

## **Matching Types of Social Media Sites (SNS) to Motives and Profiles of Youths in Malaysia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Social network sites (SNS) have been used to bring people across the globe closer to each other, especially youths. It is important to match the types of SNS to the motives for using them as well as to acquire a profile of youth users. Specifically, this study tries (1) to find out the types of SNS subscribed to by youths, (2) to gauge the frequency of their using the SNS per week, (3) to rank their motives for using the SNS, and (4) to study and compare the differences or variance in the profiles of youths using the SNS. A survey was conducted nationwide among youths aged 17-40 years old using a self-developed questionnaire. A total of 703 respondents were identified for the study. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) WIN 20. There were more male respondents than female, and they were mainly Malay, single, Muslims, adolescents and undergraduates. Results of the youth profiles revealed that there were differences among the youths' demographic characteristics and the types of SNS they subscribed to. The top three SNS identified were Facebook, Yahoo and Skype. Almost one third used them daily. Most of the SNS were used for social, followed by education and communication motives. Specifically, Twitter is also used for social, communication and entertainment motives while blogs were used for the religious, education, business and politics motives. The study applied both the social network theory and information-seeking theory with the purpose of finding out how youths could be motivated to draw on the vast knowledge available and accessible in the SNS for their own benefit, and not merely for social networking.

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## INTRODUCTION

Social network sites (SNS) have become a popular platform worldwide for people to communicate and share information with each other. In Malaysia, the adoption of SNS has shown a significant growth in the last few years in conjunction with the progress and development of iPad, iPhone and the like, facilitating easy access any time and anywhere for the search of information. The top five SNS in Malaysia are Yahoo, Facebook, Google, YouTube and Blog (Subramaniam, 2014). According to Subramaniam, Facebook is the most visited SNS with 10.4 million users, of whom 3.5 million are youths between 18 and 24 years old, i.e., those of studying age.

SNS complements the established mass media, i.e., TV and newspapers in the seeking of current news. However, SNS main use is not information-seeking; rather it is used for information-sharing and relationship-building in addition for education. As long as students use SNS for positive reasons, their academic performance should improve. Users should make use of their time wisely. This study sought to discover: Who are the users of the specific SNS?; How frequently do they use the SNS?; What are their motives for using SNS?; and Are there differences among users for each type of SNS?

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- (1) To identify the types of SNS subscribed to by youths,
- (2) To gauge the frequency of their use of the SNS per week,
- (3) To rank their motives for using the SNS,
- (4) To compare the differences among youth profiles relating to their use of the SNS, and
- (5) To predict the motives for their use of any particular SNS.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Uses and Gratifications Approach to Social Media*

It is becoming increasingly difficult today to explain the various ways of communication, for instance, one-to-many and many-to-many, as communication has become multi-dimensional. However, in studying the use of social media, the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974) may be applied to explain the process precisely as its approach is user-centred. The Uses and Gratifications (U&G) Theory is helpful in explaining the power of users in using media to their own advantage and for their own need.

Generally, the Uses and Gratifications perspective focuses on explaining the social and psychological motives that drive people to use the identified technologies and motivate them to select certain technologies in order to gratify a set of psychological needs behind those motives (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974; Rubin, 1994). Choice is made by the user based on goal and the act of use has to satisfy needs as well (Katz *et al.*, 1974). The

second assumption of this approach is that media users are aware of their needs and select the appropriate media to gratify those needs.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory may be used to explain people's motivation for engaging in specific technology, in this case, the social media sites (Newhagen & Rafaeli, 1996; Ruggiero, 2000). The technology has emerged from just newspaper, radio, television, and the Internet, thus, it is interesting to identify people's motivation to use these most influential sites among youths, which are the social media sites.

The increasing popularity of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter can be attributed to the social needs of youths for interaction and sharing of ideas with peers. Furthermore, the virtual community can generate new ideas through responding and exchanging content, which reinforces dynamic content creation (Shao, 2009; Quan-Haase & Young, 2010).

Two relevant theories that could explain SNS use are the the Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1956) and the Information-Seeking Theory (Ellis, 1989).

