RELATIONSHIPS OF ADOLESCENTS' USAGE OF SNSs TO THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION WITH FAMILY MEMBERS

by

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HUBUNGAN ANTARA PENGGUNAAN LAMAN SOSIAL OLEH REMAJA DENGAN PRESTASI AKADEMIK DAN INTERAKSI BERSEMUKA DENGAN AHLI KELUARGA

ABSTRAK

Laman sosial menyediakan platform untuk berkomunikasi, bersosial dan berkongsi maklumat kepada pengguna internet. Remaja menghabiskan banyak masa dan sering melayari laman sosial. Menggunakan kerangka teori anjakan masa dan teori sistem keluarga, kajian ini mengkaji hubungan antara penggunaan laman sosial (jumlah masa diluangkan dan kekerapan log masuk) dengan prestasi akademik. Interaksi bersemuka antara remaja dengan ahli keluarga turut dikaji untuk memberi gambaran keseluruhan mengenai perkaitan antara penggunaan laman sosial dan interaksi keluarga dalam kalangan remaja di peringkat awal dan akhir remaja. Pengkaji turut mengkaji pembolehubah demografi seperti umur, jantina, lokasi kediaman, pendapatan bulanan ibu bapa dan juga latar belakang pendidikan ibu bapa yang mungkin memoderasikan hubungan antara pembolehubah bebas dengan pembolehubah bersandar. Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada 434 orang pelajar Tingkatan 1 dan Tingkatan 4 daripada empat buah sekolah di Kuala Lumpur dan Selangor. Dua instrumen yang digunakan dalam borang soal selidik ialah *Social Networking Use Questionnaire* dan *Revised Taxonomy of Interpersonal Speech Events*. Regresi hirarki berganda digunakan untuk menganalisis kesan moderasi. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan penggunaan laman sosial dalam kalangan remaja bukan merupakan peramal yang signifikan bagi prestasi akademik dan interaksi bersemuka dengan ibu. Walau bagaimanapun, dapatan menunjukkan penggunaan laman sosial merupakan peramal yang signifikan kepada interaksi bersemuka dengan bapa dan

adik-beradik, dengan dimoderatkan oleh pembolehubah demografi seperti umur, pendapatan bulanan ibu bapa dan latar belakang pendidikan ibu bapa. Dapatan kajian ini menyumbang kepada pengetahuan dalam bidang penggunaan media sosial remaja dan interaksi keluarga. Kajian ini mengesahkan bahawa ibu merupakan individu yang mana anak-anak kerap berinteraksi secara bersemuka, berbanding dengan ahli keluarga yang lain. Dapatan ini juga menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan laman sosial memberi kesan lebih jelas terhadap hubungan yang kurang rapat dan akan kurang memberi kesan pada hubungan yang kukuh seperti hubungan dengan ibu.

RELATIONSHIPS OF ADOLESCENTS' USAGE OF SNSs TO THEIR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION WITH FAMILY MEMBERS

ABSTRACT

SNSs provide internet users with a platform to communicate, socialize and share information. Adolescents spend a significant amount of time and frequently log in on SNSs. Using the framework of time displacement theory and family systems theory, the present study examined the relationship of SNSs usage (time spent and frequency of login) to academic performance. Adolescents' face-to-face interaction with family members was also examined to give an overall view of the association between SNSs usage and family interaction among early and late adolescents. The researcher also examined demographic variables such as age, gender, residential location, parents' monthly income and parents' educational background that might moderate the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The sample of the present study consisted of 434 Form 1 and Form 4 students from four selected schools in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. Two instruments used in the questionnaire were *Social Networking Use Questionnaire* and *Revised Taxonomy of Interpersonal Speech Events*. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to analyze the moderation effect. The results revealed that SNSs usage among adolescents was a non-significant predictor of academic performance and face-to-face interaction with mother. However, the results showed that SNSs usage was a significant predictor of face-to-face interaction with father and siblings, moderated by demographic variables such as age, parents' monthly income and parents' educational background.

