

Facebook usage pattern among rural youths of 1Malaysia Wireless Village

Hamizah Sahharon, Jusang Bolong, Siti Zobidah Omar, Hayrol Azril
Mohamed Shaffril

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i3/3935>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i3/3935

Received: 21 Feb 2018, Revised: 17 Mar 2018, Accepted: 21 Mar 2018

Published Online: 24 Mar 2018

In-Text Citation: (Sahharon, Bolong, Omar, & Shaffril, 2018)

To Cite this Article: Sahharon, H., Bolong, J., Omar, S. Z., & Shaffril, H. A. M. (2018). Facebook usage pattern among rural youths of 1Malaysia Wireless Village. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(3), 374–394.

Copyright: © 2018 The Author(s)

Published by Human Resource Management Academic Research Society (www.hrmars.com)

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this license may be seen

at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

Vol. 8, No. 3, March 2018, Pg. 374 - 394

<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/IJARBSS>

JOURNAL HOMEPAGE

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/publication-ethics>

Facebook usage pattern among rural youths of 1Malaysia Wireless Village

¹Hamizah Sahharon, ¹Jusang Bolong, ²Siti Zobidah Omar,
²Hayrol Azril Mohamed Shaffril

¹Faculty of Modern Language and Communication, ²Institute for Social Science Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Email: hamisahharon@gmail.com, jusang@upm.edu.my, zobidah@upm.edu.my,
majudesadesa@gmail.com

Abstract

The aim of this study is to discover the pattern of Facebook usage among the rural youths of 1Malaysia Wireless Village in Malaysia. Technology Acceptance Model and the Theory of Social Categorization were used to further explain their Facebook usage and the benefits of Facebook functionality in attaining a virtual community among rural youths to make them feel social bonding. This study is quantitative in nature and a survey method was adopted by using a questionnaire to collect the data. Results show that rural youths would continuously use multiple platforms to get connected to Facebook. The rural youths of 1Malaysia Wireless Village have a high Facebook usage acceptance and have frequently used the five main Facebook functionalities; such as group, conversation, sharing, identity and reputation to sustain their interpersonal relationships between close and distant friends. Several recommendations were made to ensure positive utilization of Facebook in enhancing the social context of rural youths' social interaction.

Keywords: Facebook Functionality Usage, Technology Acceptance Model, Theory of Social Categorization, Community Building, Virtual Community, Interpersonal Relationship.

Introduction

Malaysia's communications and multimedia industry have been evolving into a modern commerce. With the era of global digitization, the use of modern technologies is more spread among the society, even among rural communities. Nowadays even the rural community, especially among youths, have realized the benefits of modern gadgets. Modern gadgets grant them access to the internet, making communication and information exchange easier. As a result, social media usage is proliferated and makes it easier for them to feel socially included with the urbanites. However, living in the rural has drawbacks in terms of technology infrastructure and family socio-economy. Some youths cannot afford monthly internet subscriptions; therefore, the

Malaysian government established 1Malaysia Wireless Village Programme in 2011 with the support from Universal Service Provision (USP). The provision of internet and the diffusion of innovation as mentioned by Abu Samah et al. (2015), could aid in rural empowerment as the community's awareness of self-development is high, however, their knowledge regarding community building was still low. Scholars have suggested that the use of technology could benefit rural youths in community building and social bonding.

Malaysia Wireless Village Establishment

By the end of the year 2013, there were a total of 4,808 1Malaysia Wireless Villages planted across the Malaysia peninsular and the Borneo (Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission/MCMC, 2014). Although 1Malaysia Wireless Village has a lot to offer rural development, albeit very few to no existing studies is done on its' community, up to date the benefits of such program still remain unclear (Sahharon et al. 2014). Zukefli & Sulaiman (2009) highlighted that about 80% of Internet users find the Internet as a medium for communication, able to share ideas, and to communicate with people who are located elsewhere. Noticeably, past studies by Abdul Razak (2009), Ibrahim & Ainin (2009), Abu Samah et al. (2013), and Bolong (2011), insinuated that the common use of the internet were mostly due to information searching and exchanging amongst fellow internet users through social media for social bonding as it encourages information sharing between friends, and improved their community foundation by overcoming distance barriers when communicating. The Internet helps to sharpen users' knowledge and encourage information-sharing with their online friends (Abu Samah. B, Badsar, M., Abu Hassan, M., Osman, N. & Mohamed Shaffril, H. A., 2013). Casual connections through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and so on have widened their connections with the outside world.