#### *The Social Exchange Theory*

The Social Exchange Theory, established by sociologist George Homans (1956), is rooted in psychology, sociology and economics. Homans introduces his theory in his work entitled 'Social behavior as exchange'. He defines social behaviour

as "an exchange of goods; both material goods and non-material ones, such as the symbols of approval or prestige" (Homans, 1956, p. 606). The theory postulates that human interaction is bound by cost-benefit considerations. This means that in an interaction a person is involved in an exchange with others, whether the exchange is tangible or non-tangible, based on his/her analysis of costs and benefits. Therefore, an individual selects an approach from which he/she can gain the most benefit and at minimal cost. In the area of social media, people would engage in certain activities and relationships based on their calculation of the costs and benefits involved in the exchange.

#### *The Information-Seeking Theory*

The Information-Seeking Theory is about the approaches, modes and reasons for seeking information. It can be a purposive or an unintentional seeking of the information. Ellis (1989) suggested six approaches of information-seeking behaviour based on a sample of social scientists: starting, chaining, browsing, differentiating, monitoring and extracting. A number of information-seeking models are proposed; these models provide a detailed description of the activities, causes and consequences involved in the information-seeking behaviour (Wilson, 1981). The models serve as "a theoretical lens to analyze the contextual and dynamic nature of information-seeking at micro and macro levels" (Kim, 2013, p. 2).

### *The Information-Seeking Theory and Motive*

Merged with the Uses and Gratification Theory, the Information-Seeking and Network Analysis is useful in explaining the motives of youths in using social media sites. According to Wilson (1981), motive is a gist in the study of information-seeking behaviour. The general assumption here is that motive is a stimulus for someone to do a certain act. Therefore, youths basically use social media for a particular motive. Information need is believed to be the motive leading to youths engaging in social media activities. In particular, the notion of motive can be seen in terms of the audience having complex needs that require gratification; to gratify these diverse needs, the audience actively seeks information through social media sites (Rubin, 1986; Fiske, 1990).

### *Social Media*

Social media sites are online services focusing on creating networks or social relationships. These sites enable any kind of information-sharing activities such as sharing interests, business endeavours and current issues. The main body of a social media site is the representation of the user, which consists of the user's profile while some may post pictures and use social links and a variety of other applications (Shin, 2010). Lukes (2010) stated that one must not overlook the potential of social media. Social media sites are the most preferred media by youths to connect to each other and to share information, both positive and negative in nature.

### *Social Media and Youths*

Social media and youths cannot be separated. It is believed that social media sites are not just booming in Malaysia but all around the globe. Teenagers have ranked such sites as one of their preferred methods of communication, along with cell phones and Instant Messengers (Rhoades, Thomas, & Davis, 2009; Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). A study of youth usage of social media sites in America showed significant results. The percentage of American teens that use social networking sites has significantly increased to 73%. Additionally, the percentage of young adults is almost similar to the percentage of those using social networking sites. Facebook is currently the most commonly used online social network site among these youths (Lenhart *et al.*, 2010). It was found that older teens aged between 14 and 17 years were more likely to use Twitter than younger teens (aged 12-13 years old). High school female students also preferred to use Twitter compared with high school male students (Lenhart *et al.*, 2010).

A study by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, 'Trends in Media Use by Children and Young People', based on the study previously done by the Kaiser Family Foundation (Kaiser, 2010) of the US, lists factors for the increase of usage of social media as the expansion of higher-speed home internet access and the great appeal of these social media sites to young people. The research also found that in 2009, the most popular activities for Americans between eight and 18 years old were surfing social

networking sites, playing online games and watching videos on social media sites, for example, YouTube.

Youths in Nigeria also use social networking for friendship. They are motivated and goal-orientated to preserve their self-confidence. Their main sharing activities are entertainment and friendship. From most of the research, it can be concluded that Facebook currently is among the most preferred social media site for youths (Anderson, Fagan, Woodnutt, & Chamorro-Premuzie, 2012). Studies in Malaysia show that Malaysian youths primarily share their thoughts and feelings through social media sites. Moreover, youths use social media sites because they also represent freedom (Latiffah *et al.*, 2009; Levi & Samsudin, 2010; Saodah *et al.*, 2012).

#### *Motives for Social Media Usage*

Youths share everything via social media sites. Youths are motivated by various motives in using social media sites such as religious, educational, social interaction, communication and entertainment.

