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What is the motivation student of Iranians for using Facebook?

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Abstract

The growth and usage level of social network sites have become a global phenomenon. When the popularity of the Internet has increased worldwide, there have been various websites to be established and used all over the world. Especially Facebook has been very popular amongst the youth and the use of this website has been noticed among the different countries of the world. Users in Iran have different use of this social site although the Iranian government banned on Join to Facebook, way trend for Membership in this social networking is growing in Iran? This question was the main motivation for writing this article. This article examines the motives of Iran's membership in the social networks. Researcher have used survey and questionnaire tools for analyzing 400 Iranian student user of facebook, data results showed that the main motivations for Iranian student to use facebook was, information sharing, freedom of communication, free flow of information, control of information, principles of equality and require for information and Entertainment.

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1. Introduction

Social networking sites are designed to foster social interaction in a virtual environment. In general, communication is facilitated through information posted in the profile, which often includes a photograph of the member and personal information describing his or her interests, both of which provide information about one's identity. Members can view one another's profiles and can communicate through various applications similar to email or online message boards. Such interactions can potentially address many concerns of adolescence and emerging adulthood, such as the need for friendship and peer feedback.

Facebook.com originated in 2004 to facilitate social interaction exclusively among college students. The site now includes more than 800 million users and is available for use by anyone with a valid email address (Facebook, nd/no date). Facebook operates by allowing users to select one or more "networks" to which they will belong, such as a specific high school or university, a geographical area or city, or a company. Some networks, such as a university or a metropolitan area, may include thousands of members.

Each user maintains a "profile," which is a webpage containing basic information such as the individual's year of graduation and home town, as well as personal information, such as his or her name and whether he or she is single or in a relationship (i.e., "relationship status"). Users may inform others about what they are doing by changing the "current status" message that appears at the top of the profile. In addition, Facebook allows users to designate "friends." An individual who is invited to be a member's Facebook friend may either accept or reject the offer, thus providing individual control over one's list of friends.

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The user can control how much information to post and who can view this information by editing their privacy settings. Specific groups of people (a network or friends) may be granted limited access to specific parts of the profile.

Facebook members can upload digital pictures into virtual photo albums. A user can be “tagged” in these pictures so that his or her name appears in the caption as a link to his or her profile. If the individual does not want to be associated with the picture, he or she can “untag” it, thereby removing the name and the link (though this does not remove the picture). Members are able to post comments on photos, which appear as messages below the picture. Similarly, it is possible to post links to videos. Facebook is quickly becoming one of the most popular tools for social communication. Facebook is somewhat different from other Social Networking Sites because can attract audience in different culture and country.

The use of social media has diffused widely in society with recent statistical data showing high penetration rates (Lenhart, 2009; Lenhart & Madden, 2007a; Lenhart, Madden, Smith, & McGill, 2007; Madden, 2009; Statistics Canada, 2010). Social networking websites are virtual communities which allow people to connect and interact with each other on a particular subject or to just “hang out” together online (Murray & Waller, 2007).

Membership of online social networks has recently exploded at an exponential rate. For example, the market share of the top 20 social networking websites grew by 11.5 percent from January 2007 to February 2007, social network website activity accounted for 6.5 percent of all Internet traffic in February 2007 (Hitwise, 2007). Indeed, the popularity of social networking sites is highly demonstrable by the number of people using them. It is also measured by the amount of interactions per user taking place on the network.

Consequently, the popularity of Facebook amongst the youth has been noticed by the academicians and researchers and there have been mountains of studies which examine the use of Facebook in various ways. Understanding why students use online social networking sites, especially Facebook, is crucially important for the academic community as this use has a great impact on student motivation to learn, affective learning and classroom climate (Mazer, Murphy and Simonds, 2007; Tuncay & Uzunboylu, 2010). Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the motivation factors among students of Tehran University for using Facebook.

2. Method

2.1. Design of the research

This study adopted a quantitative research method.

2.1.1. Sampling

The data was collected at Tehran University during Year 2011. The age range of the participants was between 18 and 37 but most of them were at the age of 24. There were 396 participants in the study, 165 of them were male and 231 of them were female. Participations were 241 BA, 98 MA and 52 PH.D. And 5 of them did not mention their educational degree.

2.1.2. Instrument

The instrument was modified from the questionnaire prepared and used by. There were 20 items in 4 categories. All of the 4 categories designed for recognize main motivation for use facebook, these items consist of, free flow of information, control of information, principles of equality and require for information and Entertainment. In addition were added questions on educational degree, the field of study (humanistic science, engineering...), and monthly income.

