RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATIONS OF USING FACEBOOK AND SELF-ESTEEM OF GIRNE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY'S STUDENTS

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-Abstract-

In recent years, social media has become popular in the virtual world. There are websites on the Internet where members or participants discuss about specific topics, share recent activities or upload photos or videos. Social media such as Facebook, Youtube, Twitter and Myspace are Internet based applications, and individuals use them in order to create and share content about their favorite topics. On the other hand, human beings have social needs and they look for different ways to gratify themselves during life time. Social media with a wide range of facilities have provided a sense of self-esteem which is one of the most important elements of human social needs. Since Facebook was ranked first as the most popular social networking sites in past years, and because of researchers personal experiences of observing the popularity of Facebook among Girne American University students, this study aimed at discovering the motivations behind using Facebook among students, finding out whether there is any significant correlation between a specific motivation and self-esteem or not. In order to do that, 120 undergraduate students participated in a survey study. They were selected by using probable sampling method. Data was collected by means of questionnaire and analyzed by Kendall's tau correlation coefficient. The results expanded previous studies which claim social networking sites may improve self-esteem of their users. The results showed that less self-esteem is related to share more activity, uploading photos and making new friends on Facebook, while no significant correlation was found between lack of self-esteem and discussing about personal problems on Facebook.

Key Words : *Social media, Human Needs, Facebook , Self-esteem, Girne American University*

Jel Classification : L86, D83

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1.Statement of the problem

Social media is surrounding many people all around the world, however, there is still little understanding about how and why different users get benefit from different types of online facilities. In other words, there should be reasons that made social media become relevant in people's lives. In education, politics, competition events, everybody benefits from different online services provided by different applications and tools. On the other hand, individuals tend to fulfill their different needs by means of different mediums.

Motivations differently drive social media goal pursuit, and users with different primary social media goals differ in perceptions of well-being. Improvements in technology allow people to satisfy their needs such as sociability and self-esteem (Hoffman & Novak, 2012). Basic human needs motivate individuals to attend particular mass media, and to select and use media messages in ways they find personally gratifying (Steinberg, 2006).

Thus, different given mediums, whether television, radio or the Internet, and a certain of messages such as sport events, business news and weather information, might be used by different individuals depending on particular needs they are seeking to satisfy. Self-esteem is one of those essential human needs that many theorists and scientists have emphasized on. Self-esteem refers to feelings and attitudes toward self (Mecca,1989), which may be positive or negative, and affected by environmental factors such as acceptance or rejection (Maestri & Profanter, 2017:133). So it is not strange if individuals try to utilize new technologies in order to have better feeling. Some social media's popularity can be understood through the fulfillment of certain needs of the users. This study tries to understand the relationship between using Facebook and self-esteem among undergraduate students of Girne American University in North Cyprus.

1.2.Purpose of the study

The main aim of this study is to investigate and compare different motivations of using Facebook among Girne American University students and their level of self-esteem. Another purpose of the study is to find out which motivations students have to use Facebook, and if there is any significant correlation between a specific motivation and students' self-esteem or not.

1.3.Hypotheses

Audience reception theory parallel with gratification model, help to understand why people use a specific media in specific ways. These approaches allow to have a better look at the ways social media (in this study, Facebook) are being used by specific users. The hypothesizes of this study are :

H1: There is a negative correlation between sharing activities on Facebook and self-esteem personality. The less self-esteem the more sharing activities on Facebook.

H2: There is a negative correlation between uploading personal photos on Facebook and self-esteem personality. The less self-esteem, the more uploading photo on Facebook.

H3: There is a negative correlation between making new friends on Facebook and self-esteem personality. The less self-esteem, the more making new friends.

H4: There is a negative correlation between discussing personal problems on Facebook and self-esteem personality. The less self-esteem, the more discussing about problems on Facebook.

1.4. Questions of the study

Main Questions :

-What are the motivations of using Facebook among Girne American University students?

-Is there any relationship between motivations of using Facebook and self-esteem personality among Girne American University students?

