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## **THE ACCEPTANCE, USAGE AND IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The emergence of new media, especially in the field of information and communication technology (ICT) will always cause a reaction to the users. These reactions can be the adoption of the new media, or even the rejection. The developing of ICT has become more profitable in human daily lives (Sensuse and Prayoga 2010) and social media is one growing phenomenon of communication on the internet in today's world. Therefore, this paper discusses the factors that influenced the adoption and use of social media among students and how their experience of using social media is impacting on their involvement in social and political participation. Base on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989) which consists of two main factors viz. perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, this article, in extending the model also adds other factors that have not been described in the TAM such as social influences.

**Keywords :** Internet, new media, social media, impact of social media, TAM.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Today, one growing phenomenon on the internet is undeniably social media. The term social media has grown so popular among internet users especially in the sense of being universally and widely used. Social media has changed drastically the way people communicate and the power of social media enables us to keep in touch with the latest happenings all around the world within minutes or hours even in the real time. It becomes an important global communication tool as well. Furthermore new technology and internet allow super fast data transfer so that people can communicate worldwide and only pay local rates. Basically social media is an online media as social instrument of communication (Mohd Hamdan Adnan 2011). Social media has defined as a category of online communication where its users can easily participate, share, and create content includes blogs, social networking sites, wikis, forums and virtual worlds (Asur & Huberman 2009).

Blogs, social networking site and wikis is a form of social media most commonly used by people all over the world (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). In the other hand, social networking site

is a site where anyone can create a personalized web page and then connect with friends to share information and communicate such as Facebook, Youtube or Twitter. When the internet and mobile phone technology become more advanced then social media is growing rapidly as well. Now, to access Facebook or Twitter can be done anywhere and at any time simply by using a mobile phone (Luik 2010). As a result, social media is also starting to replace conventional role of mass media in spreading news.

In short, the popularity of social media is started in March 2002 when Friendster has launched. Followed by Myspace in 2003 and also gained its popularity by received 75 million visits per month by the end of 2008. In February 2004, Facebook, the world biggest phenomenon has launched and still ranked as the number one social networking site in the world till now and for the microblogging site, Twitter as the lead (Alexa.com 2012). At first, Facebook has launched by Mark Zuckerberg as a medium to communicate and exchange information for Harvard students only. As June of 2011 Facebook has 750 million users and Twitter reported has reached 200 million active users. It is said that if Facebook were a country it would be the world's 3rd largest (Mohd Hamdan Adnan 2011).

There are a great number of people in the world who used social media especially young generation who were born in the late 80's or early 90's. Nielsen (2011) reported that females and 18 to 34 year olds are most active social networkers. They are using rapidly new media and technology now. They are interested in and more enthusiastic with everything related to internet and its application. They are actively and likely to engage with social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Google+ or YouTube. In addition most of social media is free, easy to use and available to all (Livingstone et al. 2000). A lot of application is provided to access social media accounts and it is caused an explosion of the number of users from year to year. Indonesia is among countries with the largest social media users in the world (83%) (Ipsos 2012) and it is dominated by the younger generation, particularly students (Brown 2011).

Furthermore this paper aims to discuss the factors that influenced the adoption and use of social media among university students and how their experience of using social media is impacting on their involvement in social and political participation. It is a concept paper based on secondary data which includes literature review and research findings by other scholars.

## **TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE MODEL (TAM)**

The acceptance and use of social media can be predicted by Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis in 1989. TAM was rooted in the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975). Although many theories have been proposed to explain and predict of a system, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been the only one which

has captured the most attention in the information systems fields (Chuttur 2009). TAM is generally considered as the most influential and plays a significant issue in the area of information systems since this theory was introduced by Davis in 1989 (Lee et al. 2003; Silva & Dias 2007; Alshare & Alkhateeb 2008; Chang et al. 2010).

TAM introduced perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness as the two main factors that influence computer usage behaviour. These two determinants serve as the basis for attitude towards using a particular system, which in turn determines the intention to use and then generates the actual usage behaviour (Davis 1989). According to TAM, perceived ease of use refers to the extent to which a person feels that using a particular technology would be free of effort. With regard to social media, PEOU is defined as the degree to which a student believes that using social media would be free of effort. On the other hand, perceived usefulness refers to the degree to which a student believes that using social media will be useful for him/her.

TAM has been applied in many studies and found that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness were significantly related to computer usage (Lu et al. 2003; Tengku Siti Aisha et al. 2005). TAM has been utilized to different technologies for instances word processors, e-mail, WWW, hospital information systems under different situations such as time and culture with different control factors like gender, organizational type and size and different subjects like undergraduate students, MBAs, and knowledge workers which leading its proponents to believe in its robustness (Lee et al. 2003). TAM already becomes an interdisciplinary theory. Currently, the mainly concerned area of TAM are computer science, information systems, management, information science & library science, business and also cybernetics (Chang et al. 2010).

In 1999, Malhotra & Galletta (1999) extended the TAM model account to social influence. They constructed items of the social influence factors by using Kelman's processes (1958). Kelman distinguished between three different processes of social influence that affect individual behavior. They are compliance, identification, and internalization. Based on the findings of this study, it appears that Kelman's three processes of social influence have direct effects on the users' attitude and indirect effects on their behavioral intention via attitude. It seems important to determine how social influences affect the commitment of the user towards use of the information system for understanding, explaining, and predicting system usage and acceptance behavior (Malhotra & Galletta 1999; Park 2009).

