

UNRAVELLING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION PATTERNS AMONG UITM KEDAH STUDENTS

Azfahanee Zakaria^{1*}, Sarah Sabir Ahmad², Syed Mohammed Alhady Syed Ahmad Alhady³, Tanty Husin⁴

- 1 Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: azfa292@uitm.edu.my
 - 2 Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Email: sarah342@uitm.edu.my
 - 3 Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia.
Email: syalhady506@uitm.edu.my
 - 4 Public Bank Berhad, Penang, Malaysia.
Email: tyhdba@gmail.com
- * Corresponding Author

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Abstract:

One important component of success may it be career or any other endeavours is the ability to create communication competency known as interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication is interaction between two or more people, however with the active dependent on social media, it has change on how people communicate. Therefore, this study is to identify the various aspects which contribute to the effects of social media on interpersonal communications. The study examines the relationship between three elements — self-esteem, environment, and academics — and the impact of social media on interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students. Data were analyse using the SPSS and the results designates that social media do have a great impact on the academic elements of students through interpersonal communication. This study provides valuable insights in addressing matters pertaining to social media and interpersonal communication among students.

Keywords:

Academic, Interpersonal Communication, Social Media, Self Esteem, Environment

Introduction

Interpersonal communication is the process by which individuals construct shared meaning, achieve social goals, manage their own sense of identity, and carry out their relationships through the exchange and integration of information conveyed through speech, writing, and other symbolic means (Medrano, 2019). And according to Khaola, Musiwa & Rambe, 2022; Subramaniam (2017), people need interaction to fulfil their social needs, nevertheless, digital and mobile technologies are now seen as the favoured medium for communication and interaction. People tend to speak less with one another for information, instead they would switch to mobile technologies and interact with people who are far away from them.

On the other hand, social media has allowed people who has less confidence to speak face-to-face with other people to interact more via social media. Social media also allows more people to be involved in discussion at one time (Tuan, 2021). It is also mentioned that social media is seen as able to entertain the current lifestyle which is always on the go and fast moving. As a result, this has increased the reliability on the mobile technologies and digital life more rapidly (Kushwaha, 2021). As a result, face-to-face social interactions are now less common, and people no longer rely on immediate recipients' reactions and feedback to confirm information or messages, whether verbal or nonverbal, as communicated (Priharta et al., 2019). Consequently, misunderstandings do arise, leading to a lack of interpersonal communication.

Frequent use of social media for interaction and over dependence on mobile technologies has change the way people communicate (Khaola, Musiwa & Rambe, 2022; Subramaniam, 2017). Social media and digitalization are indeed significant as to keep everyone at par with the latest information and technology, nevertheless, it also has negative effect especially to young adults who are on social media the most.

And according to Asadullah and Yeasmin, (2023); Akram and Kumar, (2018) social media is an online platform that people use to create social networks or social relationships with others that have similar hobbies, occupations, backgrounds, or connections in real life. Social networks have a big effect on young people. It is obvious that social networks have ingrained itself into people's lives. Social Media also have put people under pressure to accept new lifestyles due to the growth of technology. However, it was also mentioned that social networking websites can also help young individuals develop their social skills.

The same was agreed by Loreto (2019) claims that social media may be utilised to help people develop their interpersonal and self-aware abilities. Social media do provide a platform for individuals to express themselves, develop social connections, and also receive feedback which assist people to better understand themselves as well as others. Additionally, social media has made it possible for people to communicate more quickly and across greater distances with more people. This has also led the world to become much smaller as communication and information move through the air very swiftly (Subramaniam, 2017).

Therefore, this has led and interest on the matter social media and its effect to interpersonal communication and the three objectives of this research is to identify the relationship between self-esteem and the effects of social media towards interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students. Secondly, to identify the relationship between environment and the effects of social media towards interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students. Last but not least, to identify the relationship between academics and the effects of social media towards

interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students. Data were gathered from 400 students across 25 programmes in UiTM Kedah.

