

## **The Factors and Outcomes of Social Media Dependency Framework**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Social Media Intelligence Quotient (SMIQ) refers to social media literacy, business literacy and social intelligence. Users of social media attitude towards it is shaped by their personality, media platform and social support to stay online. Using social media can improve fresh graduates' marketability and employability. There are many factors that influence social media dependency such as the social system, media system and personality system. The purpose of this paper is to examine the factors of social media dependency and identify its implications among graduates. It aims to develop a theoretical framework based on a modified Media System Dependency (MSD) Theory.

*Keywords:* Social media dependency, Social Media Intelligence Quotient, social media literacy, business literacy, social intelligence

### **INTRODUCTION**

There are many interactive applications and instruments found on the internet which attract the users to stay and browse online longer. Laurence (2012) explains user spend time on the internet for various reasons, such as employment, professional relations

and social interactions. The experienced internet users have greater self – control in terms of their addiction to the internet and apply it more purposefully because they have greater exposure on internet usage and function (Mafé & Blas, 2006). Nevertheless, internet users who choose social media as their primary activity while online has created what is termed as social media dependency. The uniqueness of social media has transformed our daily lives in many ways, especially the millennials. It has improved social media skills among students that enhance their communication

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with university authorities, connecting with outsiders, and locating experts for their research areas (Gualtieri, Javetski, & Corless, 2012). Thus, it is crucial to identify the most common and popular applications on the internet, time spent online and on each application and what attracts the users to use the same application frequently (Joshua, 2005).

### **SOCIAL MEDIA DEPENDENCY**

According to Tsai et al. (2009), college students use the internet in different ways compared with other youngsters which has an effect on their habits and behaviour. The social media is used as a platform to create networking and for knowledge sharing, business dealing and employment. Furthermore, undergraduate students are technology savvy and fast learners in technology development, making them the most active group as they follow the latest trend of technology, high self-expression and exposure, short usage cycle (Park, 2010). Poh et al. (2012) describe those who use social media excessively (more than 30 or 40 hours per week) as high dependent users, interfering in their daily lives. There are few determinants of social media dependency such as a social system, media system and personality system that will affect the social media usage among the users.

#### **Social System**

Social media has become an important tool of communication to build and consolidate relationship with peers, relatives, colleagues

and others who share the same interest (Narasimhamurthy, 2014; Rahat & Singh, 2014). University students in particular, have unlimited access to the internet, flexible time and enjoy freedom in terms of access to the internet, free from parental and university control (Kuss, Griffiths, & Binder, 2013). It has transformed the lives of individuals, organisations and society (Leung, 2013).

#### **Media System**

In media system, social networks are the most visited websites in which the students engage in online chatting and forums instead of face to face interactions making them highly dependent on the internet (Kuss et al., 2013). Students generally have good knowledge of ICT due to its wide usage in academia. For example, they use tablet PCs, video podcasts and e-books in their learning process (Gualtieri, Javetski, & Corless, 2012). Hence, there are few popular social media used by the college students such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, Instagram, Google+ and LinkedIn. Subramani (2015) listed Facebook as the most popular social media used among students followed by Twitter. Meanwhile, Wang, Niiya, Mark, Reich, and Warschauer (2015), found that Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are the most used social media by the millennial.

#### **Personality System**

Personality traits can determine the frequency and motives of internet usage as it can reveal their social norms and habit

during their online activities (Kalmus, Realo, & Siibak, 2011). Tan and Yang (2014) have shown personality as the determinant for technology adoption as they perceive the usefulness of technology and desire its novelty. An individual that is extrovert, neurotic and open tend to use social media in an interactive way (Correa, Hinsley, & de Zúñiga, 2010). Kalmus, Realo and Siibak (2011) show an individual who is open use internet for entertainment while a neurotic individual use it for companionship. Meanwhile, the extrovert uses the internet for socialisation and networking, through online or offline conversation (Tosun & Lajunen, 2010). Additionally, a neurotic knows how to control and respond when they receive information through social media, and those who are open are willing to accept new things and explore new technology (Ross et al., 2009).

### **The Outcomes of Social Media Dependency**

Social media competence encompasses knowledge and expertise and self-efficacy in which attitude plays an important role in enhancing social media literacy (Vanwynsberghe, Boudry, & Verdegem, 2011). The users must possess dynamic behaviour by having right attitude and confidence to use that skill. Bahk, Sheil, and Lin (2010) show a strong connection between social media and the community, especially among millennial, to use that platform to seek job opportunities for example. Indeed, there are a lot of job

opportunities that require employees to have ICT skills because of the development of technology and the frequency of internet usage. According to CIO Whitepapers (2012), social media and business intelligence are related because social media give business values for enterprises to stay competitive, reduce expenses and launch the products in the broadening market. As supported by Zhou and Wang (2014), the rapid development of social media users has influenced organisations to explore the potential of business capacity through social media applications. It indicates that social media and business are can transform the way of life of those who view social media as “the internet of things” (Strategic Foresight Initiative, 2011). Meanwhile, as an active social media user, it enables them to have large networking and be sociable in communities. The users assume everything is readable, recognisable, locatable and controllable from internet spaces. Thus, Social Media Intelligence Quotient (SMIQ) integrates social media literacy, business literacy and social intelligence.

