

Social Networking Sites (SNS) and Its Influence on Job Performance at the Workplace: The Review of the Literature

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Abstract

Social networking sites (SNS) connect and link people based on information gathered about them, as saved in their user profiles. Nearly every organization has some connections with a social networking site or two; whether to extend its business or as a means of sharing information and interaction amongst its employees. Although research has found that using social networking sites has also increased the productivity in organizations, there are some organizations that have banned the social networking sites usage in the workplace. This study attempts to look at this issue by examining the previous literature on the usage of social networking sites influencing job performance at the workplace and its influence on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism, turnover intention and innovative behaviour. This article reviews the issues on the current situation as regard to the usage of social networking sites.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites (Sns), Job Performance, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, Absenteeism, Turnover Intention, Innovative Behaviour.

Introduction

Users using social networking sites (SNS) can choose the way in which they are able to present themselves to others (Akbarialiabadi & Zolfaghari, 2011). In today's recent world, social networking has directly or indirectly affected modern lifestyle. Nearly every organization has some connection with a social networking site or two; whether to extend its business or as a means of sharing information and interaction amongst its employees. It was also stated by Coyle and Vaughn in 2008, Individuals' need to connect with people to collaborate, participate and share experience and learning as well as to gain new knowledge has increasingly drawing them into the online world (Wickramasinghe & Nisaf, 2012). Thus, the universal use of social

networking amongst organizations must have some consequences on the organization itself or its employees. These influence are worthy of study, if only, to understand this phenomenon better. After the introduction of social networking sites, more and more population are hooked onto it. According to Aguenza, Kasem, & Sam, 2012 it is obvious that it is important to consider the ubiquitous nature of social media in everyday life. Nielsen (2010) stated that social media accounts for nearly one-quarter of all internet activity, and LinkedIn has over 80 million professionals in over 200 countries. Other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are available for everyone; it was traditionally created to connect with individuals from all over the world to include employees, friends and families.

There are hundreds of social networking sites operating in the world. Some of the sites are popular in certain countries while some others have a global reach. Facebook which was introduced in February 2004, is one of the most popular social networking websites today. This website was originally open only to student at Harvard University, but this no longer holds true. Nearly 500 million people are using Facebook now (Baker, Buoni, Fee, & Vitale, 2012). On the other hand, MySpace started in August 2003, which was directed more towards music. Therefore, this social networking website is no longer solely for social networking. It is more about connecting different bands and groups, rather than connecting individuals. The membership for MySpace is about 126 million (Baker, Buoni, Fee, & Vitale, 2012). Joining the social networking trend in March 2006, Twitter is the most recent of the four big social networking websites. It has become a self-promotional tool used by celebrities. For those who like to 'follow' their favourite celebrities, they can get instant updates about where their favourite singer or actor is, what they are doing or how they are feeling.

Employers these days are competing with each other to provide the best benefits for their employees by providing all their needs to satisfy them. Akbarialiabadi & Zolfaghari (2011) stated that the use of SNSs like Facebook is also becoming more observable within organizations, especially among trendier and younger employers and recent hires that joined the sites as college students. According to the Internet World Stats, as per 30 June 2011 in Malaysia, the internet penetration rate is 17.7 million, out of a total population of nearly 28.5 million. This translates to around 60 percent of Malaysians who have access to the internet. This show the amount of internet usage in Malaysia for the year 2011 which seem to be social networking is the most important tool in daily lifestyle.

Social Networking Sites

A. Overview

Today, social networking sites had created the atmosphere of highly valued Internet. Technologies have made its transformation the way people work. It started from photocopier during the 1960s, calculator and international fax standard in 1970s, into new invention of cell phones, computer and laptops in 1980, growing rapidly World Wide Web (WWW) and WiFi in 1990 and now in 2000 it's the online social networking sites. This is because just about everyone who uses the Internet are a member of at least one and often many are online using various type of social networks. Social networking using websites is a social and technological innovation that cannot be ignored. More people are learning to engage themselves with social networking to connect with their friends, family, purchasing online, finding new contacts and many more.

People join social networking sites because it gives them an opportunity to express their views, a feel of independency and self-esteem (Sahoo & Das, 2011). Social Network is social structure made up of individuals (or organizations) called “nodes”, which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, common interest, financial exchange, likes/dislikes, or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige (Abhyankar, 2011). North (2010) explored the benefits as well as the risks of the use of social networking sites in the workplace and concluded that employees believe that social networking site use in the workplace is worthwhile (Moqbel, Nevo & Kock, 2013)

According to Rob Cross and Andrew Parker 2004, the original concept of social circles was established by George Simmel (Akbarialiabadi & Zolfaghari, 2011). The technological advances and increased use of the Internet in recent years have led to a communication revolution (Moqbel, 2012). Coyle (2008) and O’Murch (2004) commented that, this communication revolution, as well as the more technologically empowered lifestyle of individual users, has changed the way people communicate and connect with each other (Moqbel, 2012). However Boyd and Ellison (2007) mentioned that the use of social networking creates challenges for managing risks to individual and organisational reputations alike. It is not known how managerial assessment of performance in the workplace is affected by perception of employee use of social networks, and how social networks function as a means of exchanging information about individual concerns about fair treatment at work and how they might shape individuals’ behaviour in the workplace (Broughton, Higgins, Hicks, & Cox, 2010).