These findings contribute to the body of knowledge on adolescents' social media usage and family interaction. The present study confirmed that mother was the one with whom children had frequent face-to-face interaction with, compared to the other family members. The findings also suggest that SNSs usage have more obvious impact on less close relationships and has less impact on strong relationships such as relationship with mother.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Innovations and technologies come into our homes with few boundaries, and the Internet has become the most vital communication tool today. It comprises a gigantic but an almost invisible universe that includes thousands of networks, millions of computers, and billions of users across the world (Greenfield & Yan, 2006). The Malaysian government's campaign "a house, a computer" is in line with the current technological developments. Moreover, through the Universal Service Provision (USP) programme, one million 1Malaysia netbooks are allocated to be distributed among eligible students, especially those who come from low-income families. This effort assists the target recipients to get the opportunity of using the internet and also to increase the broadband usage in this country. As the target groups of the USP programme are students, it is clear that the use of the Internet among adolescents will increase.

Most adolescents spend a lot of their time on the Internet. This was proved by the statistics from the Pew Research Centre, Internet and American Life Project. 93% of the adolescents ages 12 to 17 years old went online in 2010 and 55% of the teenagers had their own Social Networking Sites (SNSs) profile (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). Besides that, 48% of adolescents visited their SNS profiles daily or even more often (Amanda Lenhart, Madden, Macgill, & Smith, 2007). Hence, it is important to be aware of the impact on their development, behaviour, psychological well-being and relationships

with others. The present study seeks to gather information about how adolescents' frequency and amount of SNSs usage might influence their academic performance and relationship with their parents and siblings.

1.2 Problem Statement

SNSs have become common and important communication tools nowadays and they are, in fact, - integrated into many aspects of our daily lives. Their ease of use and the immediate gratification effect they have led to an exponential rise in their usage, especially among adolescents. This unprecedented growth sparked concern about the overall consequences of this trend especially its impact on academic performance and relationships within the family. A major problem which has come to light as a possible a consequence of this trend is that adolescents spend most of their leisure time surfing SNSs rather than doing revision and homework (Peiró-Velert et al., 2014). In addition, they often neglect the presence of their parents and other family members due to these habits. These phenomena have triggered the current research, especially because their impact has not been adequately researched in Malaysia. Previous studies showed that demographic factors such as age, gender, residential location, parents' monthly income and parents' educational background may influence adolescent SNSs usage (Hargittai, 2007; Wang, Bianchi, & Raley, 2005). The present study attempts to investigate these and other studies and fill gaps in our knowledge about these current and important topic. In addition, our study will investigate how SNSs usage may affect the general life and well-being of adolescents today. Concerns have already been raised among researchers about the side effects of continuous and long hours spent on Internet among adolescents; for instance,

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the risk of cyberbullying, SNSs addiction, social and psychological problems and relationship problems (Brandtzæg, 2012; Dreier, Beutel, Duven, & Giralt, 2016; Kuss & Griffiths, 2011; Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). These past studies highlight that in some conditions, SNSs usage can lead to a decrease in real-life community activities, worsened academic performance and relationships problems. Frequent login and long hours spent on SNSs will displace the time adolescents spend communicating with other people, which, in turn, cause long-term problems later on in life.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the statement of problem above, this study attempted to answer seven research questions:

1) Does SNSs usage predict adolescents' academic performance?

2) Does adolescents' SNSs usage predict their face-to-face interaction with family members?

3) Is there any difference in SNSs usage between early adolescents and late adolescents?

4) Is there any difference in SNSs usage between male and female adolescents?

5) Is there any difference in SNSs usage between urban and rural adolescents?

6) Does parents' monthly income predicts SNSs usage among adolescents?

7) Does parents' educational background predicts SNSs usage among adolescents?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research questions above entail seven research objectives:

1) To determine whether the time spent and frequency of SNSs usage can predict adolescents' academic performance.

2) To determine whether the time spent and frequency of SNSs usage can predict adolescents' face-to-face interaction with family members.

3) To investigate whether there is any difference in SNSs usage between early adolescents and late adolescents

4) To investigate whether there is any difference in SNSs usage between adolescent boys and girls.

5) To investigate whether there is any difference in SNSs usage between urban and rural adolescents.

6) To determine whether parents' monthly income predicts SNSs usage among adolescents.

