Edith Cowan University
CSG1132
Communicating in an IT Environment
Assignment 1b

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

Martin Ponce
Student 10371381

Tutor: Dr. Mark Brogan

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1 Introduction

Facebook is one of today's leading Social Networking Sites (SNS) and report as of June 2014, their network serves 1.32 billion users per month (Facebook, 2014). According to Hampton and Goulet (2011), 92% of SNS users use Facebook. Facebook expanded registration to users outside educational and professional institutions in September 2006 (Facebook, 2014), and 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 examines the demographic differences relating to social networking use, with particular attention to the role of gender. Men are generally regarded as earlier adopters to technology compared to women, as shown in findings by Pitkow and Recker (1994) where 95% of Internet users were men, while Kimbrough, Guadagno, Muscanell, and Dill (2013, p. 896) states 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 to Facebook, finding that the majority of men had established social network accounts before women. However, the trend has shifted, and in 2012, women represented 53% of the user base (Duggan & Brenner, 2013).

As the user gender gap shrinks, it is important to understand the differences between genders and its effects relating to personal social networking 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.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Motivational differences

2.2 Differences in use

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