Social Bonding through Virtual Community

Computer-mediated communications (CMC) can provide for the formation and functioning of communities. When mentioning CMC systems, the term "community" is sometimes used to refer to tightly knit social groups. Most scholars have studied the use of Facebook from a sociological approach, identifying the sense of community in the relationship between members within a social network (Ellison et al., 2007; Baron, 2008; Papacharissi, 2011; Yus, 2011, Balakrishnan & Shamim, 2013).

Purpose of Study

Up to this day, past studies on Facebook usage in Malaysia were mainly focused on urban Facebook usage has been positively related to several desired outcomes for social bonding (such as sense of identity, the rural youth's Facebook usage pattern has the potential to increase their sense of social categorization to create a knowledgeable, competitive, integrity and moral strength, attitude within the mentality of the rural youths, which in turn mobilizes their creativity and innovations. Both are an achievement of foremost quality for a community, which ensure that the populace have a high stance and integrated spiritual association with the community (Heiberger & Harper, 2008; Aziz, Salleh and Ribu, 2010).

Theoretical Background

The Malaysian National Strategic Framework of Bridging Digital Divide listed three main issues related to the applications of ICT which relate to the access, the adoption and the value of using ICT among Malaysians. The emergence of new media is a development booster for self-identity or. Hence, a virtual community can be made based on the ability to reach each other socially, which ultimately depends on the social interaction that individuals create and not on sheer technological features. Nowadays, given that the new generation considers Facebook as a social tool to sustain the relationship they have established with their offline friends and families and to feel like they belong to the community. The level of their Facebook acceptance must be studied to determine in what way they perceived the medium as useful for their social networking through Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

Theory of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM was established via Davis's doctoral degree in 1989 in which he developed to explain the influence of Information System (IS) usage. This view on information technology acceptance has been used as a theory in previous studies to identify the degree of beliefs an individual has over a system in enhancing their job performance (Davis 1989). This model has the potential to predict potential Information System (IS) by measuring user's beliefs towards the system after being exposed (Davis, 1993; Wixom and Todd, 2005). Former studies have found that Perceived Usefulness (PU) was a most influential predictor of technology usage than Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) (Burton-Jones & Hubona, 2006; Porter & Donthu, 2006). According to Davis (1989), an individual adopts a new technology mainly because of the functionalities offered, rather than because it is easy to use. Accordingly, users tend to overcome difficulties in using new technology if the benefits of usage are substantive. Moreover, Burton-Jones and Hubona (2006) found that TAM significantly and had consistently been better at predicting frequency than volume of usage, which is contrary to the normally accepted assumption. Overall view, TAM can be used to explain functionality is frequently used based on its usefulness and the resulting frequency of use. Therefore, creating the research question:

RQ: In what way can Technology Acceptance Model be used to explain the frequency of Facebook usage among rural youths?

Theory of Self-categorization

Theory of self-categorization is a cognitive social identity extension model. This theory explains the awakening of personal identity; Turner et al. (1987) claimed that categorization process is dynamic as it emerges based on social influences and conformity, which explains the extent of their social differences. Individuals would only perceive a high level of fit if the level of distinction amplifies perceived inter-category differences and reduces intra-category differences within their virtual community. In this case, the use of social media becomes a platform for the rural youths to perceive that they belong to a community. Being a part of the community may influence trust within a virtual community; emotional attachment to it could be more of an important factor to the community formed upon this perception of similarity, which is why most youths prefer to join an online group. Just as Turner (2010) argued, an individual self-categorizes based on his similarities to those in the groups (group joined within the social media) they identify with and the dissimilarities to others in different groups.

Facebook Usage

Youth users, especially, find Facebook usage as leisure due to its wide social media functionality platform encompassing the seven building blocks (refer to figure 1). Kietzmann et al. (2011) depicted that the seven building block functions as an interactive support for social media users, which involves sharing of personal and up-to-date information, active responses between each member and grouping identity. In understanding the various forms of social media ecology (refer to Figure 1), different social media activities are characterized by the extent of usage for the availability of the seven building blocks, namely; identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups (Kietzmann et al., 2011).