7) To determine whether parents' educational background predicts SNSs usage among adolescents.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted to examine whether SNSs usage predicts academic performance and face-to-face interaction with family members. Demographic factors were included to determine the moderation effect of those variables. The present study was limited to school-going adolescents, ages 13 and 16 years old from two urban schools in Kuala Lumpur and two rural schools in Selangor. As the schools chosen were national schools, majority of the respondents were Malays. Moreover, this study did not aim to analyse the reasons or motivation behind the adolescents' SNSs usage. SNSs usage in this study was refers to the usage of social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Mobile phone applications that provide chatting facilities for instance WhatsApp, WeChat and Telegram were excluded from this study. In addition, face-to-face interaction variable was limited to interaction with mother, father and siblings. Interaction with the other extended family members was excluded. Plus, since it was measured according to daily interaction, students who were staying in the hostel are beyond the scope of this study.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The use of communication technologies such as SNSs among adolescents far outnumber adults (Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). Statistics showed that more than half of the adolescents had their own SNSs profile (Lenhart et al., 2010). Hence, the impact of SNSs in the adolescents' life is likely to be significant. Although these media help us to communicate, concerns about the risks are rising. Spending too much time surfing SNSs

may lead to other consequences such as SNSs addiction, depression, cyber-sex, cyber bullying, loneliness, impaired academic performance and reduction of face-to-face interactions with others. More extreme condition is suggestive of a potential new mental health problem that emerges as SNSs proliferate. Such social consequences extend beyond the adolescents themselves to their families, friends and society.

Today's adolescents are important assets for our country as they will become our future leaders and who will shape the future generation. In the long term, the proliferation of SNSs could gradually change and shape the thinking processes, social behaviours and overall culture of a society in undesirable ways. Much of what we currently know about adolescent SNSs usage and its consequences comes from research in the West. We do not know much about this matter in Malaysia. Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge about the adolescent SNSs usage and its impact on academic performance and interaction with family members. This information is useful because if we know how much time they spend, we can highlight to parents the problems that may arise and find some effective mechanisms to overcome any related problems. The study should also provide evidence of the differences of SNSs usage among early and late adolescents which is crucial to identifying developmental groups at risk in order to orient prevention programmes to their particular needs. The findings of this study would be of value to the overall society as well as to academicians, especially psychologists, as it highlights the adolescent attitude toward SNSs usage and the adolescent socio-emotional relations with family members. This study would also help provide parents and educators with guidance on the appropriate use of the Internet for adolescents.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) refers to web-based service that provides a virtual community for people to connect with friends, share their daily activities or share their interest in a certain topic and also to increase their circle of acquaintances (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011). Examples of SNSs are Facebook, Friendster, Twitter and Instagram.

Adolescence refers to a stage of life which is a transition state from childhood to adulthood. Early adolescence usually starts from 11 or 12 to 14 years old and late adolescence starts from 16 to 18 or 19 years old (Rathus, 2011).

Face-to-face interaction is defined as a direct encounter between two or more individuals. (VandenBos, 2007).

Family is defined as a kinship unit consisting of a group of individuals united by blood or marital, adoptive or other intimate ties.

Sibling is defined as one of two or more children born of the same parents (VandenBos, 2007).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, past studies related to the present research are reviewed. First, the definitions of SNSs were acquired from several articles reviewed. SNSs' common features and uses and adolescents' communication pattern are also described. Next, the socio-emotional development of the adolescence and the adolescents' relationships with parents, siblings and peers are reviewed. Three theories are reviewed: time displacement theory, social exchange theory and family systems theory. Finally, a conceptual framework for this study is provided.

2.1 What is Social Networking Site?

Social networking sites are online communities where users can create their own profile, connect with their real-world friends and find new acquaintances based on shared interests. Boyd and Ellison (2007) defined social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. According to Kaveri Subrahmanyam and Patricia Greenfield (2008), social networking utilities were online services that allow users to create profiles (public or private) and form a network of friends; allow users to interact with their friends via public and private means (such as messages and instant messaging), that also allow the posting of user-generated content such as photos and videos.

There were some debates on the issue of the most suitable term to be used for SNSs. For instance, the above definition made by Boyd and Ellison used the term social network sites instead of social networking sites. Their point is that the word 'networking' stresses on creating a new relationship, often with strangers in the offline world. In fact, initiating a new relationship is not the main purpose of many people who join SNSs (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). On the contrary, many researchers (Kuss & Griffiths, 2011; Livingstone & Brake, 2010; Kaveri Subrahmanyam, Reich, Waechter, & Espinoza, 2008) used the term social networking sites. For this study, the researcher prefers to use the term social networking sites in agreement with the arguments projected by Dr David Beer that the term social network sites proposed by Boyd and Ellison was too broad and can be referred to too many web applications (Beer, 2008).