The motive to use social media sites is both positive and negative (Saodah *et al.*, 2012). For example, people use Facebook specifically to maintain friendship and initiate new relationships (Subrahmanyam *et al.*, 2008). However, Yang and Brown (2013) claimed that the need for social media sites is motivated by not just social reasons but also educational. Youths, especially students, use social media for sharing knowledge, scanning journals and sourcing for the steps to conduct good research.

Some research shows that adolescents become involved in social media relationships in order to increase their self-esteem or because they see social media as a sort of 'show-off media'. Social media is also used for the motives of addressing loneliness, seeking entertainment such as playing online games and keeping updated on the recent activities and status of their colleagues (Joinson, 2008; Sheldon, 2008; Tosun, 2012).

Brocke, Richter and Riemer (2009) explained two main motives in relation to the use of social media sites by university students in Germany: the social motive and the interest motive. The social motive basically revolved around contact maintenance and social searching while the interest motive revolved around contact interest and topic interest.

Youths depend highly on social media because they face difficulty in expressing their true self in face-to-face interactions. In particular, according to Yang and Brown (2013), social adjustment as a student is the motive for students to cling to their gadgets to know the latest update in their social media sites (2013).

In addition, Boyd (2014) claimed that youth engage in social media activities for the motive of developing self-identity. Social media is a recent subject in relation to the study of culture. Although complicated and not obvious, motives for social media use are emerging/changing in line with the different atmosphere of the social media sites. New or updated versions of social media sites can cause a change of motives;

for example, youths can now post their personal videos via Facebook or Twitter and make it viral as everyone shares the videos with others.

In this study, several motives of social media use were presumed such as the religious, education, business, social interaction, communication, politics and entertainment motives.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Research Design*

The study employed a quantitative research design using the survey method. It used the questionnaire as the research instrument for data collection. This design was chosen because it is a scientific and logical method that produces quantifiable, reliable data that can be generalised to the population. At the same time, deductive reasoning was also used and thus, simplicity in data summarisation could be done. Above all, the results were easily interpreted and could easily predict the outcome of the study.

### *Population and Sampling Procedure*

Youths make up 45% of the 28.3 million population of Malaysia. The population of the study consisted of youths aged between 17 and 40 years old nationwide. Youths at that age can understand the need of the study and can respond to the questionnaire individually. The youths were randomly selected, initially, from among the students of the Department of

Communication at the main campus of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), at different levels of their programme. The department currently has a student population of 297 students.

### *Measurement of the Variables*

The focus variables of the study were motives of using the social media sites (SNS). There were seven motives for using the SNS: religious (6 items), education (7 items), business (5 items), social interaction (6 items), communication (5 items), politics (7 items) and entertainment (5 items). All items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly agree, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. Each motive item was subjected to a reliability test. The results of the reliability tests for all variables are presented in Table 1. All the items were excellent because the Cronbach's Alpha exceeded .70, the standard comparison value for the homogeneity of the items for each variable. The Cronbach's Alpha ranged from .835 to .941. Therefore, no item for each variable was deleted. Each variable concerned was created to form a construct based on its mean value. Further analyses were based on the created mean of each construct.



TABLE 1  
Reliability Test for Motives for Using SNSs

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD
Religious motive	6	.941	3.35	1.02
Education motive	7	.940	3.58	0.93
Business motive	5	.930	2.89	1.15
Social interaction motive	6	.890	3.83	0.86
Communication motive	5	.835	3.55	0.81
Politics motive	7	.854	2.80	1.10
Entertainment motive	5	.906	3.26	1.11

### *Data Collection*

The collection of data began at IIUM main campus in Gombak during a regular semester and each Malaysian student later collected 10 questionnaires to be distributed to the identified respondents. Each foreign student also took 12 questionnaires for data collection. All attended a training session prior to data collection. Each questionnaire took 10-20 minutes to complete. The questionnaire was developed in English. The data collection process took two months.