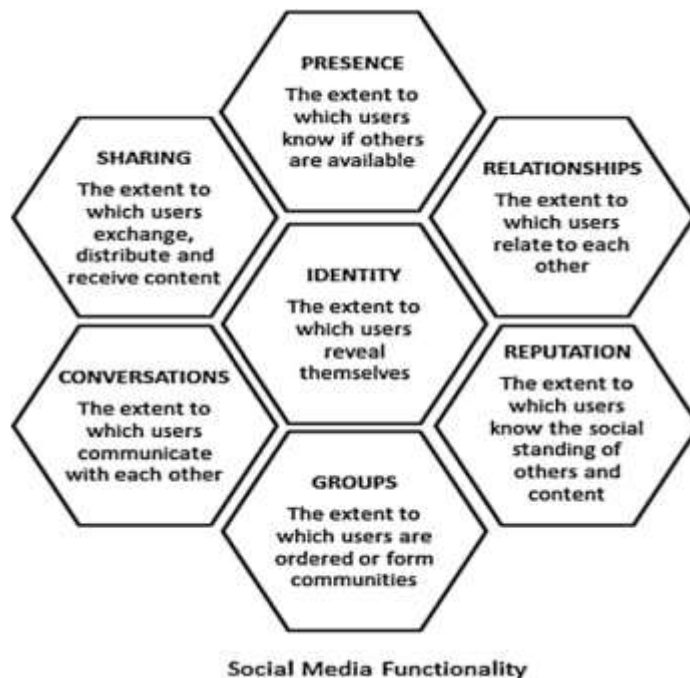


Figure 1: Honeycomb framework of Social Media building block functionalities (Kietzmann et al., 2011)

Facebook also offers long term social support for people with lower self-esteem (Butt & Phillips, 2008; Ross, Arseneault, Simmering & Orr, 2009, Indian & Grieve, 2014) this kind of people tend to spend more time and have a stronger emotional connection to Facebook (Kalpidou, Costin & Morris, 2011). The intensity in Facebook usage serves as a social connectedness for its highly engaged users, providing individuals with social information that is critical for exploiting the technical ability to maintain relationships and perceived social capital but only to the number of actual friends (Ellison et al., 2011). In a study on the uses of Facebook for self-disclosure behaviour by Mazer et al., (2007) and Hollenbaugh & Ferris (2014), impact on depth, breadth, and amount of user self- disclosure can contribute to the level of one's self-esteem and social bonding. Nonetheless Sheldon et al.'s (2011) study found that being offline for 48 hours could reduce the feeling of connection, but not detached during this period, and that being offline (but not less connected) during this period could increase Facebook usage when they have a free period.

There have been several studies done on Facebook usage using Uses & Gratification Theory to identify the motives for Facebook use and significant predictors of Facebook use however not many were done using TAM theory to explain the frequency of usage. Motives for Facebook use were proven to be mostly due to interpersonal motives, relationship maintenance, to pass time, virtual community, develop new relationship, entertainment, it was in trend, companionship, sharing daily activities, self-disclosure and more (Mazer, Murphy & Simonds, 2007; Joinson, 2008; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Sheldon, 2008; Sheldon, Abad, & Hirsch, 2011; Smock, Ellison, Lampe & Wohn, 2011; Hunt, Atkin & Krishnan, 2012; Tosun, 2012; Special & Li-Barber, 2012; Yang & Brown, 2013). Therefore, this study will take the initiative to study the level of Facebook user's perceived Facebook usage through Technology Acceptance Model.

Due to inconsistencies of findings from previous studies on TAM regarding their prediction in measuring user's belief in the usefulness of a system, this study wanted to determine the frequency of Facebook usage through TAM. This theory can help clear out the purpose of utilizing technology; hence it is indispensable to distinguish whether they perceive information technology useful as a medium and whether it is easy to apply. The functionalities of social media can facilitate long distance interpersonal relationship or current dialogue exchanges without barrier, it is likely that users may perceive it as useful and frequently use it to socially categorize themselves in order to feel belongingness (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). While Facebook is undergoing a rapid diffusion process, it is important to monitor not only by what means the users use it as a new medium, but also in what way potential users perceive Facebook as useful and easy to use compared to other social sites. Therefore, the study used Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to identify the Facebook acceptance among the rural youths in Malaysia.

Methodology

A quantitative method was used in this study with a target sample of 400 1Malaysia Wireless Village rural youth users. As a quantitative approach, by applying the Social Categorization Theory and Technology Acceptance Model, this study will measure the perceived usefulness of Facebook usage pattern. The positive use of Facebook is said to improve users' social identity or self-categorization and make them feel more involved with their online members through digitization activities. The purpose of using a survey method was due to avoiding researcher bias.

