neutral and 6.7% disagreed.

Moreover, the 100% of respondents agreed that social networking services help them much, feel comfortable with the social networking services, frequently used social networking services in daily work and high speed internet connection have encourage them to use social networking services in sharing the knowledge. As for the last part of this segment of analysis, it shows that the (88.6%) respondents agreed that UiTM online discussion platform was convenient to be used as part of knowledge sharing tools.

6. DISCUSSION

Based on the all those analysis and findings, this has shown that the social networking sites contribute much in influencing the users to widely share their knowledge. Thus, the results have also shows that the social networking services were convenience to become a tool in terms of reduction of time for sharing the knowledge. Through these results, the student can had an ability to disseminate the information or sharing their ideas. These have been proven through the reliability of data that represent most of the respondents agreed that SNS is convenience enough for becoming a knowledge sharing tools.

Besides that, an eligibility to have the high speed internet connection, this has helped to encourage huge number of students to frequently use the social sites in transferring the knowledge. On top of that, the finding has also shows that the respondents feel more comfortable to use Yahoo Mail, Google Mail and others as the primary tools of sharing. In fact, they preferred to share the knowledge through those platform compared to social networking such as Facebook.

Through those discussions above, the result of findings has disguised that the social networking sites were highly addictive to those people who prioritize themselves on the entertainment purposes compared to academic works. By giving too much focus on the social acceptance and affiliation, this will lead to the new issues that need further investigation and works.

7. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the usage of social network services can be beneficial if it was used appropriately. By controlling the usage of the social networking services, it can become part of the academic sharing tools. Some of the people might have to use the social sites in communication. But, when it comes to the sharing the important knowledge, they were preferred to used a formal email. Therefore, the usage of the social sites can become a tremendous knowledge sharing tools if it is properly used by the users.

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