Related Questions :

-Is there any relationship between sharing activities on Facebook and self-esteem personality?

-Is there any relationship between uploading personal new photos on Facebook and self-esteem personality?

-Is there any relationship between making new friends on Facebook and self-esteem personality?

-Is there any relationship between discussing about personal problems on Facebook and self-esteem personality?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Our self-esteem, sense of belonging or emotional well-being, self-worth and health, are negatively influenced by isolation from social groups or activities. Connections built in social groups may have a positive influence on our health and mental wellness. On the other hand, teachers, parents, psychologists, and other individuals do efforts on finding ways to boost self-esteem needs, in order to gain many positive outcomes and benefits. In online age, where online activities may influence individuals in different ways, it is important to study different aspects of using social media and its effect or relationship with users' personality. It's important that experts understand how social media is related to young people's life, since it is young people's accepted priority medium of communication today. A study by Casale and Fioravanti (2015) showed that socially anxious people use social networking sites in order to self-present positively and to be assertive. So, the study of relationship between social media and human needs is useful to have clues about potential solution for some psychological disorders among youth.

The results of this study help academicians to find out if Facebook is a useful social media to increase the satisfaction of social needs among students or not. People use social media sites as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace to create and sustain relationships with others (Boyd and Ellison,

2007). So, popularity of using new media, especially among college students, makes it important to study different aspects of using them. It makes it possible for university consultants to be aware of potential of social media if they are a good source for information and news or solving students personal problems. Also few number of previous studies about social media and personality in North Cyprus was a main limitation to do this research, so it will enrich future knowledge about social media effects in real life of Northern Cyprus students.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Communication in 21th Century

We live in a century that communication can be done via different ways and technologies. Not only are we able to use traditional forms of communication such as telephone, television or radio, but also invention of new technologies like internet and smartphones has made it possible for individuals to be in touch with each other more than ever before. As Shute and Becker (2010) claim, new media practices has become so important in many aspects of social, political and economic life. In other words new communication technologies have provided some services as well as facilities that are effecting the individuals' life style, relationships and other activities. By increasing the number of smartphones, users are able to have an instant and real-time access to different online communities.

2.1.1. Popularity of social networking sites

Cambridge Dictionary defines social networking site as a website that is designed to help people communicate and share information, photographs, etc. with a group (Social Networking Site, n.d.). Everyday more and more users are forming communication and socialization in social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. Based on Alexa ranking, in recent years, top social networking sites include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Tumblr and Pinterest (The top 500 sites on the web, 2017).Many of social networking sites are free to use, and they provide a friendly place in which users are able to share different interests and given opportunity to meet new people. Establish online brands in marketing and reaching out potential customers can be considered as other reasons for popularity of social networking sites. With over 2.13 billion monthly active Facebook users in worldwide by the end of 2017, Facebook has been ranked the first popular social networking site (The Top 20 Valuable Facebook Statistics, 2018). The reasons may vary from the ease of sharing contents to high security and supporting business applications and games.

2.2. Mass media approaches

2.2.1. Uses and gratification approach

The theory claims that individuals communicate via messages according in a selective way in order to fulfill different needs like relaxation, access to information, or escape from worries and stress (Green et al, 2015). In other words, it focuses on how individuals use the media rather how media

use audiences. In his study, Lineberry (2012) found that college students tend to use social networking sites to share different activities in order to create bridge and bonding with other peers. Another study by Duff (2012) showed that Facebook has a huge impact on people's lives as some people go on it to heighten their self-esteem levels, insofar as they need to logging to it continuously. On the other hand, social media are considered as communication facilities that provide a place for sharing interest with others and to get entertained and sociable. Quanhasse and Young (2010) found that communication via instant messaging in different social networking application platforms, have been used among in order to develop relationship, and at the same time, Facebook were regarded as entertaining networking, where users could relax and have fun.