### *Data Analysis*

The data were coded according to the master code prepared by the researcher. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS WIN 20) for both the descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics included frequency, percentage, minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation. The inferential statistics used for the study were cross-tabulation with a Chi-square test to assess the differences between proportions of the samples under study

and the discriminant analysis since the dependent variable was coded as a dummy variable having a value of 0 and 1. The discriminant analysis was complementary to the Chi-square test. As the created variables for the different motives were classified according to scale measurement, a discriminant analysis was the most appropriate for the study. Both method-enter and Step-Wise discriminant analysis were conducted to discover the predictors for each SNS and for the best variable(s) in the equation for each SNS.

## **FINDINGS**

The findings of the study are presented according to the demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by the findings that help answer the objectives of the study.

### *Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents*

Demographic characteristics of the respondents of the study are as follows. There were slightly more males (58.8%) than females (41.2%). Almost three quarters of

the respondents were Malaysians (74.2%) while the rest were foreigners (25.8%), comprising mainly Indonesians, Somalis and Sudanese nationals. Malaysians were represented by 61.6% Malay/Bumiputra, 22.3% Chinese and 15.9% Indians, and this roughly represented the nation's population distribution. Almost three quarters of the respondents were single (74.3%) while the rest were married, divorced or widowed.

This distribution pattern was typical among the youths. Almost three quarters of the respondents (73.4%) were Muslims while the rest (26.6%) subscribed to other religions. In terms of age, the respondents were rather young, aged mainly 25 years old and younger (64.1%) while the rest were between 26 and 40 years old (35.9%). The youths in the study were still studying and they declared that their highest level of education was first degree (38.3%). This was

followed by those with certificates: MCE/SPM (20.9%) and diploma holders (17.4%). Based on the level of education and the age category, therefore, it was not surprising to find the youths in the study to be students (58.6%), followed by those working in the private sector (16.4%) and finally, those working in the public sector (11.4%).

#### *Types of SNS Subscribed to by Youths*

Almost all of the youths had social media sites and subscribed to Facebook (95.3%), followed closely by subscription to Yahoo mail (75.1%) and Skype (42.0%). Others had Twitter (34.1%), Blog (22.6%) and Friendster (21.0%) accounts. This means that the most popular new social media among youths in this sample was Facebook and Facebook was not the only site subscribed to. Many had more than one SNS.

TABLE 2  
Social Media Sites Used by Youths

Social Media Sites (N=634)	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	604	95.3
Yahoo mail	476	75.1
Skype	266	42.0
Twitter	216	34.1
Blog	143	22.6
Friendster	133	21.0
Frequency of Using SNSs per Week	Frequency	Percentage
Never (0 day)	5	0.8
Rarely (1-2 days)	109	17.3
Sometimes (3-4 days)	181	28.8
Often (5-6 days)	133	21.1
Always (7 days)	201	32.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Multiple responses



*Frequency of Using SNS per Week*

When asked how often they used the social media sites in a week, many (32.0%) claimed that they used it daily. Others indicated that they used it less consistently: 3-4 days (28.8%) in a week while many used it 5-6 days per week (21.1%). Surprisingly, there were five respondents who subscribed to it and yet did not use it at all.

*Motives for Using SNS*

Further, each type of SNS was then analysed in relation to the seven motives. Table 3 shows the overall means for all types of SNS. It was found that the highest mean ( $M=3.44$ ) went to Twitter and Blog. Within each type of SNS, the results showed that Twitter was mainly used for social interaction ( $M=3.44$ ). Similarly, across the board, the social interaction motive ( $M=3.93$ ) recorded the highest use for all types of SNS: Twitter ( $M=4.05$ ), Facebook ( $M=3.85$ ), Skype

( $M=3.89$ ), Yahoo ( $M=3.85$ ), Friendster ( $M=3.99$ ) and Blog ( $M=3.96$ ). In addition, each motive was also checked for the type of SNS used the most. It was found that the Blog was used for religious motive ( $M=3.51$ ) the most. Education motive ( $M=3.69$ ) was also obtained from the Blog. For business motive, too, the youths used the Blog ( $M=3.09$ ) the most. However, for the social interaction motive, Twitter ( $M=4.05$ ) was used the most. Similarly for the communication motive, Twitter ( $M=3.75$ ) was used the most, too. For the politics motive, the Blog ( $M=2.83$ ) was also used by the youths sparingly but the highest. Finally, the entertainment motive was widely used through Twitter ( $M=3.59$ ). It can be implied that youths used Twitter for social interaction, communication and entertainment motives while Blog was used for the religious, education, business and politics motives.