2.1.3. Data Analysis

After the items of the questionnaire were gathered the questionnaire was analyzed and then finalized. The data was entered onto the computer by the researchers and analyzed by using the SPSS.

3. Results

3.1.1 Information sharing

This factor is major motivate of Iranian student for use facebook. The data analyses show that 40 percent of student use social network such as facebook because that help user to sharing their information, photos, multimedia and news between friends.

3.1.2. Freedom of communication

36/4 percent of participations told that facebook enable there to connect with all people in the world, to each person with each attitude and religion. About relationship criteria for user, data analyses showed for 60 percent of Iranian student, coreligionist is not important for select our accept friend, 71.4 percent of user told have common language never main for add a new friend, 56/3

percent of user told that have common political attitude for add a new friend or membership in new group is not important also 96 percent told that have similar commercial situation for add a new friend is not important for those.

3.1.3. Free flow of information and use facebook

Many members of this network (facebook) believe that new media such as social network site have not restrictions old media for instance one-way flow and use can crate content in this media and received feedback from their audience. In this study 40 percent of participators told that joint to facebook because this network has principals of free flow of information. On this topic significant different between men and woman's there was no. as regards Iranian government prohibit student to membership in this network and in some cases users faced with legal restriction, the tendency of students in Iran to this network can be quite reasonable in this case.

3.1.4. Social credit and use facebook

Social credit is a term that use in sociology to respect the difference between social groups or social status. For users in Iran joint to this network have social value. 22 percent of participators believed that facebook essentially is a venue for intellectual people and student class.

3.1.5. Entertainment and Using Facebook

Facebook provide some interesting applications for users. The most important of this applications is, photo sharing, wall wrote, comment in friend page, like photo or content of friend, sharing of contents, games, joint to different groups and quest of news and information. Between all applications that used by Iranian student, like content or photo friends most used applications (21.7 percent), other applications used inclusive, photo sharing 12.9, wall wrote 12.9, comment in friend page 15.2, sharing of contents 4.5, games 4.5, joint to different groups 4.3, and quest of news and information 4.3 percent.

4. Discussion and conclusion

After analyzed of results, we can some interesting results. We initial make content analyses of most important study about facebook in USA, Canada and England. Afterward we make Comparative Study between Iranian students and students in other countries about how to uses facebook in Iranian and another country. Interestingly when the results were analyzed, it can be easily seen that the participants in Iran less use of facebook for educational goals. In other hand most motivations of students for use facebook in most study in different country was: Time spent, Maintain previous relations, create new relationship, establishing personal identity and learning purposes. Because in Iran access to facebook have legal ban and government like China and Syria filter this social network site, student in Iran hardly can use of this site.

Most participators in this study told used facebook because enable them to free relationship, information sharing. Iranian user has sense with trust in this site, and can sharing content or pictures in facebook that not tendency do in Iranian site. Iranian students use facebook most for political goals or civic activities.

number of friend While can reflect that users have some form of acquaintance with people whom they have previously known offline, it can also reflect the most superficial type of relationship (i.e., weak ties) since it is common for users to solicit and establish friend status with the most barely acquainted people. Only teen students reported that her parents were a Facebook friend. The reasons for not wanting older adults, particularly parents, as friends appeared to be related to embarrassment, social norms, and worries about parents being exposed and made vulnerable. Facebook friends were generally peers of a similar age. Facebook appears to play an important role in helping students form and maintain social capital.

According to Ellison et al. (2007), Facebook helps to facilitate this by providing personal information about other people (via the profile pages), making visible a person's commonalities with other individuals, and thus enabling students to identify other students who might be useful in some capacity. On the whole, previous research suggests that students primarily spend between 10 and 60 min on Facebook per day majority of students (79% of 97 students) reported that they spent between 10 and 60 min on Facebook daily (Ross et al., 2009).

About 96% of 364 students logged onto Facebook from less than 10 min to 60 min every day (Stern & Taylor, 2007). Participants reported spending an average of 38.93 min on Facebook each day, with female students appearing to spend significantly more time on the network site than male students (Muis et al., 2009). The finding about students spending 10–60 min using Facebook a day suggests that Facebook does not seem to distract students very much from learning as far as time is concerned. Analyses of date show that no significant difference between men and woman's in number of friend, time spent, and degree of satisfaction. Generally, the results of past studies indicated that students had between 150 and 350 friends on Facebook, 70 percent of Iranian student in this research told that since become membership of facebook has increased number of friends.

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