There are many types of social networking which was started back then and fewer had slowly varnish and some had grew to the extend being a tool for business marketing. Launched in February 2004, Facebook is arguably the most popular social networking site (Byod & Ellison, 2007). Joe Nguyen, the ComScore’s Vice president for Southeast Asia stated that social networking has become the central activity in Malaysians’ digital lives, accounting for 1 in every 3 minutes spent online. It was also reported that in August, more than 11 million people age 15 and older accessed the Internet from a home or work location. Among this audience, 92.4 percent visited Google Sites, which ranked as the top online property for the market with 10.4 million visitors. Facebook.com ranked as the second most-visited property with nearly 9.9 million visitors, up 15 percent in the past year, as the social networking giant continues to attract more users. (Comscore, 2011).

In a survey done in April 2011, it was found that Malaysia’s penetration of social networking sites time spent per visitor on social networking sites, averaging 5.1 hours for the month with the 14th ranking in global. (ComScore, 2011). Addition to that, in 2013 it was reported that 82 percent of Malaysians are hooked on to Facebook followed by Twitter at 15 percent. It has proven that social networking plays a major role in our daily activities.

B. Benefits of Social Networking Sites for Organizations

As it is known that social networking helps to keep everyone connected, it is also important for organization to implement or allow their staffs to use social networking in workplace. It was stated that social networking sites however supply chances for both formal and informal interaction and cooperation with fellow employees and clients/customers who aids knowledge transfer and communication (Akbarialiabadi & Zolfaghari, 2011).

Fahmy (2009) commented that, as number of studies show those employees who use social media are 9% more productive than those who do not. He also continue to argue that employees who are more social by nature and are connected to other people through social media sites are better persons in workplace, which means they are skilled at interacting with others and solving problems (Aguenza, Kasem & Sam, 2012). In a similar study by Fahmy (2009), he found that 70% who used internet for personal surfing resulted in sharpened employee's concentration. It is assumed that by taking short breathers, the brain will be refreshed and renewed (Aguenza & Som, 2012).

Also identified by Coker in (2009), another research done by an Australian studies 300 workers examined Workplace Internet Leisure Browsing (WILB) and found that employees who spend a reasonable amount of work time using the Internet for personal purpose were approximately 9% more productive. He also added that essentially, although employees who take regular breaks may spend less time concentrating on work, they were found to have better concentration, and were therefore capable of higher productivity (Parsons, McCormar & Butavicius, 2011). Sarrel cited in Awolusi (2012) stated that business use of social media doubled from 11% to 22% between 2008 and 2009. She stated that many employees in the workforce now use social networks to attract clients, develop relationship with business partners and display their expertise. From all this research social networking has seem to be a positive approach in many organizations.

According to Abrahams & McKeon (2008), a survey of 693 full or part time workers in Australia indicated that the vast majority (76%) of respondents believed that allowing employees to use SNS in the workplace provided benefits to the organisation, and of those respondents, 68% felt that allowing these sites showed an element of trust. They also added furthermore, approximately half of the employees who believed SNS should be permitted in the workplace claimed that the sites provide a break and allow employees to keep fresh. In a similar study by Fahmy (2009), he found that 70% who used internet for personal surfing resulted in sharpened employee's concentration.

It has been stated that those in communication or media-related positions were most likely to report using Facebook as part of their job, especially as a method for facilitating outreach to a variety of audiences. A more indirect use of Facebook for professional goals was discussed by some participants, who pointed to the benefits of sharing social information with their colleagues through the site (Vitak, Lampe, Gray, & Ellison, 2012). Using Facebook not only helps the organizations to have a good contact with consumers but it is also learnt that it bring a good impression. Besides that organizations may be able to effectively manage consumers' impression towards the organization through their interactions with consumers on Facebook (Terrell & Kwok, 2011).

Influence Of Social Networking On Staff Job Performance

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction of the employees is very much important to sustain an organization. It is because when employees are satisfied with their job, the contribution towards the organization will be more and committed. Weiss in 2002 defines job satisfaction as a positive or negative evaluative judgement one makes about one's job or job situation (Moqbel, 2012). High job satisfaction could lead to better personal and organizational outcomes.