2.2.2. Audience Reception Theory

According to audience reception approach, audience is considered as an active and the audience user, who decides what to use with the text, instead of being used by that and do it for his/her own gratification or pleasure. In other words, since messages may have multiple meanings, receivers have different interpretations in accordance to their cultural context. As Fourie (2006) claims, reception theory rejects any ideas of passive viewers being dominated by powerful texts, Vice versa, media use is a process of negotiation between readers and text. In other words, when we use reception theory to investigate readers, we investigate theoretically and empirically the process of interpretation. During Arab spring in 2011 in some countries like Egypt and Tunisia, social networking sites specially Twitter and Facebook, played an important role to make protests closer to each other. Young men and women with smartphones, could find a sense of belongingness in social media by informing each other about the last news and the next meet up for arranging rallies (The truth about Twitter, Facebook and the uprisings in the Arab world, 2011).

2.3. Self-esteem

According to William James, self-esteem as the feeling of self-worth that derives from the ratio of our actual successes to our pretensions (as cited in Carr, 2004). Esteem needs is considered as the basis for human desire and help to have a sense of acceptance by others. Maslow (1943) emphasizes that individuals tend to fulfill self-esteem need in order to have a sense of self-respect and finally achieve self-actualization. People with low levels of self-esteem may try different ways to boost it, these practices may include getting help from psychological counseling or paying more attention to their appearance. By invention of new technologies in communication, individuals have found new ways to satisfy themselves. A recent study by Ingólfsdóttir (2017) indicates that spending a lot of time on social media can impact adolescents' self-esteem, especially among girls who suffer from lacking of that. Having a good level of self-esteem, help individuals feel more secure and consequently more worthwhile. So, it is important to know and discover possible ways or situations which lead to have a better self-esteem.

3. METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional study is used in this research. A self-administered questionnaire distributed to 120 undergraduate students by means of probable sampling. Descriptive analysis such as frequency and percentages and bivariate was used in order to analyze the results. Students were asked about their self-esteem and motivations of using Facebook. Kendall tau coefficient was used to examine the correlation between variables. Cronbach' s Alpha coefficient wasused for reliability: Alpha for questions related to self-esteem was out to be 0.755, which is acceptable.

3.1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 displays the variables that have been investigated in the study. Self-esteem was considered as an independent variable, while sharing activities on Facebook, uploading new photos on Facebook, making new friends on Facebook and discussing personal problems on Facebook were dependent variables.
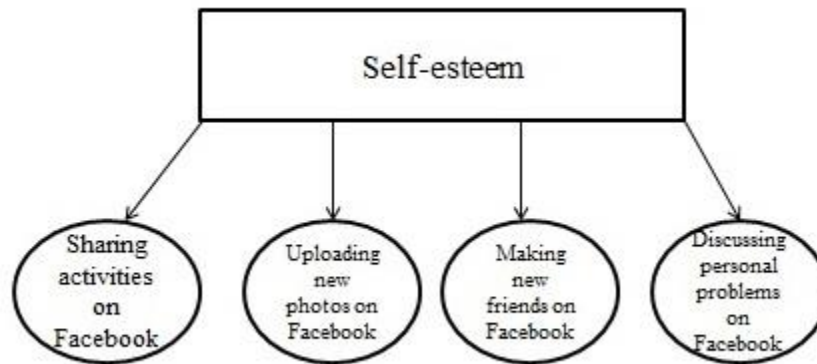

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

4. FINDINGS AND EVALUATION

55% of men and 45% of females participated in the study. Majority of them were between 21 to 24 years old. 60% of students had high self-esteem, while 11% of them had low self-esteem personality. Motivations of using Facebook by GAU students were :

- Sharing latest activities,
- Uploading personal new photos,
- Commenting ideas,
- Making new friends,
- Discussing about personal problems ,
- Activity in social or political groups,

- Getting latest news of friends and university, and
- Staying in touch with old friends.

