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Facebook Usage and Functionality as the Predictive Factors in Contributing Towards Employee Engagement

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Abstract

Although it is clear that Facebook is a very powerful tool of communication, many employers are unable to identify the Facebook usage and functionality in engaging their employees. Therefore, a quantitative survey involved 55 respondents using purposive sampling technique has been done to determine whether Facebook usage and functionality are the predictive factors in contributing towards employee engagement.Based on multiple regression analysis, it showed that *groups, presence and reputations (*functionality) *and perceived ease-of-use (*Usage*)* are the predictive factors in engaging the employees. As conclusion, by analyzing these predictive factors, organizations can understand how Facebook activities certainly benefit to them in engaging their employees.

*Keywords:*Facebook; facebook functionality; employee engagement

1. Introduction

Recently, many researchers especially from the academia and the industry has interest on social media. This is contributed to the face that the role of social media is rapidly changing in term of sharing knowledge and ideas and also giving opinion. Social media is a set of online tool for social interaction and one of the Internet-based Application group that provide the base of ideological and technological of web 2.0 to create and change of User Generated Content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In practice, social media serves as a catchall phrase for social

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networking services (SNS) (e.g Facebook), social sharing services (YouTube, Flickr), a collection of web-based technologies and services (e.g Twitter) (Hansen, Shneiderman, & Smith, 2011). As social media has matured, it has become an important feature of many people's personal lives. Sometimes employers need to speak in many languages and many ways to really reach employees. One of those is the language of social media because it has the ability for people to voice their opinions as customers and consumers. By engaging employees through social media, employers can reach a larger audience and build credibility with techno-savvy workers as it creates a two-way communications between employer and employee.

In an organization, effective and strong communications are the variables that can lead to employee engagement. Engagement is related to a lot of emotions both from the psychological and cognitive perspective. It is about how one feels about the job, the organization and about the emotion one attaches to these for being driven to do more than expect for holistic growth of the organization. The relationship of effective communication, confidence in management, supportive supervision and acceptance of change are being moderated to employee engagement (Leiter & Harvie, 1998).An employee would not stay at work if they don't feel engage to their work and will more distracted by non-work related issues (Saks, 2006).Employees experiencing engagement are capable to deal with the job's demands due to feeling connected with their work activities (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002). The engagement at work is related between and individual well-being outcomes and being positive at work are contributed to levels of employee engagement (Koyuncu, Burke & Fiksenbaum, 2006).

1.1. Facebook as a social media

The world of social media is moving rapidly. Social media such as Facebook has profound implications when applied to organizations, because it is changing the way people interact and work and even the nature of the employment relationship. In Malaysia, Facebook users are more than 13 million or equivalent to 49.83 per cent of Malaysia's population (Socialbakers, 2013). Facebook also has voted as the second list under Top 20 Sites Surfed by Malaysians in 2013 and Top Social Networks in Malaysia (comScore, 2011).

The reliance through social media is increasing from day to day as the feedback given by their social networkers' friends is faster than traditional other internet medium such as forum. Facebook has proved as a very powerful tool for communication, however many employers are unable to identify its functionalities especially in engaging their employee in term of developing strategies and to allocate the resources. The main reason behind the ineptitude is lack of understanding the definition and the functionality of social media itself (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Therefore, many organizations regularly disregard or mishandle the opportunities and extortions by creative consumers (Berthon, Pitt, McCarthy, & Kates, 2007). The functionalities of Facebook has presented using Honeycomb model (Kietzmann, Silvestre, McCarthy & Leyland, 2012).