Understanding job satisfaction and organizational commitment is important because they both have important impacts on performance, and they also can be influenced by other human resource practices and policies (Rayton, 2006). Adding on, Organ and Near noted the terms job satisfaction, job attitude, and morale are often used interchangeably in the literature because they tend to measure the same concept “organizational member’s happiness at work” (Moqbel, Nevo & Kock, 2013).

Job satisfaction does not stand by itself for employees to perform well but it is also inter related with organizational commitment, job performance and also attitude. Smith, and Kollock in (1999) and Zyl in (2009) has done research and quoted that online social networking contributes to maintain moral and increase in job satisfaction of employees (Wickramasinghe & Nisaf, 2012). Results found by Yousaf et al. in (1998) indicated a significant positive correlation not only between job satisfaction and job performance but also among job satisfaction and organizational commitment and concluded that more the employees are satisfied with their job greater will be there organizational commitment and better will be their job performance (Ahmad, Ahmad & Shah, 2010).

In another research, Hussami in 2008 has quoted that’s job satisfaction and dissatisfaction not only depends on the nature of the job, it also depend on the expectation what’s the job supply to an employee (Parvin & Kabir, 2010). Following to that in the research done by Nash (1985) has extensively reviewed the nature of job satisfaction in the industrial world and found that job satisfaction is attributed not only to one but many factors and varies in its impact on individuals satisfaction with life because work varies in importance from individual to individual. He also found that people who take their job as prime interest experience high level of job satisfaction (Ramayah, Jantan & Tadisina, 2001). Some other researchers such as Bhuian & Abdul-Muhmin, 1997; Hellman & McMillan, 1994; Jamal, 1999; Yavas & Bodur (1999) and Mogbel (2012) found that job satisfaction is related to organizational commitment.

Organizational Commitment

In the research of Garland, McCarty and Zhao (2008), they concluded that organizational commitment reflects one’s feelings toward an entire organization, not just a specific job. In addition to that, Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) defined organizational commitment as:

“The relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Conceptually, it can be characterized by at least three factors: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert consider able effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. (p. 27)

Another group of people had defined organizational commitment refers to the bond formed between the worker and the employing organization (Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Gail, & Baker, 2009). Ghazzawi and Smith (2009) said that it is “a condition in which an individual identifies with his or her organization and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in it” (Ntumba and McCain, 2011). Following to that, studies have highlighted that commitment has a great impact on the successful performance of an organisation. This is because a highly committed employee will identify with the goals and values of the organization, has a stronger desire to

belong to the organization and is willing to display greater organizational citizenship behaviour (Nehmeh, 2009).

According to Moqbel (2012), social networking sites used in the workplace can work as an effective mechanism in boosting the organizational commitment of employees. He also continued that its usage in the workplace may provide employees with a sense of social interaction. In his research he also added that Chew & Chan (2008) quoted organizational commitment is one of the issues that concern organizations.

Affective organization also defined as physiologically attachment to the organization (Tella, Ayeni & Popoola, 2007). However Meyer & Allan 1991; Mowday, Porter and Streers (1982) concluded that effectively committed employees are seen as having a sense of belonging and identification that increases their involvement in the organization's activities their willingness to pursue the organization's goal's and their desire to remain with the organization (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001).

Absenteeism

According to Camp & Lambert in 2006, absenteeism generates financial burdens through sick leave costs. Garland (2002) stated that disrupts the continuity of supervision and treatment and strains co-workers who cover for absent employees (Garland, Mccarty and Zhao, 2008). Following to that Casio (2010) had defined as "any failure of an employees to report or to remain at work as schedule, regardless of the reason" Casio also added that the causes of absenteeism range from personal illness to stress (Moqbel, 2012).

Dalton and Mesch (1991); Mason and Griffin (2003) stated that productivity losses due to employee absence cost organizations millions of dollars each year (Hausknecht, Hiller and Vance 2008). A human resources information provider showed that an average annual cost of absences to employers amounted to a record \$789 per employee in 2002. This shows a lost in productivity when absenteeism occurs in an organization. (Kocakülâh, Kelley, Mitchell and Ruggieri, 2009). The average cost of absence was \$354 per person per day which equates to \$26.6 billion in lost productivity for the Australian economy each year (Emery, 2010).

Turnover Intention

Normally when employees are not satisfied job turnover intention would take place. According to Igbaria & Greenhaus in 1992, they stated that turnover intention refers to the extent to which employees' intent, desire and plan to leave the organization (Moqbel, 2012). It was also supported by Jaros in 1997 that turnover intentions are seen as an indicator of an employee's affective commitment to an organization (Jordon & Troth, 2010). The turnover costs to organizations range from indirect costs, such as loss of skilled employees with tacit organizational knowledge, to more ones, such as replacement and training costs (Mitchell, Holtom, & Lee, 2001). Moreover nowadays, an employment does their references on hiring a staff with using social networking site as a tool.