TABLE 3  
Types of SNS by Motive

No. Motive	SNSs*						Mean
	Twitter (N=216)	Facebook (N=604)	Skype (N=266)	Yahoo (N=476)	Friendster (N=133)	Blog (N=143)	
1 Religious	3.28	3.35	3.33	3.41	3.35	3.51	<b>3.37</b>
2 Education	3.68 (9)	3.57	3.64	3.64	3.66	3.69 (8)	<b>3.65</b>
3 Business	2.95	2.89	2.86	2.90	3.00	3.09	<b>2.95</b>
4 Social interaction	4.05(1)	3.85 (5)	3.89 (4)	3.85(6)	3.99(2)	3.96(3)	<b>3.93</b>
5 Communication	3.75 (7)	3.57	3.59	3.58	3.59	3.67(10)	<b>3.63</b>
6 Politics	2.80	2.79	2.82	2.81	2.73	2.83	<b>2.80</b>
7 Entertainment	3.59	3.26	3.32	3.23	3.49	3.35	<b>3.37</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.44</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>3.44</b>	

\*1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=slightly agree, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

To simplify the findings, ranking was done according to the types of SNS. The most popular SNS in sequence was Twitter and Blog, followed by Friendster, Skype and Yahoo, and finally, Facebook. In terms of motive, the social interaction motive was the most used, followed by the education motive, communication, religious, entertainment, business and finally, the politics motives.

The ranking was also done by motive. The top three SNS used for the religious motive were Blog, Yahoo and Facebook. For the education motive, Blog, followed by Twitter and Friendster, was used. Blog, followed by Friendster and Twitter, was mainly used for the business motive. For the social interaction motive, Twitter, Friendster and Blog were the three most popular SNS, in that order. For the communication motive, Twitter, followed by Blog and finally Skype, was widely used. The politics motive revealed a different perspective where Blog, followed by Skype and Yahoo, was used. Finally, for the entertainment motive, Twitter, Friendster and Blog were used, in that order.

In addition, the study also identified the top 10 SNS based on the means, and they were translated into the rankings. It seemed that the most popular SNS for social interaction motive was Twitter (1), followed by Friendster (2), Blog (3), Skype (4), Facebook (5) and Yahoo (6). Again, Twitter was ranked 7th for the communication motive and 9th for the education motive while Blog was ranked 8th for the

education motive. Blog, too, was placed in 10th position for the communication motive. The religion, business, politics and entertainment motives were not the top motives for the youths sampled. The findings revealed a disturbing trend, as the social interaction motive was used for all the six SNS. Religion was not a top priority. The authorities should take heed of this because religion provides positive guidance for youths for life in this world and in the hereafter. What more, since a majority of the youths were Malay, and therefore, Muslim, the religious motive should be a priority as religious knowledge can ensure that they do not go astray in this ephemeral world.

#### *Comparison Between Youth Profile for Using SNS*

Comparisons for each type of SNS were made according to gender, nationality (Malaysian and foreigner), ethnicity (Malay/Bumiputra, Chinese, Indian/other), marital status (single and married/other), religion (Islam and other religions), age (teenage, adolescent, young adult, adult, older adult), highest educational achievement (primary/secondary education and tertiary education) and designation (students, employed and others).

**Twitter.** With regards to Twitter there was no difference between male and female for its use ( $\chi^2=2.907$ ,  $p=.088$ ). However, Twitter usage was significant between Malaysian and foreigner usage ( $\chi^2=72.674$ ,  $p=.000$ ), for marital status between single and married ( $\chi^2=101.407$ ,  $p=.000$ ), in

terms of religion between Islam and other religions ( $\chi^2=225.028$ ,  $p=.000$ ) and between age groups where those aged between 21 and 25 years old used it more frequently than the rest of the groups ( $\chi^2=171.256$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Ethnicity also played a part: Malay/Bumiputra and the other races gave the scores  $\chi^2=22.583$  and  $p=.000$ . Similarly, those with tertiary education (diploma and higher qualifications) used Twitter more frequently than did school children ( $\chi^2=68.907$ ,  $p=.000$ ). In terms of designation, students used it more frequently than those who were employed and others ( $\chi^2=146.583$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