This honeycomb model helps to explain the implications that each block has and how organizations should engage with Facebook. The seven functions involved are *Groups*, represent the extent to which users can form their own societies or sub societies, *Reputation* which extent to which users can determine other users' level or themselves in term of their reputations through their shared contents, status, friend list and CheckIn, *Relationships* that represent the extent of users attached to other users. They can create relationships through profile, adding new friends, joining other groups and also by creating their personal groups, *Sharing* represents the extent to which users' exchange, distribute, receive and sharing their photos, audio, video, notes, what they like and their status, *Conversations* represent the extent to which users communicate with other users in Facebook setting such as chatting, sharing status, sending messages, shared contents and shared what they likes. *Identity* is the extents to which users reveal their identities in Facebook setting such as their profile (name, gender, age and qualification), their status and interest, their shared contents and any information that represent users. *Presence* represents the extent which can user identify existing of other users from their users profile, status, chatting and CheckIn status on Facebook.
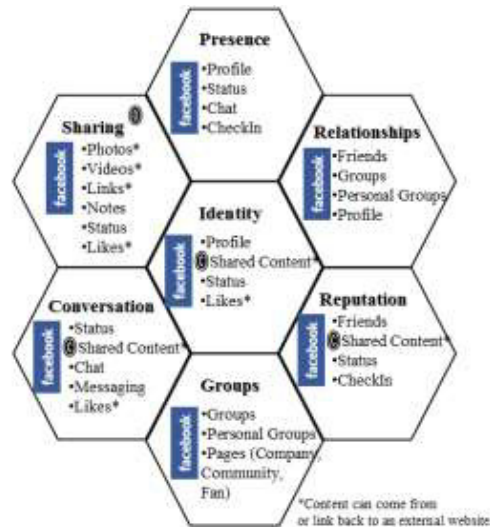
Fig. 1. Source: Facebook features' fit on Smith's (2007) Honeycomb Model (RanaBabac,2011)

1.2. Facebook functionality and employee engagement

In times of change and challenge, communication can be the key to sustaining the business. The roles of social media such as Facebook have been suggested as a tool to engage among engineers and users in software engineering to involve in their social activity (Begel, DeLine & Zimmermann, 2010). If the social media such as Facebook has utilized properly, the employer can develop the reputation and brand image using social media for their organization (Groysberg & Slind, 2012).

Employee engagement is essential to an organisation's success. Many domestic and international firms depend on high levels of engagement in order to promote talent retention, foster customer loyalty and improve organisational performance and stakeholder value. What becomes of effective communication is the drive for employees to engage, commit and be productive that will subsequently lead to enhanced business performance. This in turn generates superior financial returns. Much on the contrary, an organisation that is silent can have detrimental results as it forces employees to speculate, consume gossip and rumour as well as relying on the media for company information (Hoover, 2005).

Organizations that promote effective communications experience less turnover and resistance, higher shareholder returns, increased commitment and higher levels of employee engagement. Therefore the new framework has presented to consider that Theory Acceptance Model (TAM) and A Honeycomb model of Facebook are the predictive factors affecting the employee engagement. The framework suggests the usage of the TAM model because when users are presented with a new technology, a number of factors influence their decision about how and when they will use it and users formulate a positive attitude toward the technology when they perceive it to be useful and easy to use (Davis, 1989).