Interpersonal Communication

Referring to the article by Jha (2020), giving and receiving feedback nonverbal communication mastery, emotional intelligence application, situationally appropriate listening, probing questions, conflict recognition and resolution, mentoring, coaching, and counselling, trust building, team formation and interviewing are all examples of important interpersonal communication skills. Moreover, according to the Eginli and Tas (2018), in the relationships formed by social networks, interpersonal communication becomes "corporeal co-presence," even if it is not real-time communication and face-to-face.

Interpersonal communication is also said to have a great motivation towards study among students. Besides, certain media platform such as myspace, allows users to create deeper interaction, building interpersonal understanding and predictability (Eginli & Tas, 2018).

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem, often described as a person's subjective evaluation of their own value and self-worth, is a psychological aspect that tends to undergo significant development during the transition from adolescence to young adulthood. During this pivotal life stage, individuals generally experience a boost in their self-esteem as they gain a clearer sense of their identity and capabilities (Cingel, Carter & Krause, 2022). However, it's essential to note that self-esteem is not a fixed trait but rather a dynamic one that can be influenced by various environmental factors. These influences can shape and mould an individual's perception of themselves, either positively or negatively. The intricate interplay between internal self-evaluation and external stimuli highlights the malleability of self-esteem, which researchers have keenly examined. While the overall level of self-esteem is crucial, researchers also emphasize the importance of understanding how it fluctuates in response to experiences of success or failure.

The fluctuations in self-esteem mentioned by researchers are not confined to the offline world alone. In today's interconnected digital age, individuals can experience these changes in online environments as well, including social media platforms. Success and failure in the virtual realm can have a profound impact on an individual's self-esteem. Achievements, recognition, and positive feedback from peers can lead to a temporary boost in self-esteem, while criticism, rejection, or comparing oneself unfavourably to others can have the opposite effect (Aslan, 2023). This online dimension of self-esteem underscores the significance of digital interactions and their potential to shape how we perceive ourselves. It also highlights the need for individuals to navigate the online world with mindfulness and self-awareness, as these experiences can play a substantial role in their overall sense of self-worth.

Environment

In accordance with Candrasari (2020) it has been observed that individuals who actively engage with instant messaging and social networking sites experience heightened levels of group support, sympathy, and friendship compared to those who do not participate in such online activities. The advent and widespread integration of media technologies into our society have brought about significant social changes. These changes, have not only reshaped the dynamics

of individuals' relationships but have also had a profound impact on how families interact and connect with each other.

This shift in social behaviour is particularly noteworthy. Instead of engaging in face-to-face interactions and spending quality time with one another, it has become increasingly common for individuals to dedicate a substantial portion of their time to various technological resources. The lure of these digital platforms has, in many ways, altered the traditional modes of socialization and family bonding. It is essential to acknowledge that these shifts in behaviour are not limited to a specific demographic or region; they are pervasive and global.

Academics

As cited by Shabbir (2021) in his write up and mentioned by Tariq et al. (2012) the detrimental effects of social networking sites on young individuals are expounded upon. These platforms, while seemingly harmless, often serve as repositories for trivial content, accumulating a digital footprint that may not be advantageous for users' future endeavours. Moreover, they act as couriers of information, enabling the dissemination of information, often of questionable veracity, among the general public. One of the primary concerns raised by this research is the pervasive distraction caused by peer-to-peer communication on social networking platforms. Young students, in particular, find themselves diverted from their academic responsibilities as they engage in endless chats and interactions with friends and acquaintances. The implications of this distraction are far-reaching, affecting not only their academic performance but also their ability to concentrate on essential coursework.

In a study held in 2018 by Thomas, it delves deeper into the repercussions of social media use on academics. The findings of this research reveal a negative correlation between using social media for non-academic purposes and academic achievement. This suggests that students who primarily utilize these platforms for leisure activities may experience a decline in their scholastic performance. Additionally, the study by Shah, Zakir, and Lu Wei., (2022) highlights the disruptive nature of social media on students' concentration. Constant notifications, updates, and the allure of endless scrolling can severely impact their ability to focus on their studies, potentially derailing their academic careers. Furthermore, Kirschner and Karpinski., (2010) research underscores a critical issue—social media's contribution to reduced study hours. As students allocate more time to social media engagement, they allocate less to their studies, resulting in a decline in academic performance and a drop in their grade point averages. Collectively, these studies shed light on the multifaceted challenges posed by the ubiquitous use of social media among young individuals, urging a more mindful approach to balancing online activities with academic responsibilities.