**Facebook.** Facebook, being the most popular, had its own use. Specifically, males tended to use it more frequently than females ( $\chi^2=12.552$ ,  $p=.000$ ). In addition, Malaysians used it more frequently than foreigners ( $\chi^2=163.781$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Single respondents used it more frequently than those who were married ( $\chi^2=182.490$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Muslims used it more frequently than the followers of other religions ( $\chi^2=763.391$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Young people aged between 17 and 30 years old tended to use it more frequently than the older group aged 31 and above ( $\chi^2=284.819$ ,  $p=.000$ ). However, in terms of ethnicity, the Malay/Bumiputra and the Indian/other used it more frequently than the Chinese ( $\chi^2=95.825$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Education played an important role in the use of Facebook as holders of diploma and higher qualifications used it more frequently than school students ( $\chi^2=193.649$ ,  $p=.000$ ). With regards to

designation, students and employed staff used it more frequently than those with other jobs ( $\chi^2=305.427$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

**Skype.** Skype was not widely used by the respondents. Only 266 used it. Specifically, the number of males to females was similar in terms of usage ( $\chi^2=2.751$ ,  $p=.097$ ). However, Skype was more widely used among Malaysians than foreigners ( $\chi^2=28.562$ ,  $p=.000$ ). In addition, single respondents seemed to use Skype more than the married ones ( $\chi^2=96.241$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Muslim respondents tended to use Skype more than those of other faiths ( $\chi^2=360.802$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Those aged between 21 and 25 years old stood out in terms of Skype usage compared to those in the other age categories ( $\chi^2=161.736$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Malay/Bumiputra and Indian/other were Skype users rather than the Chinese ( $\chi^2=28.541$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Education was an important indicator of Skype usage: those with a diploma and higher qualifications used Skype more than those with HSC and lower qualifications ( $\chi^2=121.805$ ,  $p=.000$ ). This coincides with their designation, as students used Skype more than those employed or with other job types ( $\chi^2=182.895$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

**Yahoo mail.** Yahoo mail use showed distinct groups of users. There were more male than female users ( $\chi^2=13.813$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Yahoo users comprised more Malays compared to foreigners ( $\chi^2=131.857$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Single Yahoo mail users overtook married users ( $\chi^2=135.538$ ,  $p=.000$ ). More Muslims tended to be Yahoo mail users over users professing other religions

( $\chi^2=651.148$ ,  $p=.000$ ). In addition, there were more users of the 17-25 age group compared to their older counterparts ( $\chi^2=248.295$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Malay/Bumiputra and Indian/other tended to use Yahoo mail more compared to the Chinese ( $\chi^2=88.063$ ,  $p=.000$ ). It was also found that those with diploma and higher qualifications used Yahoo mail more than those with HSC and lower qualifications ( $\chi^2=169.445$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Students and employed staff used Yahoo mail more compared to those with other work ( $\chi^2=253.618$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

**Friendster.** Friendster was not a very popular SNS among the respondents (N=133 out of a total of 702 respondents). Specifically, there was no difference between male and female users of Friendster ( $\chi^2=0.068$ ,  $p=.000$ ). However, there were differences between Malaysian and foreign users ( $\chi^2=78.818$ ,  $p=.000$ ); Malaysians tended to use Friendster more than the foreigners. In addition, single respondents used it more than the married respondents ( $\chi^2=76.699$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Muslims used Friendster more than those of other religions ( $\chi^2=140.788$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Respondents aged between 21 and 25 years were the most frequent users of Friendster compared to those in the other age groups ( $\chi^2=150.424$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Malay/Bumiputra tended to use more Friendster than either the Chinese or the Indians ( $\chi^2=33.940$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Those with tertiary education used Friendster more than those with secondary education ( $\chi^2=31.767$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Students used Friendster more compared to the employed and other groups ( $\chi^2=90.511$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

**Blog.** There were only 143 users of Blog in the study. The number of male and female users were close ( $\chi^2=2.282$ ,  $p=.131$ ). Malaysians use more Blog than the foreigners ( $\chi^2=64.901$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Similarly, singles used Blog more than the married respondents ( $\chi^2=74.189$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Muslims also used Blog more than believers of other religions ( $\chi^2=230.063$ ,  $p=.000$ ). In terms of age group, those between 21 and 25 years of age were the biggest number of users of Blog compared to those in other categories ( $\chi^2=119.197$ ,  $p=.000$ ). There were more Malay/Bumiputra users than those of other races ( $\chi^2=57.664$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Diploma and degree holders use Blog more than those with secondary education ( $\chi^2=35.252$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Finally, students used Blog more than the employed and those of other groups ( $\chi^2=115.818$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

#### *Discriminating Types of SNS with Motives*

Below are the discriminant analysis results for each SNS.