2.1.1 Common Features of the Social Networking Sites and the Current Trend

There are so many SNSs that have been established since Web 2.0 was introduced. Web 2.0 refers to the newer version of World Wide Web which allows users to generate content, interact and collaborate with one another, compared with Web 1.0 in which the users just operate in a one-way flow of information. Blogs and SNSs are utilities that come into existence together with the Web 2.0. There are several SNSs that are created to enable users to connect with friends (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008), such as Myspace and Facebook, to share photos, such as Instagram and Flickr, to share videos, such as YouTube and Keek, and to connect for business base interest, such as LinkedIn. These SNSs promote different features but they have several similarities in common.

The common features that are essential in SNSs are profiles, friends and friend lists (Ahn, 2011). Once individuals have signed up and created a new account or profile, users need to identify their friends (or with whom they wish to have a relationship) in the systems straightaway (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). The term for this friendship differs among SNSs, such as 'friends', 'contacts', 'fans' and 'followers'. Users can view their friends' contact or friend lists by looking up in their friends' profile where the link is usually provided. Moreover, most SNSs offer private messaging as a mechanism for users to leave their messages to their friends specifically. These convenient and user friendly common features are among the reasons why people are so attracted and attached to SNSs.

Besides that, there are several other activities that users are able to do, such as updating their status, commenting on other users' statuses and contents (O'Brien, 2011), and also making use of the 'like' and 'tag' function. Generally, 26% of Facebook users are found to 'like' another user's content, 22% comment on another user's post or status, 15% update their own status and 20% comment on another user's photo (Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, & Purcell, 2011). People who love games can invite their friends to play online games on Facebook or play by themselves. All the above user-friendly features attract users to spend their time on SNSs.

During the data collection period of the present study, Facebook is the dominant SNSs platform based on the number of users around the world (Facebook, 2013). However, a large number of users are now diversifying onto various platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest. Despite the increasing popularity of other SNSs, Facebook remains dominant and popular across a various mix of demographic groups.

Facebook and Instagram exhibit high levels of user engagement where 63% of Facebook users and 57% of Instagram users reported that they visit this sites at least once a day (Duggan & Smith, 2014). As more and more new SNSs are expected to emerge, people will have even more options to choose from to meet their preferences. Thus, present SNSs seek to actively increase their popularity by considering diverse factors that attract people to use their product, so that they can remain significant in the life of users across generations.

2.1.2 Social Networking Sites Users

With more than one billion people who have signed up until 2013 and an average of 757 million daily active users in December 2013 (Facebook, 2013), Facebook has become the most popular SNS today. Facebook in its early emergence is limited to Harvard students to enable them to communicate with each other. The user-friendly features and excitement of using it made Facebook popular and it became a huge interest around the world. In 2010, about 100,000 Malaysians joined Facebook every month, with nearly 1.4 million Malaysians who have already registered for it (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2013). Apart from that, other recent SNSs, Twitter and Instagram, also caught the attention of Malaysian netizens. As there are a large number of SNSs users nowadays, it is indeed necessary to categorise them.

SNSs users can be divided into five groups according to their pattern of usage. In general, as suggested by Brandtzæg (2010), there are five types of SNSs users. The first

group is Sporadics which refers to individuals who use SNSs at low level. The second group is Lurkers referring to individuals who use SNSs but who do not contribute or interact with other users. The third group is Socializers. This refers to individuals who use SNSs mainly for social interaction with friends and family. The fourth is the Debaters which refer to individuals who use SNSs mainly for debating and discussion, and the fifth, the Advanced who use SNSs frequently for almost all purposes, such as socializing, debating, and contributing. These types differ significantly from one another in terms of user activities, scope of user activities, and social roles within SNSs. However, there was no gradient relationship between distinct user types. This is because there were some degrees of overlapping, but each user type has some distinct characteristics. For example, Advanced Users are most dissimilar from Sporadics and Lurkers, but may be involved in several activities within SNSs in which Socializers and Debaters are also involved.

