Edith Cowan University

CSG1132

Communicating in an IT Environment

Assignment 1b

Literature review:
Factors and attitudes that shape personal use of social media

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Contents

1 Introduction

Facebook is one of today's leading Social Networking Sites (SNS). The company reports that as of June 2014, their network serves 1.32 billion users per month (Facebook, 2014), while Hampton and Goulet (2011) identified that 92% of SNS users in their dataset were Facebook users. As Facebook expanded registration to users outside educational and professional institutions in September 2006 (Facebook, 2014), males and females alike were quick to adopt the technology at a fast paced rate (Mazman & Usluel, 2011). This adoption rate has triggered a multitude of scientific research "from widely different fields of inquiry", attempting to explain the phenomenon of Facebook (Caers et al., 2013, p. 983).

This literature review focuses on research which examine the demographic differences relating to SNS use, with particular attention to the role of gender. Men are generally regarded as earlier adopters of technology compared to women. This is evident in findings by Pitkow and Recker (1994), where 95% of Internet users were men, while Kimbrough, Guadagno, Muscanell, and Dill (2013, p. 896) declares that during the first half of the 1990's, the Internet "was mostly regarded as a technological boy's toy". A decade later, Fallows (2005) asserts that there are just as many females as there are males online. Research by Fogel and Nehmad (2009) provides supporting evidence that men are also earlier adopters of SNS, finding that more men had established SNS accounts before women. However, the trend has shifted, with recent reports indicating that women now represent the majority of SNS users compared to men (Duggan & Brenner, 2013; Hampton & Goulet, 2011).

As the Internet user gender gap disappears, it is more important than ever to understand the differences between genders and its effects relating to personal SNS use, so that current social network sites and social network sites of the future are able to service both men and women equally. This literature review will explore those differences as expressed in the body of current research literature, by responding to the following questions:

- What are the motivational differences between genders in SNS use?

- What are the gender differences in SNS self-presentation?

- What are the differences in SNS privacy concerns between genders?

2   Literature Review

2.1   What are the motivational differences between genders in SNS use?

3   Literature Review

3.1   Motivational differences

3.1.1   Women use FB for relationship maintenance more than men

- Kimbrough et al. (2013)

- Muscanell and Guadagno (2012)

- Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008)

- Mazman and Usluel (2011)

  - Women more likely to look for old friends

3.1.2   Women compare themselves with other people more than men

- McAndrew and Jeong (2012)

- Choi and Kim (2014)

- Fogel and Nehmad (2009)

- Haferkamp, Eimler, Papadakis, and Kruck (2012)

  - Women more likely to look at others' profiles to find out more about that person

  - Women more likely to compare themselves with others more often than men

3.1.3   Men use FB to create new relationships more than women

- Mazman and Usluel (2011)

- Might not include this sub-subheading, or merge with another

3.1.4   Men use FB for information-gathering purposes more than women

- Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008)

- Choi and Kim (2014)

  - Men are more open to advertising on FB than women

- Muscanell and Guadagno (2012), see quote.

- Kimbrough et al. (2013)

- Countered by Park, Kee, and Valenzuela (2009), but study only examines FB groups, not FB as whole

- Countered by Haferkamp et al. (2012), no difference in gender for task and information-orientated behaviour

3.1.5   Men use FB for dating purposes more than women

Might merge this section with "Men use FB to create new relationships more than women"

- Muscanell and Guadagno (2012)

- Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008)

- Tifferet and Vilnai-Yavetz (2014)

  – Men's profile photos express masculinity or status to appear more attractive
  – Move to Self-presentation

- McAndrew and Jeong (2012)

  – Men express less emotion in photos to express masculinity
  – Move to Self-presentation

- Choi and Kim (2014)

  – Men more likely to engage in brand-related WOM discussions, possibly to increase status

- Haferkamp et al. (2012)

  – Men use SNS for relationship seeking more than women
  – Men are more likely to edit profile picture than women

3.2   Self-presentation

3.2.1   Profile pictures

- Haferkamp et al. (2012)

  – Women prefer to use portrait shots, emphasise facial features
  – Men prefer to use full body shots, including environment and other people
    * Linked to risk taking, refer to privacy concerns

3.2.2   Use of language

- Schwartz et al. (2013)

- Joiner et al. (2014)

3.3   Privacy concerns

3.3.1   Women more concerned about privacy than men

- Mathiyalakan, Heilman, and White (2014)

- Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008)

- Fogel and Nehmad (2009)

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