Sampling

A multi-stage cluster sampling was applied. Sixteen 1Malaysia Wireless Villages were chosen for its clear community structure based on the Universal Service Provider and Malaysia Communications and Multimedia Commission's website. Each 1Malaysia Wireless Village location was chosen based on the parliamentary area for each state. The locations chosen were Kampung Seberang Ramai, Kampung Titi Tampang, Kampung Seberang Alor and Kampung Hujung Tanjung to represent Perlis; Kampung Larong, Felda Titi, Kampung Seperi and Taman Bukit Kempas to represent Negeri Sembilan; Sabak, Kampung Batu 38, Taman Muhibah and Kampung Haji Dorani to represent Selangor; Kampung Bukit Kuang, Kampung Darat Kijal, Kampung Geliga and Teluk Kalong to represent Terengganu.

The population of this study encompasses social media users aged between 15-40 years old, this is because youth generation is where ICT is highly consumed. The sampling technique was employed in this study for its cost efficiency and suitability to survey the communities within a

given geographical area. The data collection procedure was conducted through self-administered questionnaires inspected by trained enumerators including the researcher. For every state, around 100 respondents were chosen as an examined populace, consequently a sum of 400 respondents from sixteen 1Malaysia villages had contributed to the data of this study.

Analysis

SPSS was used to analyse descriptive statistics. The use of quantitative method in this study was to evaluate numerical evidence to the effect of social phenomena based on empirical observation (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, it was fitting to measure rural youths' Facebook acceptance and Facebook functionality usage using a four-point Likert scale.

Measurement Scale

To measure Facebook Conversation, Identity, and Sharing functionality usage, a four-point scale was used; 1 indicating never use the function until 4 indicating a high frequency of the function usage, whereas for Facebook Reputation and Group functionality usage, a four-point scale indicated 1 as strongly disagree until 4 indicating strongly agree was utilized.

The survey has three parts; demography, Perceived Usefulness (PU) of Facebook functionality usage, and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) of Facebook functionality usage. Items under factors of Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Use of Facebook Usage were stimulated from TAM theory by Burton-Jones & Hubona (2006). The items for PU were assessed on a 4-point Likert-type scales such as Very useless to Very useful, meanwhile the items for PEOU were assessed on a 4-point Likert-type scales such as Very difficult to Very easy.

Results

Demography

Based on the frequency of distribution of the sampled population (refer to Table 1), the majority of 1Malaysia Wireless Village active Facebook users consist of young adults who were Malays (98.3%) with slightly more males (58%) than females (42%). Most respondents were aged between 15 to 20 years old (76.8%) with a mean of 19.15. As previously mentioned, Facebook is a Social Networking Website (Web 2.0) that has become one of the most popular means of communication among Malaysian in 2006 (Abdul Razak, 2009). By 2012, Facebook had an estimated of 13, 589, 520 subscribers out of 20,140,125 internet users in Malaysia (Argaez, 2014). Youth notably are heavy users of ICT because they are the age group community that has been actively applying new media as a medium for social networking; to gain more contacts, to develop interpersonal relationships, and youth positive development (Abdul Razak 2009; Ibrahim & Ainin, 2009; and Bolong 2011; Sharifah Sofiah et al., 2011; Abu Samah et al., 2013).

Table 1: Frequency of distribution of the sampled population (n=400)

Variables	Frequency	%	Mean	SD
Gender				
Male	232	58		
Female	168	42		
Race				
Malay	393	98.3		
Chinese	4	1		
Indian	3	0.8		
Others				
Age (years)				
15-20	307	76.8	19.15	4.80
21-30	72	18.0		
31-40	21	5.3		

Online Friends

Pertaining to their Facebook profile, the respondents have mostly befriended people from school (95.5%), village (65.4%), and family (59.5%). Through these categories of friends, it was clear that Facebook was mainly used to maintain interpersonal relationship between face-to-face friends (refer to Table 2).

Usually, individuals do not look for strangers or add strangers to their social networking site network (Subrahmanyam, Reich, Waechter & Espinoza, 2008). The mean number of friends they prefer to chat with at once was $M=4.58$, which portrayed the intimacy of a small group discussion as the smaller quantity of people there is, the more you can control and contribute to the topic being discussed (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Then again, about 46.8% of the respondents have less than 500 friends on Facebook, while the rest have at least 500 to 2001 friends on Facebook (53.2%). Similarly, Balakrishnan and Shamim (2013) study on Facebook usage showed that these users would add up to 1987 people as friends, but on average, Malaysian youth have 612 friends on Facebook. This fact was not new since Park et al. (2011) claimed that a typical Facebook user would add more than a thousand of friends given that people might not seek deep relationships but to maintain existing ones through Facebook.