2.2 Adolescents' Usage of Social Networking Sites

As SNSs has become world-famous, the scientific attentions with regard to the effects of SNSs has also increased. Studies on SNSs usage have been conducted in many countries such as the United States, Cyprus, China, Korea and also Malaysia (Ayu & Abrizah, 2011; Bicen & Cavus, 2010; Kim, Sohn, & Choi, 2011; Men & Tsai, 2013; Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009; Swang, 2011). Much attention has been given to the effects of SNSs usage on psychological well-being (Subrahmanyam & Lin, 2007, van der Aa et al., 2009), cognitive development, and academic performance (Alexander, Hamilton, & Chairperson, 2012; Brien, 2011; Swang, 2011). However, only a few studies have been conducted to examine the impact of SNSs usage on adolescents' interaction

with family members and academic performance, especially in Malaysia. Although the references available in this study area are limited, there are some studies on the Internet and social media research that had been conducted. Related studies on the Internet addiction specifically those conducted in Malaysia show that entertainment, social-interaction, eroticism, information surveillance and product-related information are the factors that motivate Malaysian adolescents to go online (Soh, 2011).

Adolescents have incorporated the Internet into their lives as daily routines. This was supported by the data provided by Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) in their annual report that adolescents, mostly from 15 to 19 years old, were the main Internet users at home. A study found that Chinese youths spend double the time online compared to the Malays and Indians (Soh, Yan, Ong, & Teh, 2012). Among the activities that they are engaged in are online gaming, chatting, listening to music, surfing the social sites, and gathering information. Meanwhile, their Malay and Indian counterparts are found to view the Internet as a medium to help them in their studies.

Moreover, Internet and SNSs do not affect all adolescents in the same way. For example, different gender may exhibit different effect on the relationship of SNSs usage on adolescents' academic performance and interaction with family members. The percentage of adolescents who reported being a member of at least one SNSs was significantly higher among female adolescents than male adolescents (Tsitsika et al., 2014). In addition, boys spend more time online than girls (Tan, Ng, & Saw, 2009) and most of them used the Internet for recreational purposes such as online gaming (Chen &

Fu, 2009). Since adolescents' usage of the Internet and SNSs takes much of their time and is without a clear purpose, it is vital to examine the implication of this usage on their lives.

In addition to gender, age is also considered as a moderator, because age represents the developmental stage of a person, for example, the social developmental process in early adolescence differs from those in late adolescence. It was found that older adolescents engaged in intense use of SNSs compared to younger adolescents (Tsitsika et al., 2014). A study by Reich in 2012 which involved high school students in Southern California showed that adolescents actually used SNSs to support and address the developmental issues they faced. Adolescents tended to interact online with people they already knew in their offline world. This study suggests that SNSs are being used as a platform to share important information and stay connected to others as well as a medium to provide support emotional intimacy.

Residential locations, parents' monthly income and parents' educational background may also affect adolescents' Internet and SNSs usage differently. Adolescents from urban residential locations use Internet more than their rural counterparts and are also more likely to be exposed to the risk of Internet addiction (Stavropoulos, Alexandraki, & Motti-Stefanidi, 2013). It was found that members of a higher income household are more likely to be SNSs users, compared to those living in households earning less (Perrin, 2015). Moreover, adolescents from low income families are less likely to own a mobile phone, more often share devices among family members and have more responsibility in using such technology (Lenhart et al., 2010; Yardi & Bruckman, 2012). Adolescents who have at least one parent with a graduate degree more frequently use different SNSs than

adolescents who have parents with no graduate degree (Hargittai, 2007). Normally, adolescents with parents who have higher educational background usually live in urban areas because they have higher monthly incomes that can support the higher living costs in those areas. However, this statement may not necessarily apply to all. Yet, there are some wealthy families who chose to stay in suburban or rural areas. In brief, all these factors may or may not be significantly related to SNSs usage among adolescents.

A study by Frison and Eggermont in 2015 also proved that adolescents use SNSs (particularly Facebook in this study) as a platform for social support seeking. Facebook users who express their need for emotional support will gain that kind of support from their Facebook friends. This indicated that, SNSs in some way may help adolescents to cope with their levels of stress and has a positive impact through the perception of available emotional support from online friends. However, the adolescents' depressed mood may increase if they lack of this perception.

