

Learning Can Be Fun – Exploring the Intention to Use Social Media among University Students

Vimala Balakrishnan¹

¹ Faculty of Computer Science and Information Technology,
University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

^avimala.balakrishnan@um.edu.my

*Corresponding author

Keywords: Learning, social media, social media frequency, social media experience

Abstract. This paper investigates the use of social media among the youth, especially the perceptions of university students in using social media in learning. To be specific, the paper (i) explores the factors that may affect the use of social media in learning, (ii) investigates if age affects the use of social media in learning, and (iii) determines the social media intention to use predictors for social media experience and frequency. The objectives were accomplished by administering a self-report questionnaire survey which was prepared based on an integrated model – the Social Media Acceptance Model (SMAM). The final sample of students were 300 ($M_{age} = 25.9$, $SD_{age} = 4.28$). The data gathered were analysed using exploratory factor analysis, multivariate analysis and multiple regressions. Regression analysis revealed six significant factors that influence the use of social media in learning, that is, Self, ICT Infrastructure, Social Media Culture, Communication Functionalities, Effort/Influence, and Performance. Participants' age was found to significantly affect Self and Effort/Influence, with the older participants emphasizing more importance on Self and Effort/Influence than the younger ones. Multiple regression analysis revealed Performance to significantly predict social media frequency, indicating that the more benefits one obtains from using social media and the more flexible they are, the more time one spends in using the social media. Similarly, the analysis also revealed ICT Infrastructure and Self to be significant predictors for social media experience. This indicates that when the ICT infrastructure is available and reliable, more people tend to use social media in learning. Self also plays an important role whereby having positive attitude and confidence in using social media results in the participants to use more social media in learning. The findings of the study could prove to be beneficial to academics and also fellow researchers who are interested in using social media to teach or to promote the use of social media in learning. As age was found to affect the intention to use, different tailored approaches may be necessary in using the social media in learning.