Majority of students claimed that they never used Facebook in order to make new friends, while staying in touch with old friends was the major motivation to use Facebook. The results are similar to another study on 364 university students by Stern and Taylor, found out that very few numbers of students tend to make initiate a relationship with new people in Facebook (as cited in Farrugia, 2014). The findings are also close to the study by Beheshtikashi and Makki (2013) that claimed students tend to use social networking sites in order to participate in discussions and share activities and opinions with peers.

The current study revealed that students with low self-esteem tend to use Facebook for sharing activities, uploading their new photos and making new friends on Facebook more than others. Results of this study show that human beings can be considered as active audience when they choose to use specific media with specific motivation. Self-esteem, which is considered as one of the most important social needs of human beings according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow,1943), is related with motivations of using Facebook. Online communities provide flexible types of sociability which allow students to access to a certain type of medium to help them to boost their low levels of self-esteem. Girne American University's students with lower self-esteem prefer to engage in sharing activities, uploading their personal photos and making new friends on Facebook more than others. According to self-affirmation theory, people tend to involve in activities that help their needs to be affirmed by means of being valued by others (Furey, 2014). Receiving statements such as "you are so beautiful" in comments, or being tagged by Facebook friends by the title "my best friend and me" , increases the sense of connectedness as well as self-representation. Individuals may find some certain social media tools (like Facebook), and decide what to do with and how to use it in order to gratify their needs. This approach to social media has been well explained in uses and gratification theory, which claims that individuals actively choose media, based on the media's ability to satisfy different categories of needs including social integrative needs associated with communicating with family and friends (Blumler and Katz, 1974; Palmgreen, Wenner, and Rosenberg, 1985; Eldon, 2013). On the other hand, many of social media users, based on their socio-cultural background, are able to interpret the meanings behind each message, whether a text or an audiovisual content. As audience reception theory claims that audience in the moment of receiving a certain message, interpret the context of their own values, opinions and experiences (Hall, 1980; Fourie, 2001). So, individuals make sense to different messages, and it enables them to satisfy their needs of belongingness, as well as boosting self-esteem. The results expanded previous studies which claim social networking sites may improve self-esteem of their users.

As it can be seen in Table1 , 22.5 % of students are from 16 to 20 years old, 49.2 % of students are from 21 to 24 years old, and 28.3 % of students are from 24-30 years old. According to this data, the majority of participants are between 21-24 years old.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of participants age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-20	27	22.5	22.5	22.5
	21-24	59	49.2	49.2	71.7
	24-30	34	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Source : Tabrizi : 2013 : 53.

As it can be seen in Table 2, from total of 120 students, 67 of them are male and 53 of them are female. In other words, 55,8 % are male and the other 44.2 % are female.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of participants gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-20	27	22.5	22.5	22.5
	21-24	59	49.2	49.2	71.7
	24-30	34	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Source : Tabrizi : 2013: 52.

As it can be seen in Table 3, 11.7 % of students have low self-esteem, 28.3 % of them have medium self-esteem and 60 % of them have high self-esteem.

Table 3 : Frequency and percentage of participants self-esteem

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	low	14	11.7	11.7	11.7
	medium	34	28.3	28.3	40.0
	high	72	60.0	60.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Source : Tabrizi : 2013 : 58.

The data in Table 4 show that the large number of students claimed that they never make new friends from same sex or opposite sex on Facebook, while staying in touch with old friends is a motivation that students always do it on Facebook. The hypotheses that claimed there is a significant correlation between the level of self-esteem of Girne American University students and making new friends on Facebook, has been confirmed. Also, another two hypotheses which claimed there is significant correlation between the level of self-esteem of Girne American University students and uploading new photos and sharing activities on Facebook have been approved. However, the hypotheses which claimed there is a significant correlation between the level of self-esteem of Girne American University student and discussing about problems on Facebook is rejected.

Table 4 : Statistics of participants' motivations of using Facebook

		Share activity	Upload new photos	Comment new ideas	Making new friends	Discussing about problems	Getting news and info	Staying in touch with friends	Activities in groups
N	Valid	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mode		2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		.61812	.72176	.77564	.73902	.61060	.67317	.63063	.72394

Source : Tabrizi : 2013: 69.