Research in Western and European countries mostly focused on the association of SNSs usage with academic performance (Alexander, 2012; Hargittai & Hsieh, 2010; Karpinski, Kirschner, Ozer, Mellott, & Ochwo, 2013; Ozer, Karpinski, & Kirschner, 2014), online risk and Internet safety (Christofides, Muise, & Desmarais, 2012; Dowell, Burgess, & Cavanaugh, 2009; Reich, 2012) and Internet addiction (Andreassen, 2015; Kuss & Griffiths, 2011; Lopez-Fernandez, Honrubia-Serrano, Gibson, & Griffiths, 2014).

2.3 Impact of Social Networking Sites on Academic Performance

The rapid increase of social media attracts researchers' attention towards its impact on students' academic achievement and performance. However, the research findings are varied. Some have claimed that the Internet and social media give positive effects on academics while others reported the contrary. In order to determine whether the Internet gives positive or negative impact on their academic performance, it depends on the usage patterns and how adolescents use the Internet. If the Internet is used for information searching and gathering instead of recreational and socializing purposes, it will indeed produce a positive impact on the academics (Chen & Fu, 2009). Both online behaviour exerted by girls (chatting and socializing) and boys (online gaming) might impair their academic performance (Chen & Fu, 2009). Besides, the intensity of SNSs usage is a factor that differentiates the academic achievement between high intensity users and low intensity users. A study conducted by Celeste Marie Alexander in 2012 among 509 high school students in Arkansas showed that students who used Facebook more intensely gain lower grade point average (GPA) than their friends who used Facebook less intensely. Similar to the above findings, adolescents who are heavy users of SNSs significantly scored lower in academic performance and in offline activities compared with adolescents who are moderate users (Tsitsika et al., 2014).

In addition to the factors above, students also reported that SNSs had a negative impact on academic performance and lead to academic procrastination. Adolescents tend to favour the use of SNSs as a method of procrastination or passing time (Orchard, Fullwood, Galbraith, & Morris, 2014). Adolescents also reported that using SNSs is time

consuming and a source of distraction (Ozer et al., 2014). They might use SNSs while doing revision or homework, or in other words – multitasking. Multitasking involves switching behaviour which requires a person to juggle limited cognitive resources in order to accomplish the different tasks engaged in (American Psychological Association, 2006). It has been shown that such juggling leads to inefficiency in task performance, compared to carrying out tasks serially (American Psychological Association, 2006). Multitasking between two processes, academic work and SNSs usage, resulted in a significant negative relationship, which indicates there is a deleterious effect of juggling these two process at the same time which could impair academic performance (Karpinski et al., 2013; Kirschner & Karpinski, 2010).

Despite these negative results, the use of the Internet and SNSs was also found as a helpful academic tool. School students are able to search for information that required for their studies and that will help them to do their homework. It was discovered that 94% of online adolescents reported that they use the Internet to do research for schoolwork (Amanda Lenhart, Rainie, & Lewis, 2001). Via SNSs, students are able to discuss with their classmates about their studies and engaged in informal class-related academic collaboration. Students who seek academic help from their Facebook friends claimed that their friends provided a resourceful support such as giving ideas, information and explanations (Khan, 2014). Although the effort to search for information from the Internet has no direct positive impact on students' grades, it could still improve efficacious belief that students will gain from knowledge and skills that they encounter from the Internet (Zhu, Chen, Chen, & Chern, 2011).

From these previous findings, we can say that the effect of SNSs usage on academic performance really depends on the style of use, which may be either disruptive or non-disruptive. These two styles differentially impact academic performance (0zer 2014) depending on how a student manages his or her time. For example, weak time management and excessive media use lead to negative academic performance (Alwagait, 2015).

2.4 Adolescents and Communication

Adolescents today love to interact and socialize with friends online. This is mainly because modern lifestyle restricts them from communicating physically. Crime incidence, long school hours and limited areas for doing physical activities may be factors that keep the current young generation at home and spend their time online. Lack of attention and support from family and restrictions from being free are some factors which lead adolescents to direct themselves into a virtual environment where they feel unlimitedly free (Aydm & San, 2011). Besides, they have the desire to communicate easily, to create an identity easily and to develop meaningful personal relationships (Lukoff, 2004). Another factor that makes adolescents attached to the online habit is peer influence (Zhao, Lu, Wang, & Huang, 2011). They seem to gain more fun and happiness if their friends were to ask them to do so. Above all, the feeling of loneliness, low self-esteem and social isolation (Caplan, 2002; Douglas et al., 2008; Morahan-Martin, 2003) might be factors that lead to the excessive use of the Internet.