In 2000, Ventakesh & Davis (2000) introduced TAM 2, an extended model of the original TAM. They develop new version of the TAM model to resolve the limitations raised by previous studies. TAM 2 was tested using a longitudinal study with four different information systems in four organizations considering both voluntary and mandatory situations. The extended model defines the external variables influence perceived usefulness, such as social influence (subjective norm, voluntariness and image) and cognitive instruments (job relevance, output quality, result demonstrability and perceived ease of use) and the external

variables influence perceived ease of use, such as anchors (computer self-efficacy, perceptions of external control, computer anxiety and computer playfulness) and adjustments (perceived enjoyment and objective usability) (Ventakesh & Davis 2000).

The study by Hughes (2009) resulted Twitter adoption due to usefulness of it. Twitter seems to have evolved over time to offer more of an information-sharing purpose, with more users sharing URLs, and this behavior appears to be more evident in non-routine situations. The ability to access social media like Facebook or Twitter via the mobile web is one the factors in the adoption of social media. It has a maximum quality eventhough it is accessed from a smart phone to mobile web. In addition, due to its ability to allow communication among users globally, social media has been used by various users such as academicians, political experts, scientists, organization of corporate, agency empire, students, and so on for various purposes. Among them are commercial, teaching and learning, political ideology, communication or advertising tools (Siti Ezaleila Azizah & Mustafa Hamzah 2010).

## **THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Brown (2011) said that there are many different social networks, and it is worth understanding their differences. For instance, Facebook is seen as a media of keeping connected with family, friends, and old acquaintances, while Twitter is more appreciated for information about current events and popular culture. Furthermore social networks are aimed at particular audiences and focus on sharing reviews, issues, problems, and solutions.

Social media and youth can unite to create something instead of status updates about crushes, relationship drama or senseless tweets. For example the Egyptian revolution or the Arab Spring, it can be seen as the power of youth and unity (Mohd Hamdan Adnan 2011). The situation in Indonesia is not different, social media is such a powerful communication tool. Facebook and Twitter are the lead. At the moment Indonesia ranked third in the country with the most Twitter users in the world (A world of tweets.com 2011), and the number one for most Facebook users in the world (Alexa.com 2012). According to Ministry of Information and Communication Technology Indonesia (Kominfo 2011), Internet users have reached 55 million by December 2011. However, the development of social media can't be separated from the development of the Internet itself. Internet and social media closely related. It is because to access social media would require Internet access.

Indonesia is among countries with the largest social media users in the world (Ipsos 2012) and it is dominated by the younger generation, particularly students (Brown 2011). Based on Alexa (2012) Facebook become the largest social media in Indonesia. Socialbakers (2012) found that Indonesia ranked number four in the world's largest Facebook users with 49,948,800 users. Facebook users in Indonesia is dominated by the younger generation aged 18-24 by 21,477,984 users, followed by 25-34 years of age (Socialbakers 2012).

The popularity of social media is growing rapidly not only in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, but also spread to other provinces, such as Sumatra. In Jakarta, Facebook users reach 11,658,760 (Socialbakers 2012) and for Twitter, Jakarta has become Tweet highest contributor in the world, followed by Tokyo and London (detiki-Net 2012). Among the ten major cities with highest Tweets in Indonesia are Jakarta (16.33%), Yogyakarta (11.5%), Semarang (8.92%), Surabaya (8.21%), Malang (7.41%), Medan (7.25 %), Bali (6.01%), Riau (4.66%) and Palembang (3.62%) (IYAA.COM 2012).

In Indonesia, social media users such as Facebook or Twitter share ideas, cooperate, and collaborate to create a creative, thinking, arguing, find people who can become good friends, find a partner, and build a community. This community is according to their mutual interests and social media is the virtual place to gather them. With regard to social and political participation, university students are really aware about what is going on locally and globally and they are actively engage in political and social issue. As young voters, there are two key aspects that form the political review of young voters. First, the level of education and the second one is influence of social media (Ismail Saleh 2011). It means they are within the scope of influence of formal education before voting. Thus education is sharpening their intellectual acuity. With regard to education, social media like Twitter can be used as an educational tool to help engage students and to mobilize faculty into a more active and participatory role (Junco et al. 2010). It is because Twitter facilitated communication, engagement, and the democratization of roles and relationships in ways that may not have happened in the real world.

The social media has led to online participation as well. Social media has an impact on community participation in current issues. This includes active involvement on issues like social or political through blogs or online group. It also includes commenting on online news, articles, blogs, participate in online discussions, download or to spread news related to socio-political issues (Pewinternet 2009). The study by Umar (2012) found students are interested in religion, education and social issues rather than entertainment or celebrity. They are frequently commenting on these issues. Now to communicate with member of parliament even the president by simply using Twitter.

## **CONCLUSION**

Social media has become the world phenomenon. Social Media invites anyone interested to participate by contributing openly and share information in a fast and unlimited manner. Perceived ease of use, usefulness and social influence are among the factors that influence people in using social media which also can be predicted by Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989). Moreover, social media has significant impact not only in the terms of communication channel but also in other aspects of the users' life. It has become social networks which include sharing reviews, issues, problems, and solutions even in online

political participation. It is hoped that this paper contributes to the body of knowledge on new media adoption especially social media, and particularly useful for future research in this area.

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