**Twitter.** The results showed that there were differences ( $\chi^2=42.767$ ,  $p=.000$ ) between those using Twitter (centroid=.382) and those who did not use it (centroid=-.216). Based on the centroid and the F-test ( $df=1$ , 540), it can be noted that those who used it did so mainly for entertainment ( $F=31.090$ ,  $p=.000$ ), social interaction ( $F=21.766$ ,  $p=.000$ ), communication ( $F=19.939$ ,  $p=.000$ ) and education ( $F=4.717$ ,  $p=.030$ ). The percentage gave a discrimination of 64.2%. The equation for predicting use for Twitter:  $y=-3.202 + .543$  entertainment + .494 communication +.343 education

+ .125 social interaction - .06s0 business - .153 politics - .426 religious motives. Nevertheless, when the Step-Wise Discriminant Analysis was used to detect the best predictor(s) to be included in the equation, it was found that Twitter was used for entertainment and communication motives but not for religious motives. They were significant contributors either positively (entertainment and communication) or negatively (religious), based on the direction in the equation.

**Facebook.** As for Facebook, the results showed discriminating differences ( $\chi^2=16.276$ ,  $p=.023$ ) between those using it (centroid=.037) than those not using it (centroid=-.832). The percentage of discrimination was 69.7% for right allocation. Based on the centroid and the F-test ( $df=1$ , 540), it was found that Facebook was mainly used for social interaction ( $F=11.605$ ,  $p=.001$ ). The equation for predicting use for Facebook:  $y=-3.028 + 1.270$  social interaction + .356 religious - .020 business - .083 entertainment - .187 education - .218 communication - .446 politics motives. When Step-Wise Discriminant Analysis was used to detect the best predictor to be included in the equation only the social interaction motive was found to be a significant contributor.

**Skype.** There was no difference ( $\chi^2=9.301$ ,  $p=.232$ ) between those using Skype (centroid=.152) than those not using it (centroid=-.115). Based on the centroid and the F-test ( $df=1$ , 540), it was found that there was no single predictor for Skype. The percentage explains correct allocation as

55.5%. The equation for predicting use for Skype:  $y=-2.930 + .851$  education + .274 social interaction + .268 communication + .198 entertainment + .075 politics - .406 religious - .554 motives. Further analysis using Step-Wise Discriminant Analysis confirmed that there was no predictor that could contribute significantly for use of Skype.

**Yahoo mail.** Use of Yahoo mail, on the other hand, was able to be predicted for users (centroid=.095) and non-users (centroid=-.307) with the Chi-square value equal to 15.454 ( $p=.031$ ). The discrimination and correct allocation for both groups was explained by 57.6%. Based on the centroid and the F-test ( $df=1$ , 540), therefore, Yahoo mail was used for education ( $F=8.813$ ,  $p=.003$ ) and religious ( $F=5.039$ ,  $p=.025$ ) motives. The equation for predicting use for Yahoo mail:  $y=-3.611 + .792$  education + .532 communication + .236 social interaction + .156 religious - .026 politics - .146 business - .619 entertainment motives. Nevertheless, when Step-Wise Discriminant Analysis was used to detect the best predictor to be included in the equation, only the education motive was found to be a significant contributor.