Malaysian adolescents spend long periods of time using the Internet where most of them spend more than 20 hours a week (Soh, 2011). Many parents claim that their children have less interaction with family members because they spend too much time on the Internet. This was proven by a longitudinal study conducted by Robert Kraut and his co-workers in 1995 to examine the effects of the Internet use among participants who only used the Internet for one to two years. They found that high intensity of the Internet usage was associated with lower communication with family members and an increase in the feeling of loneliness and depression. This habit eventually decreased the time that should have been used by them to communicate with their family members (Kraut et al., 1998).

Furthermore, communication by using online service is less effective compared to face-to-face communication or via telephone conversation in the aspect of constructing and strengthening the social relationships (Cummings, Butler, & Kraut, 2002). Mobile phone and instant messaging are usually used to strengthen their communication (close friends and family) while SNSs work on other weak ties (Lee et al., 2010). Individuals on the friends list usually have some sort of connections, such as old friends, and college friends but they need not necessarily be close friends (Boyd & Ellison 2007). Moreover, online communication will lead to different results and interpretation in a particular interaction compared to offline or face-to-face communication. During face-to-face communication, individuals who are interacting could convey and exchange their emotions effectively due to a more conducive and warmer condition that exists (Lee et al., 2010). These elements could facilitate a deeper understanding among them and could also tighten the relationship.

In contrast, evidence from previous research suggests the positive side of online communication. In an online communication, adolescents can control what they want others to know about them. The presentation of themselves can be constructed or modified (Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). This enhanced controllability of self-presentation and self-disclosure create a sense of security and freedom in their interpersonal interactions, compared to offline communication (Walther, 1996). Opportunity to optimize the reactions and feedback from online friends gradually enhance their self-esteem (Valkenburg & Peter, 2011). A study by Ellison and colleagues in 2007 found that using SNSs such as Facebook can increase the feelings of well-being and self-esteem among low self-esteem people.

2.5 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

Adolescence is a stage of life where a person becomes more autonomous and peer oriented. Many changes occur, such as cognitive, behavioural and biological changes. During adolescence, there are several developmental issues that may arise for instance, identity exploration and development, establishing intimate relations with peers and romantic partners (Brown, 2004; Erikson, 1959 in Subrahmanyam et al., 2008). Berndt (1982) believed that one of the most important tasks during adolescence is the formation of close mutual relationships.

Despite the basic needs such as food, shelter and love, there are some psychological needs that are vital to be fulfilled. According to Fleming (1963), there are

five aspects where individuals need to accomplish in order to function effectively in their lives. One of the aspects is the need to be accepted in his/her group. Individuals need to love and be loved by others. They also need to feel being admired and appreciated by the others. Besides, individuals also need to give as well as to receive. All these psychological needs can be accomplished through friendship and family ties. Part of the difficulty faced by backward students and delinquent adolescents come from the failure of their groups to satisfy some of their fundamental psychological needs. Certainly, adolescents who seem to be unhappy and rebellious can be saved by someone who shows his/her love and acceptance towards them.

Another psychological need that is important for socio-emotional development during adolescence is the need for social support. Seeking of social support, especially the emotional support had been the frequently used of active coping strategy by adolescents (Frison & Eggermont, 2015). Social support can be in the form of emotional, instrumental, financial or informational support (Reevy & Maslach, 2001). These kinds of support are expressed, perceived or received from multiple sources such as family members, close friends, teachers and classmates (Malecki & Elliott, 1999). Social support provides a buffer against the negative outcomes of stressful life events (van Beest & Baerveldt, 1999). Adolescents who are involved in the supportive social relationships were found to be more confident and have higher self-esteem. Past research showed that the increase in perceived social support was followed by the increase in the levels of self-esteem and self-confidence accordingly (Ebru Ikiza & Cakarb, 2010; Malecki & Elliott, 1999). Perceived social support varies by gender and age. Female adolescents consistently reported higher levels of perceived social support than their male counterparts (Malecki & Elliott, 1999;

van Beest & Baerveldt, 1999). Moreover, younger adolescents perceived more social support than older adolescents. In sum, psychological well-being and quality of life can be expected as an outcome of stronger relationships and social support received (van Beest & Baerveldt, 1999).