In identifying the particular beliefs that are operative in the context of computer behavior, this framework has identified two specific beliefs which are perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEU) (Davis, 1989). While for the Honeycomb Facebook functionality model, there are seven blocks involved which are sharing, presence, conversations, identity, relationship, reputation and groups. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study is to determine whether all these predictor factors will contribute to employee engagement. The figure below presents the study's conceptual framework.
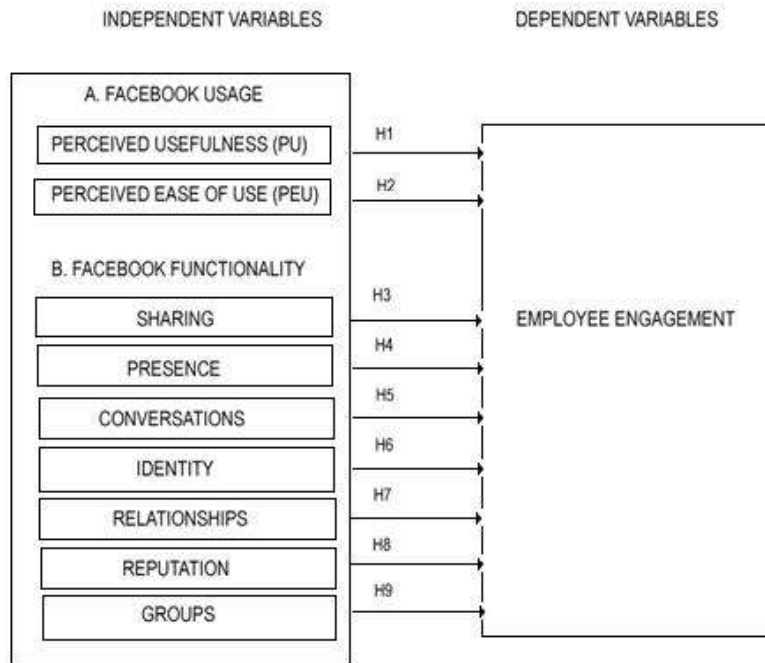
Fig.2. Predictive factors in contributing towards employee engagement framework

2. Methodology

A quantitative research using survey method was conducted among academic staff at Faculty of Science Computer and Information Technology (FCSIT), Unisel because of their engagement in computer mediated communication (CMC) such as Facebook due to physical and time constraints. A set of self-administrative questionnaire was distributed to the respondents using "drop and collect" method. The respondents are given one week to complete the questionnaires and it will be collected by the researcher from the faculty office. The sample is chose based on purposive sampling where 55 respondents have been selected based on two criteria; respondent must be a Facebook active user and has been in the service for more than five years. A set of questionnaire consist of four sections which are user profile (5 items), Facebook Usage (Perceived Usefulness, 5 items; Perceived Ease-of-use, 5 items), Facebook Functionality (Group, 3 items; Presence, 5 items, Reputation, 4 items; Relationship, 4 items; Identity, 4 items; Sharing, 5 items; Conversation, 5 items) and Employee Engagement (8 items) were asked to respondents to rate their opinion using a 4-point scales ranging from 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree and 4=Strongly agree.

The pre-test found that the Alpha Cronbach values on Perceived Usefulness (0.829), Perceived ease-of-use (0.829), Identity (0.828), Relationships (0.902), Groups (0.986), Presence (0.753), Sharing (0.931), and Conversations (0.745), Reputation (0.763) and Employee Engagement (0.834). Therefore, the reliability of research instrument was acceptable. Multiple regressions are used to find the predictive factors towards employee engagement.

3. Results and discussion

In this study, two predictive factors of Facebook Usage and seven predictive factors of Facebook functionality has been analysed to determine which of all these predictive factors will contribute to employee engagement.

Based on multiple regression analysis, this study has found group, presence, reputation of Facebook functions and perceived ease of use have statistically significant in contributing towards employee

engagement, $[F(4,50) = 60.864, p < 0.05]$ (Table 1). Group function has explained 68.3 percentage variances (R^2=0.683) (Table 2) towards employee engagement. It shows that group function(β=1.043, p<0.05) (Table 2) was the strongest predictive factor of employee engagement.

When the group function (β=0.142, p<0.05) has combined with the presence function, it has increased 8.9 per cent of the variance (RSquare Change=0.089) (Table 2) has explained 77.2 percentage variances (R2=0.772) towards employee engagement. It means that the presence function also to be a second predictive factor affecting the engagement among the academic staff. In the meantime, the analysis also found that when group and presence functions (β =-0.312, p<0.05) combined with the the perceived ease-of-use were increased for 4.3 per cent of the variance (R Square Change = 0.043) (Table 2) has explained 81.5 percentage variances (R2= 0.815) towards employee engagement among the academic staff. This implies that perceived ease of use also influences the academic staff to get engage with their colleague members.