Conceptual Framework

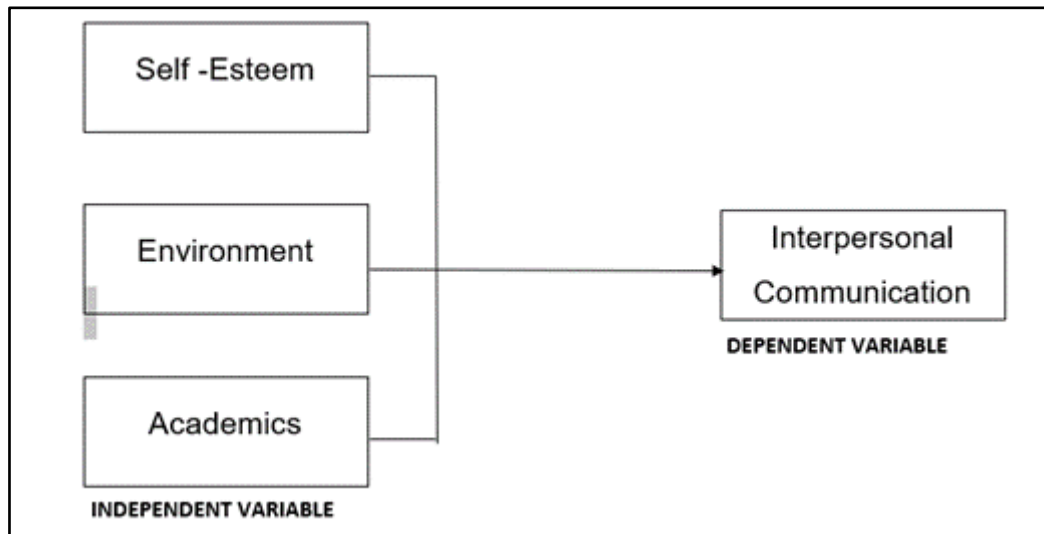


Figure1 : Conceptual Framework

Data Collection and Analyses Methods

In this section, we will elucidate the research methodology employed in this study. The initial step involved the distribution of questionnaires among respondents. Subsequently, the collected responses were subject to comprehensive analysis. To create these questionnaires, researchers effectively utilized Google Forms. The data garnered from these questionnaires underwent rigorous examination using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). It's crucial to note that this survey is specifically focused on students at UiTM Kedah.

The research approach predominantly relied on quantitative methods to gather data from respondents. Interestingly, the questionnaires incorporated open-ended questions due to the scarcity of existing data on the research topic. Given the nature of this correlational study, which investigates the influence of social media on interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students, the utilization of descriptive language was deemed appropriate. The study was conducted in natural settings, mirroring regular work and study environments. The researcher employed a cross-sectional study model to collect data, thereby examining the experiences of part-time working students. It's worth mentioning that the outcomes of data analysis may vary based on the timing of the study.

Additionally, this study adhered to the simple random sampling approach within the realm of probability sampling. This method ensured that each student within the population had an equal probability of being selected as a participant. The questionnaire was conveniently distributed to 400 students at UiTM Kedah, with researchers leveraging cost-effective and easily accessible platforms such as WhatsApp and other social media channels. Furthermore, the researchers incorporated document analysis, utilizing resources like journals and research papers to supplement their data collection efforts. To analyze the data, SPSS statistical software version 12.0 was employed, employing a range of instruments including frequency analysis, descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, multiple regression analysis, and correlation analysis.