### **Social Media Intelligence Quotient**

According to the US National Chamber Foundation (2011), the millennial is creative and innovative in order to be a successful entrepreneur. Pérez-Bustamante (2014) defined entrepreneurial literacy as skills, knowledge and attitudes to exploit opportunities in order to survive. Those who have entrepreneurial literacy are good at generating ideas, communicating, learn from their mentors, have good time

management, self – directed, information seeker, problem solver, competitive, collaborative, creative and participative in teamwork. Thus, business literacy is defined as the ability to seek, identify, interpret, communicate and evaluate business opportunities and stay alert with market research and development.

According to Vanwynsberghe, Boudry and Verdegem (2011), social media literacy refers to special capabilities in social media applications, knowledge, skills, attitudes and self – efficacy in creating social media content. Jenkins (2008) introduces literacy skills in new media usage that includes play, performance, simulation, multitasking, distributed cognition, collective intelligence, judgment, transmedia navigation, networking, negotiation, appropriation, and visualisation. Digital New Zealand, (2012) has viewed development of technology to document form, quote text and record music, photo, and video. It requires individuals to adapt to the latest technology and multi - media using digital content to perform well in academia even though they are engaged in several social media activities.

According to Hootsuite (2014), social relationship platform is a crucial determinant of social media intelligence for companies because they need to deal with people, especially customers and rivals. The companies must stay alert and engage with from their stakeholders critically and build relationship with them by responding and taking part in online discussion. Thus, it involves social intelligence in developing social media intelligence.

Additionally, many companies hire people with outstanding analytical skills and the ability to engage in the online community as information hunters (Harrysson, Metayer, & Sarrazin, 2013). Social intelligence includes understanding person minds through verbal and nonverbal communication, have good listening skills, sociability, influence others, popular in social sites, have good negotiation and problem-solving skills, good persuasion power and know how to act in different social medium (Doğan & Çetin, 2009). Furthermore, it can influence intercultural communication because they know how to conform with different cultures (Habib, Saleem, & Mahmood, 2013). Social media helps to connect the users with people all over the world and to enable us to learn about their culture and their daily lives.

### **Social Media Dependency Framework**

Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), propose the media system dependency theory which relates to the factor of dependency and its outcomes (Figure 1). It highlights the relationship between media system, and the social system, the latter includes individuals, groups, parties and so on. It controls information gathering, the transformation of information presentation and distribution of information that involves personal motives (Power, 1995). Apart from that, this system is goal-oriented rather than needs oriented because it shows a personal desire of the users (Yi, 1999). It shows the individuals have their goals when utilising the media, whereby individual media dependency (IMD) is

used to measure their dependency on particular media (Mafé & Blas, 2006).

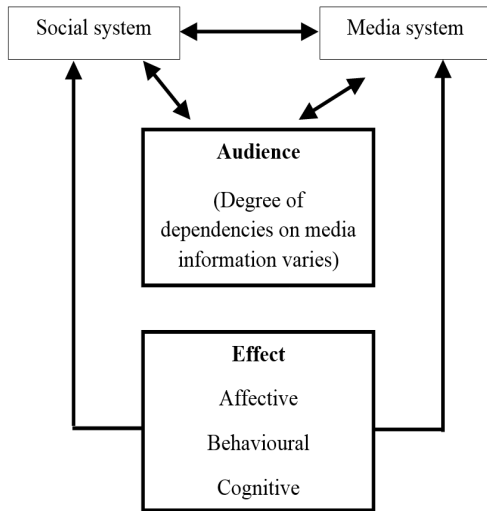


Figure 1. Social Media Dependency framework  
Source: Origin Theory from Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976)

The goals are varied, and different goals can be set up by using the same media even for the same person (Patwardhan & Yang, 2010). Apart from that, there are few types of individual level of dependency such as solitary play, social play, action orientation, interaction orientation, self - understanding and social understanding (Tai & Sun, 2007). This theory was modified by (Negin, Musa, & Wahab, 2013) by adding Personality System in identifying the outcomes because different people will have different degree of media dependency (Figure 2).

There are three predictors of social media dependency which are the endogenous variables in this research. The social system involves societal parties such as family, peers, universities and lecturers.