These different developmental needs can be accomplish from the usage of Internet, particularly from SNSs. Since the Internet has become increasingly integrated into people's daily lives, research has begun to emerge suggesting that Internet use may fulfil their developmental requirements. Research has shown that adolescents use these new forms of technology to develop close and meaningful relationships (McKenna, Green, & Gleason, 2002; Valkenburg & Peter, 2009a), intimacy (Valkenburg & Peter, 2009b), gain social support (Frison & Eggermont, 2015; Grieve, Indian, Witteveen, Tolan, & Marrington, 2013) and also engage in identity exploration and formation (Davis, 2013; Israelashvili, Kim, & Bukobza, 2012).

2.5.1 Relationships with Parents and Siblings

Adolescents spend less time with parents than they did during childhood. As the age of children increased, the time spent with family members will decrease radically (Rathus, 2011). Moreover, there are gender differences in time spending preference between boys and girls which displace the amount of time they previously spend with their family members. Boys replace it with their time to spend alone by themselves, whereas girls spend more time with friends (Rathus, 2011).

This pattern may reflect the adolescents' struggle to become more independent. A certain degree of separation from parents may be adaptive for adolescents as they are engaged in the task of forming relationships outside the family circles and entering adulthood (Rathus, 2011). However, greater independence does not mean that adolescents have become emotionally detached from their mothers and fathers (Rathus, 2011). Adolescents still continue to maintain a great deal of love, loyalty and respect for their parents.

In general, the relationship between parents and adolescents is not always good. Amplified disagreements and a decline in shared activities and expressions of affection, especially during early adolescence, will lead to more conflicts in this relationship. Generally, most parents love to see their children use the Internet technologies for beneficial use such as searching for information for academic purpose, but when their children use it mainly for socializing (chatting, surfing SNSs) and recreational use (online gaming), this will deviate from their initial expectation. Thus, parent-child conflict might occur. Conflict is greatest during puberty and will decrease in late adolescence. Conflictive incidence does not only occur with parents, but also with siblings.

Individuals have no option in selecting their siblings but they do make a decision on how, when and why they should communicate with their siblings (Rocca, Martin, & Neary, 2010). Some studies found that positive sibling interactions were linked with a good level of personal adjustment while conflictive and aggressive sibling relationships are linked to antisocial behaviour and personal adjustment problems during adolescence (Scaramella, 1997 in Rocca et al., 2010). High levels of conflicts which previously occurred infrequently will decrease as adolescents grow and the level of intimacy in

sibling relationships will increase slightly or will stay constant (Buhrmester, 1992). However, parents and siblings support and advice are still needed by adolescents even though at most of times they can think and make decision independently.

In this digital era, with the usage of recent technologies available, such as smartphones applications, social media and other communication platforms, interactions among family members is very likely to undergo a constant evolution beyond the traditional ways. The relationship between social media and the Internet and communication among family members has become a new field of research interest around the world (Coyne, Padilla-Walker, Fraser, Fellows, & Day, 2014; Rasmussen et al., 2014). Therefore, much more research is needed in order to understand the impact of these new communication platforms especially SNSs in the family context.

The Internet can be a source of conflict among adolescents and parents because of parental concern about their adolescent children's Internet use (Borca, Bina, Keller, Gilbert, & Begotti, 2015). Parents feel uncertainty and worry about their adolescent children's use of the Internet, which may introduce many undesirable problems such as being subjected to bullying, coming in contact with dangerous people, and viewing inappropriate web content (Sorbring, 2012). Parents eventually come up with various methods to influence their adolescents' computer and Internet use such as modelling, monitoring and mediating behaviours. A study found that 61% of parents checked which websites their children visited and 60% checked their adolescents SNSs profile (Anderson, 2016). However, many adolescents are not comfortable with their parents monitoring and reported that they are having conflict with their parents, as they felt their parents restricted their autonomy (Borca et al., 2015). Adolescents feel that their Internet use is private and