Result And Discussion

Reliability Analysis

Table 4.1 Results of Reliability Analysis

Variable	Total Items	Items Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
Interpersonal Communication	5	None	0.704
Self-esteem	4	1	0.608
Environment	5	None	0.627
Academic	5	None	0.633

The reliability analysis, which was done with Cronbach's alpha, showed how well a measuring tool could give accurate and reliable results. According to the table of obtained results, the Cronbach alpha values for both dependent and independent variables were determined. As stated in the table, the Cronbach's alpha for the dependent variable, which is interpersonal communication, is 0.704, which consists of 5 items. For independent variables, the highest Cronbach's alpha value is 0.633 for academic, which consists of 5 items. However, among all of the independent variables, the results of the first reliability test for self-esteem are 0.551, which is below 0.6. Consequently, after removing one item from one of the items, Cronbach's alpha value has increased to 0.608. In contrast, the final results indicate that all variables had significantly acceptable readings (above 0.6), indicating that the items used in the study allowed for the analysis to proceed as intended.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics (N=108)

	Mean	Std Deviation
Self-esteem	3.92	0.612
Environment	3.52	0.645
Academic	3.99	0.524
Interpersonal Communication	3.92	0.573

All independent and dependent variables underwent a comprehensive descriptive analysis. As illustrated in Table 4.3, this table provides mean and standard deviation values for all variables. The results indicate that, on a five-point scale, all variables, with the exception of the environmental factor, exhibited a skew towards the right. Specifically, the mean value for the

independent variables was indicative of an average level, whereas the mean value for interpersonal communication demonstrated a notably higher rating. Conversely, the mean value associated with the environmental factor leaned towards the left of the five-point scale. The data presented in Table 4.3 further elucidate that respondent expressed greater satisfaction with self-esteem and academic factors, as these variables recorded the highest mean values among the independent variables

Correlation Analysis

Table 4.3

Pearson Correlation Results

		ICC	SEE	ENVV	ACAA
<i>Interpersonal Communication (ICC)</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>				
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>				
	<i>N</i>				
<i>Self-esteem (SEE)</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.274			
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	.004			
	<i>N</i>	108			
<i>Environment (ENVV)</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.326	.247		
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	<.001	.010		
	<i>N</i>	108	108		
<i>Academic (ACAA)</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.617	.175	.286	
	<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	<.001.	.070	.003	
	<i>N</i>	108	108	108	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

Measuring the relationship between interpersonal communication (dependent variable) and self-esteem, environment, and academic factors (independent variable) requires the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Below is a table displaying the results of a statistical analysis of the correlation between pairs of variables used to record information about double stars. Interpersonal communication, which is the dependent variable, was found to have a significant correlation with all of the independent variables. When put through a regression analysis, these variables demonstrated significant correlations and indicated strong evidence for the hypotheses being tested.

Regression Analysis

Table 4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

MODEL	Unstandardized Coefficients	STD.ERROR	Standardised Coefficients BETA	t	Sig
(CONSTANT)	.563	.407		1.383	.169
SEE	.136	.072	.145	1.876	.063
ENVV	.117	.071	.132	1.657	.101
ACAA	.605	.085	.554	7.085	<.001

A multiple regression was run to find out whether there is a significant relationship of interpersonal communication to each of the independent variables.

From the result which is shown in Table 4.6, the R² value is 42.2%. This means that the independent variables for the three variables do not greatly impact the dependent variable (interpersonal communication). It indicates that the independent variable of self-esteem, environment and academic can be explained to the dependent variable as much as 42.2%.

Table 4.6
Summary of Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Results
H ₁ : There is a significant relationship between self-esteem and Interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students.	Rejected
H ₂ : There is a significant relationship between environment and Interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students.	Rejected
H ₃ : There is a significant relationship between academic and Interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students.	Accepted

Discussion

According to Loreto (2019), it is generally agreed that interpersonal communication is the process by which individuals construct shared meaning, achieve social goals, manage their own sense of identity, and carry out their relationships through the exchange and integration of information conveyed through speech, writing, and other symbolic means. Referring to Eginli and Tas (2018) argues that people are more likely to engage in both passive and active forms of communication when they have established personal connections with one another in an online setting because of this certainty factor. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to comprehend the effects of social media on interpersonal communication in order to provide additional support and generate new information for future research.

The empirical results of the study showed that the effects of social media towards interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students were related to all of the possible factors that could have played a role, including self-esteem, environment and academic variables. All of these factors had both a significant and insignificant impact on interpersonal communication, the results showed. The variables in this study show how different factors can affect one's interpersonal communication ability.