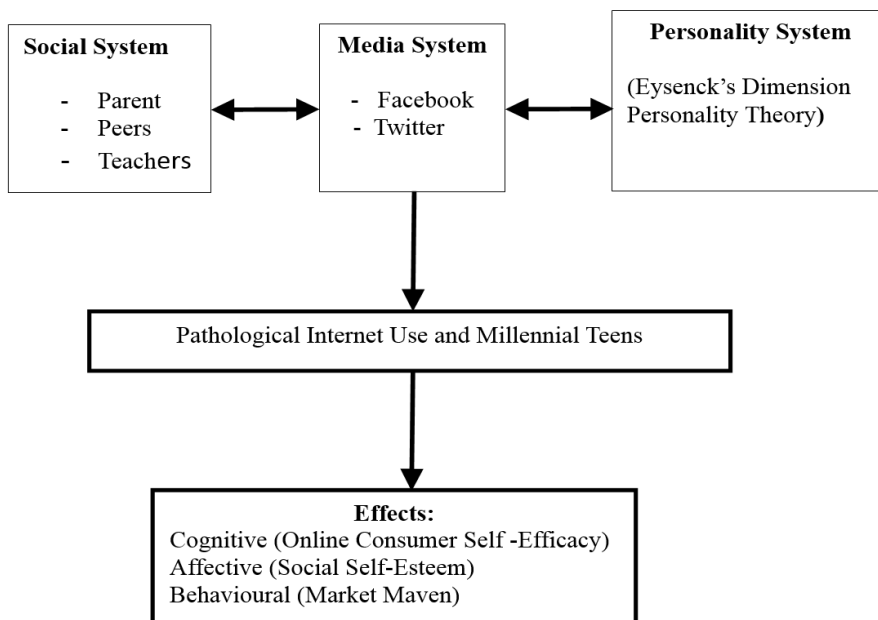


Figure 2. Pathological Internet Use and Millennial Teens Framework  
Source: Negin et al. (2013)

Meanwhile, media system includes social network sites (Facebook and Twitter), online photo sharing (Instagram) and online video sharing (Youtube). Innovativeness and Optimism are vital for personality development. All of the predictors will affect social media dependency among the users. Social media dependency is the latest media dependency among the internet users because most of their daily activities will involve social media, especially for communication, education, networking, business and so on. Therefore, it shows that by spending more time on the internet does not necessarily produce adverse effects,

especially on their psychology.

Apart from that, it will produce positive outcomes for graduates when they have social media dependency. They will possess new skills on social media that would be helpful for them in increasing employability chances upon graduation. Thus, introducing SMIQ for this study is important as there is no way to measure SMIQ among the social media users. Hence, this research produces measurement scale for SMIQ by combining social media literacy, business literacy and social intelligence as the evaluative dimensions for this talent.

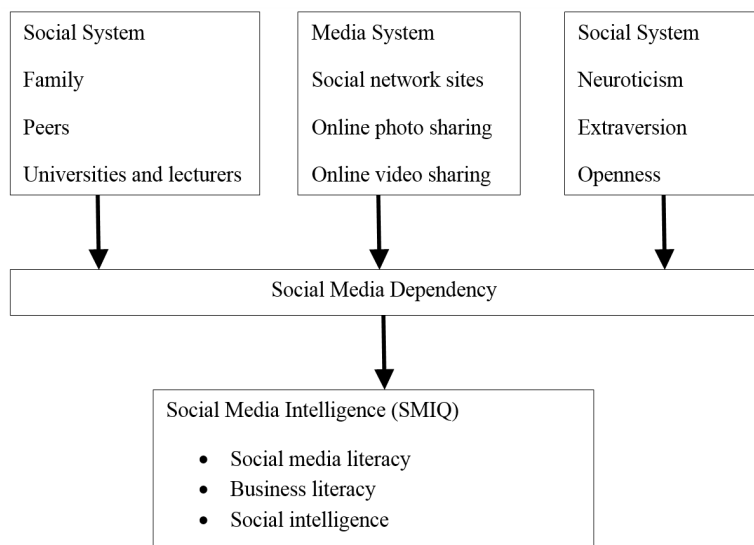


Figure 3. Social Media Dependency Conceptual framework

## CONCLUSION

The excessive use of social media has positive implications on millennial as they use social media in the right path and they know how to prioritise when browsing the social sites. Meanwhile, the present

research shows that SMIQ not only can increase employment chances, but it can produce more successful and independent entrepreneurs in the future to enhance their self - marketability. In fact, there are job opportunities offered by employers in diverse industries for social media experts

at all levels and the number of online entrepreneurs have increased from time to time. It allows the graduates to explore their skills in social media for personal achievement, academia, social and business purposes. Thus, future research should investigate positive implications of social media to identify social media experts in the industries to ensure we are ahead in producing good IT-savvy human capital.

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