Data in Table 5 indicate as the ratings for self-esteem decrease, the ratings for share activities increase. So, the first hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5 : Correlations between self-esteem and sharing activities on Facebook

			Self esteem	share activity
Kendall's tau_b	Self esteem	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.160*
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.031
		N	120	120
	Share activity	Correlation Coefficient	-.160*	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.031	.
		N	120	120

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Source : Tabrizi : 2013 : 70.

Data in Table 6 , indicate as the ratings of self-esteem decrease, the ratings of uploading new photos increase. So, the second hypothesis is accepted.

Table 6 : Correlation between self-esteem and uploading new photos on Facebook

			Self esteem	upload new photos
Kendall's tau_b	Self esteem	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.392**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.000
		N	120	120
	upload new photos	Correlation Coefficient	-.392**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.
		N	120	120

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed). Source : Tabrizi : 2013: 72.

As it can be seen in Table 7, Girne American University students claimed that the less they have self-esteem personality, the more they make new friends on Facebook. So, the third hypothesis is accepted. Lack of self-esteem may cause problems with how people interact with others and how they manage new relationships in real life. They are often introverted, and may prefer to boost their self-esteem by trying virtual areas. Results are close to another study at Cornell University, which claims looking at Facebook, where we all tend to put our best digital foot forward, appears to provide a quick ego boost (facebook-walls-boost-self-esteem-finds-study, 2011). Also according to Ellison et al (2007) the use of Facebook is beneficial in terms of making friends, as it helps to increase the sense of well-being among college students.

Table 7 : Correlation between self-esteem and making new friends on Facebook

			Self esteem	making new friends
Kendall's tau_b	Self esteem	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.430**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.000
		N	120	120
	Making new friends	Correlation Coefficient	-.430**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.
		N	120	120

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

 Source : Tabrizi : 2013 : 76.

According to Table 8, results show that there is no correlation between self-esteem and discussing about personal problems in Facebook among Girne American University students. So, the fourth hypotheses is rejected. Reasons may vary from lacking of trust in virtual area or not having a sustainable relationship with friends or not seeing Facebook a place to get beneficial advices.

Table 8 : Correlations between self-esteem and discussing about personal problems on Facebook

			Self esteem	Discussing about problems
Kendall's tau_b	Self esteem	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.121
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.081
		N	120	120
	Discussing about problems	Correlation Coefficient	-.121	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.081	.
		N	120	120

Source : Tabrizi : 2013: 77.

5. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study investigated the relationship between motivations of using Facebook and self-esteem of Girne American University students. Results approved the hypotheses which claimed that the less self-esteem is related to more sharing activities, uploading photos and making new friends on Facebook. People always seek to fulfill essential needs through different ways. users can send and receive messages, present themselves on their own profile page and engage with like-minded people in community groups Results showed that Girne American University students tend to use Facebook as an appropriate way to present themselves and affirm an important aspects of their self to provide a positive image among their friends, which may help them to increase their self-esteem. The study didn't approve the hypothesis which claimed that the less self-esteem is related to discuss about personal problems on Facebook. Increasing the number of Facebook users – especially among youth and students- every day, the results of this study can be a used an idea for parents and lecturers to develop online facilities and opportunities for students who suffer from lacking of self-esteem. While likes, comments, and followers can raise or break the users' mood or self-esteem and individual may try to seek a kind of validation via social networking sites, the case of Girne American University students showed that Facebook has provided a virtual place for them in which they might satisfy self-esteem needs with different online activities. Lacking of relevant academic resources that can be accessed from Northern Cyprus was the main limitation of the study. Time restrictions that resulted in smaller sample size and limited findings was another

considerable limitation. Future studies may focus on a larger number of students in Northern Cyprus, investigate other factors such as belonging or self-actualization needs that might be related to social media use. Further studies also may try to explore different aspects of self-esteem from real world to virtual ones, and discover if social media have the ability to boost human needs only in virtual communications or in face-to-face communication as well.

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