Academic variables were shown to have the biggest impact on interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students. This can be supported by the findings of Thomas (2018) where using social media for reasons other than academic ones was shown to have a negative correlation with academic achievement. Moreover, Shabbir (2023); Tariq (2012) explains why young people shouldn't use social networking sites and gives examples of the harm they may do. In the present, it serves as a garbage collector for the future and a courier for the plebes. Students' attention is often diverted away from their schoolwork by the peer-to-peer communication social networking platforms. Aside from that, they were successful in grabbing students' attention for educational objectives, which ultimately benefited the students' final grades. Hence, this shows that academic variables are significant to interpersonal communication on the effects of social media among UiTM Kedah students.

Self-esteem was the second biggest impact on interpersonal communication. However, according to the regression analysis test conducted, it showed that there is no significant difference between self-esteem and interpersonal communication. As stated by Thomas (2018), the psychological signs of social media addiction include defensiveness, euphoric sensations while using social media, and an inability to manage time, while the physical symptoms include weight gain, backaches, and strained eyesight. In addition, people's social, physiological, and mental health suffer as a consequence of their inability to break free from their smartphone addiction. Consequently, workers get disengaged, have unfavourable interactions with one another, and provide subpar results. Although in the previous research, there were some findings stating that self-esteem has a significant effect on interpersonal communication. However, these findings show that self-esteem does not have a significant relationship to the interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah's students. The differences in the output of the findings is probably because of the demographic factors among the respondents.

On top of that, environment variables show insignificant values towards interpersonal communication. Based on study emphasised by Eginli and Tas (2018) ensures continuous communication between people, allowing weak bonds to strengthen as people get to know each other better. However, the findings from the previous research shows a contradictory opinion on the effects of social media towards interpersonal communication. Besides, according to Thomas (2018), the ability to develop social capital, which is the network of relationships that people have and that grow through the use of interpersonal skills, can be harmed by excessive use of social media. However, based on the research conducted towards UiTM Kedah's students, the results of the regression analysis showed that there is an insignificant relationship between environment and interpersonal communication. Major reason behind the insignificant effect between environment and interpersonal communication among UiTM Kedah students and the previous study is because of differences in personal background and experience in terms of how they manage to cope with interpersonal communication that contradict with our present samples.

Conclusion

As technology continues to advance in the 21st century, contemporary communities increasingly rely upon social media platforms, which have become an integral facet of modern existence. For many individuals, social media has evolved into an indispensable tool, facilitating various aspects of daily life. Beyond its instrumental value, social media platforms contribute to the enhancement of individuals' academic competencies, granting them unprecedented access to a vast repository of knowledge. Moreover, as commonly acknowledged, social media serves as a medium that fosters and fortifies interpersonal communication, affording individuals opportunities to establish new connections and expand their social networks.

However, it is imperative to recognize that an excessive reliance on social media can, in some instances, yield adverse consequences, potentially redirecting the course of individuals' lives. Such an overindulgence may lead to the erosion of carefully cultivated personal relationships. Contemporary society witnesses a phenomenon wherein individuals appear to disengage from their tangible, or "offline," lives in favour of prioritizing their digital, or "online," personas. This shift can be attributed, in part, to a craving for external validation and the allure of garnering attention from virtual strangers. This prompts an intriguing inquiry: Why do individuals feel compelled to seek validation from the virtual realm when they could potentially attain even greater affirmation from their immediate surroundings?

It is plausible that some individuals resort to social media as a means of gratifying their need for recognition, a need that might not be fully met through traditional, offline relationships. Consequently, social media's influence on interpersonal communication becomes evident. In light of this, it is imperative that subsequent generations undertake comprehensive studies to explore the nuanced impact of social media on interpersonal communication dynamics. Such endeavours hold the potential to foster greater awareness and comprehension of this evolving phenomenon.

Limitation of Study

The study focuses on students in one university only. The limited scope of data collected from a single university may restrict the generalizability of the study's findings to a broader population or other educational institutions

Future of Study

Researchers may study on areas on how universities and alumni can engage via social media to help raise funds, mentoring or support to current students. Other area of study would be on how universities can effectively use social media in delivering information to students in managing crisis management issues.

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