**Friendster.** On the contrary, there was no difference in the use of Friendster ( $\chi^2=11.815$ ,  $p=.107$ ) between users (centroid=.279) and non-users (centroid=-.079). The correction prediction for users was only 54.2% correct. Based on the centroid and the F-test ( $df=1$ , 540), it was found that Friendster was used for entertainment ( $F=6.705$ ,  $p=.010$ ) and

social interaction (F=4.691, p=.031). The equation for predicting use for Friendster:  $y = -2.066 + .672 \text{ social interaction} + .545 \text{ entertainment} + .227 \text{ business} + .218 \text{ education} - .112 \text{ religious} - .465 \text{ politics} - .573 \text{ communication}$  motives. When Step-Wise Discriminant Analysis was used to detect the best predictor to be included in the equation, only the entertainment motive was found to be a significant contributor.

**Blog.** Similarly for Blog, there was no significant difference ( $\chi^2=10.428, p=.166$ ) between users (centroid=.249) and non-users (centroid=-.079). The correction predicting percentage for Blog users was 55.9%. Based on the centroid and the F-test (df=1, 540), hence, Blog was used for communication (F=4.893, p=.027), social interaction (F=4.223, p=.040) and business

(F=3.934, p=.048) motives. The equation for predicting usage for Blog:  $y = -4.293 + .506 \text{ religious} + .497 \text{ communication} + .463 \text{ business} + .192 \text{ social interaction} + .016 \text{ education} + .008 \text{ entertainment} - .466 \text{ politics}$  motives. Further analysis using Step-Wise Discriminant Analysis was used to detect the best predictor to be included in the equation. It was found that only the communication motive was a significant contributor for Blog.

In sum, different SNS were used for different motives (Table 4). Specifically, Twitter was used for entertainment, communication and religious motives, Facebook for social interaction motive, Yahoo mail for education motive, Friendster for entertainment motive and Blog for communication motive. There was no specific motive for Skype.

TABLE 4  
Summary of SNS Usage and Motive

SNS	Motive	Nature of Contribution
Twitter	Entertainment, Communication, Religious	Positive Positive Negative
Facebook	Social interaction	Positive
Skype	-	-
Yahoo Mail	Education	Positive
Friendster	Entertainment	Positive
Blog	Communication	Positive

\* Significant variable in the equation for discriminant analysis result using the Step-Wise Method \*\*  
Critical value for Chi-sq. (df=7)=14.067, p=.05

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

A total of 702 respondents participated in the study. They were mostly single Malay, Muslim males aged between 21 and 25 years old, were students and held degrees

from universities. They tended to subscribe to Facebook, Yahoo mail and Skype. Many used their favourite SNS daily while others used it 5-6 days per week. Therefore, Facebook remains the most popular SNS



among Malaysians, following its global trend (Ostrow, 2011; Protalinski, 2012; Alexa internet, 2014; Facebook, 2014).

A comparison of users' overall mean scores across motives revealed that Twitter was the highest rated SNS for its motive usage, despite the fact that it was not the most popular compared to Facebook. Yahoo mail was the second highest rated SNS for its motive usage i.e. the education motive. This was in line with the results reported by Vascellor (2011), where he found that Yahoo mail was most popular webmail in the USA. Such findings can be attributed to the fact that respondents were mainly students and they sought information to do their work. Therefore, the Information-Seeking Theory (Ellis, 1989) could contribute in explaining the popularity of Yahoo mail usage. Twitter was used specifically for the entertainment and communication motives while Blog was for the communication motive only. So, communication made the two SNS popular. This may be explained by the Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1956), which states that communication, being a two-way process, demands a complementary and mutual benefit from each party involved.

The most frequently cited motive by Malaysians was the social interaction motive followed by the education, communication, religious, entertainment, business and politics motives. So, Facebook was the main SNS used by the youths in Malaysia for social interaction. However, the youths sampled did not select the business and politics motives from the SNS as these motives were not included in the motives for each SNS usage.

The study also tried to compare youth profiles for using the SNS. It was found that Twitter and Skype did not show any differences between male and female users. Overall, the study indicated that there were differences between other users' attributes. Specifically, the users were more likely to be male, Malay, single, aged between 21 and 25 years old, pursuing a degree and they were students.

In matching the type of SNS and motives for using it, it was found that Twitter was used for the entertainment and communication motives; Facebook for the social interaction motive; Yahoo mail for the education motive; Friendster for the entertainment motive; and Blog for the communication motive. It can also be concluded that SNS was not used for business and politics motives by the respondents. Another interesting finding that emerged from the study was that Skype was not used for any specific motive.

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