Job Performance

Job performance has been a concern for an organization to succeed. There are many definition found for this term. According to Hunter & Hunter (1984) job performance is of interest to organizations because of the importance of high productivity in the workplace

(Cook, 2008). Following to that, Smith (1976) discusses some of the problems with various definitions of job performance and stresses that an accurate measure of job performance includes the direct observation of behaviour. Commonly it is always understood that job satisfaction is related to job performance. When a worker is satisfied with their job, therefore job performance will surely increase (Rotundo, 2002). Murphy (1989) performance definition should focus on behaviors rather than outcomes because a focus on outcomes could lead employee to find the easiest way to achieve the desired results, which is likely to be detrimental to the organization because other important behaviors will not be performed. Hussin, 2011).

Innovative Behaviour

West & Farr (1990) defined innovative as intentional production and application of ideas, products or processes, new to the relevant unit of adoption, and designed to specifically benefit the individual, group, organisation or wider society (Wolfgramm, 2011). According to Carmeli, Meitar & Weisberg (2006) innovative behaviour is referred to as the process of facilitating new problem solving ideas into organisational practice (Xerri, 2012).

Individuals' innovative behaviors in the workplace are the foundation of any high-performance organization (Carmeli, Meitar & Weisberg, 2006). Azura (2009) stated that social networking sites, therefore are essential for empowering individuals to successfully explore, develop, and adopt new ideas (Moqbel, 2012). Innovative working behaviour can directly and indirectly stimulate the development and the productivity of an organization. Innovative behavior is then a part of an employee strategy to smoothen the work process in order to reduce the experienced work strain (Spiegelaere, Gyes, Vandekerckhove & Hootegem, 2012).

According to Manpower 2010, companies determined to improve the value of their innovation efforts have been looking beyond their dedicated research and development teams and traditional processes for fresh ideas. They also added that the advent of social media has given these "open innovation" efforts a huge boost, by allowing companies to build channels to customers, academics and independent inventors who used to be hard to reach in a targeted and sustained way.

Policies of Social Networking Help Better Productivity

The access to Facebook at the workplace should not be banned. SNS has proven to be a powerful networking and communication tool, in which workers in an organization can communicate via the social media to communicate urgent matters, to colleagues in the same organization or to the ones outside the organization. Rather than banning it, organizations should find creative ways of harnessing the power of these social networks sites. For example, Asiedu (2010) suggested that Facebook can be incorporated into the internal communication system of organizations and used for purposes such as team building.

However, one out of five employers responded that their organizations did have policies in place to regulate social networking in the workplace. And this number is likely to grow. Of those employers with policies in place, the vast majority (63%) indicated that these policies were most often effective in helping avoid productivity loss. Approximately four out of 10 employers indicated that policies were effective in helping protect intellectual property and

other proprietary information. Only two percent of the surveyed employers indicated that their organizations' social networking policies were not effective. (Manpower, 2010).

Out of 7,700 employers from the Asia Pacific surveyed, 25% indicated that their organizations implemented policies regulating the use of social networking in the workplace. Employers from China (33%), New Zealand (32%), Australia (31%) and Hong Kong (27%) were above the regional average (Manpower, 2010). Among Asia Pacific employers, nearly seven out of 10 (67%) identified social networking policies as effective in minimizing productivity loss (Manpower, 2010).

From the past studies, Broughton, Higgins, Hicks, & Cox (2010) found that certain policies could be implemented in organization since social networking site had contribute to the increase of productivity. They suggested that all employers should have a policy on internet/social media use. Furthermore, an internet or social media use policy must set out clearly and explicitly the organisation's expectations and definitions of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and the consequences of violation. These should be consistent with the disciplinary procedures in the organization. Then, the policy on internet/social media use need not be complicated – the main message that online conduct should not differ from offline conduct, with reference to existing conduct guidelines, may suffice. Next, the policy on internet/social media use should be drawn up in consultation with staff, either through their representatives, if present, or directly, if no representatives are present. The policy on internet use needs to be communicated too, whereby organisations should make sure that there are adequate mechanisms for employees to raise formal and informal grievances. Organisations may wish to consider how they can reap the business benefits of social networking. Finally, employers need to consider reviewing policies on internet use/social media on a regular basis. (Moqbel, 2012) stated that employees who use social networking sites in the workplace to a large extent – that is, strongly identify with their online social networks – received more social support and thus showed improved job satisfaction, organizational commitment, innovative behavior, and job performance. Although there are negative effect towards social networking site, perhaps in many research, the positive effect is stronger to bring a better advancement in job performance and also with the existence of social media policy it could help to satisfy employees working. Job performance is led by job satisfaction by the employees and this will help the growth of organizational commitment. This might also help to reduce the turnover intention and absenteeism in an organization. With the advancement of technology and social networking is a network which helps to connect family members closer is acceptable in an organization.

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