Finally, the variable reputation function have also contributed to the employee enaggement among the academic staff. The analysis found when group and presence functions and perceived ease-of-use combined with reputation function were increased 1.5 per cent of the variance (R Square Change = 0.015) (Table 2) has explained 83.0 percentage variances (R^2=0.83) towards employee engagement among the academic staff. This means that the requirements of the reputation function is also a predictive factor influencing the employee engagement among the academic staff.

Table 1. Analysis of variance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. value
4 (Group, Presence, Perceived ease of use, Reputation)					
Regression	324.214	4	81.054	60.864	.000
Residual	66.586	50	1.332		
Total	390.800	54			

Table 2: Analysis of coefficient regression

Model	B (Unstandardized)	Beta (Standardized)	t	Sig.
1(Constant)	18.131		8.730	.000
Group	2.404	.826	10.678	.000
2(Constant)	9.975		3.927	.000
Group	2.588	.890	13.129	.000
Presence	.480	.305	4.499	.000
3(Constant)	12.947		5.257	.000
Group	3.081	1.059	13.459	.000
Presence	.661	.420	6.001	.000
Perceived Ease Of Use	-.763	-.278	-3.460	.001
4(Constant)	17.338		5.430	.000
Group	3.033	1.043	13.597	.000
Presence	.649	.412	6.067	.000
Perceived Ease Of Use	-.856	-.312	-3.920	.000
Reputation	-.313	-.130	-2.071	.044

	R	R Square Change	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1 (Group)	.826	.683	.683	.677
2 (Group, Presence)	.878	.089	.772	.763
3 (Group, Presence, Perceived ease of Use)	.903	.043	.815	.804
4 (Group, Presence, Perceived ease of Use, Reputation)	.911	.015	.830	.816

As a result, Table 1 and Table 2 have shown that the contribution of all four factors be 83 percent variance (R^2 = 0.830) to changes in the employee engagement among the academic staff towards using Facebook. Results of the analysis show that significantly group, presence, perceived ease of use and reputation predictors to influence the engagement among the academic staff. This means that the fourth-dimensional is the fourth key predictors affecting the respondents accept or reject. Therefore, based on the results, one regression equation has been formulated to develop employee engagement.

Equation Regression Employee Engagement = 1.043 (Group) + 0.412 (Presence) - 0.312 (Perceived Ease of Use) - 0.130 (Reputation)

It shows that the hypothesis of this study has been rejected because there were only four factors have been identified in contributing towards employee engagement.

4. Conclusion

It becomes clear that social media such as Facebook does not focus solely on just one function in engaging the employees in an organization. By analyzing the usage and Honeycomb's seven functions of Facebook, organizations can monitor and understand how social media such as Facebook activities vary in terms of their functions and impact, so as to develop a congruent social media strategy in developing employee engagement in their organizations. Based on the finding of this study, a new model has been produced that may certainly benefit to all organizations in engaging their employees towards using Facebook as their communication tools.
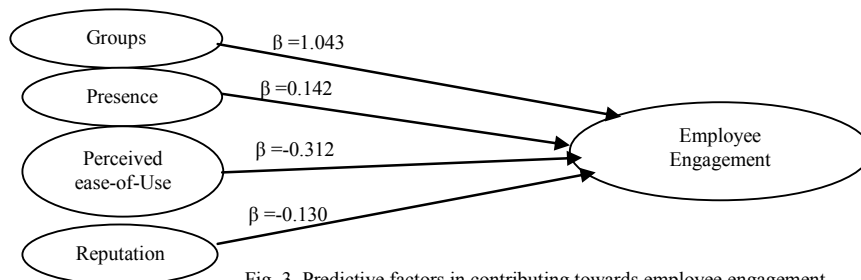

Fig. 3. Predictive factors in contributing towards employee engagement

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