Nadkarni and Hofmann (2012) stated that a study by Seder and Oishi (2009) found that a network of homogenous people would form a more supportive connection easily as they are joined by people who are perceived to be similar to them. In line with this, Xiang et al. (2010) also found that although a user may have hundreds of friends, due to resource constraints they will likely resort to communicate more frequently with stronger friends than acquaintances.

Table 2: The frequency of distribution of the rural youth's Facebook member background

Variables	Frequency	%
Member's race		
Malay	395	98.8
Chinese	54	13.5
Indian	22	5.5
Others		
Type of friends		
School friends	382	95.5
Village friends	261	65.3
Family	238	59.5
New friends	213	53.3
Friends from neighbouring village	126	31.5
Urban friends	125	31.3
Colleagues	102	25.5

Facebook Usage Access

Regarding their Facebook accessing activity (refer to Table 3), the majority (87.5%) of them accessed Facebook from home and would surf the free internet around 1Malaysia Wireless Village Hotspot (35.5%) if they did not have a personal data plan. Given that the respondents were mainly students aged between 15-20 years old, they would spend most of their time at home compared to other places in their village. Out of 400 respondents, about 386 of them subscribed to a personal data plan, they mainly subscribed to the two strongest service providers in Malaysia: Maxis (56.5%), and Celcom (38.8%). However, only 14 (3.6%) of them could not afford a personal data plan as they were mainly students without regular income, therefore, to have a free internet access via 1Malaysia Wireless Village hotspot was a convenient solution for students who wanted to keep connected socially and for daily tasks. Approximately most of them (90.5%) would open Facebook through their smart phones, PC (54%), and personal laptop (36.8%). This finding indicates that these users would use several channels to continue their Facebook access, especially when the majority owned a smart phone with provided internet access; Malaysian youth could access Facebook anytime and anywhere (Balakrishnan and Shamim, 2013).

Cell phone use is on the rise among youth. An internet research study by Lenhart et al. (2005) reported that approximately 33% of teens not only have a cell phone, but consecutively texting on the regular basis. Facebook, for example, is a computer-mediated social media that offers socio-structural functions such as companionship, social support, exchange of information and a sense of belonging that links individuals from different neighbourhoods, states and countries (Erwin et al., 2004; Wellman & Gulia, 1999).

Haythornthwaite (2005) counteract by claiming that using Facebook to maintain relationship with close friends does not contribute to perceptions of social categorization, instead it was the use of media multiplicity with a variety of channels for communicating.

Table 3: The distribution of Facebook usage access (n=400)

Variables	Frequency	%
Facebook usage locations		
Home	350	87.5
1Malaysia Wireless Village Hotspot	142	35.5
Cyber café	136	34.0
Eatery	102	25.5
Study place	77	19.3
Workplace	72	18.0
Service provider		
Maxis	226	56.5
Celcom	155	38.8
Digi	69	17.3
U-Mobile	18	4.5
None	14	3.5
Gadgets used to access Facebook		
Smart phone	362	90.5
Computer (PC)	216	54.0
Personal laptop (netbook)	147	36.8
iPad/iPod	51	12.8
Type of groups joined		
Family/School/Community/Village	239	59.8
Hobby/ Interests	161	40.3

Distribution of Friends on Facebook

In addition to understanding their Facebook usage, a smaller group of friends could result in more cooperative and cohesive group members (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). For the respondents of this study, it was clear that they preferred to chat with a small number of friends less than 10 at once (refer to Table 4). The mean number of friends they preferred to chat with at once was $M=4.58$, which portrayed the intimacy of a small group discussion as the smaller quantity of people there is, the more you can control and contribute to the topic being discussed (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Then again, about 46.8% of the respondents have less than 500 friends on Facebook, while the rest have at least 500 to 2001 friends on Facebook (53.2%). Similarly, Balakrishnan and Shamim (2013) study on Facebook usage showed that these users would add up to 1,987 people as friends, but on average, Malaysian youth have 612 friends on Facebook.

Table 4: The distribution and the average amount of friends on Facebook (n=400)

Variables	Frequency	%	Mean	SD
The number of friends to chat at once			4.58	4.04
1-10	375	93.8		
11-20	22	5.5		
21-25	3	.80		
Number of friends on Facebook			1144.31	1243.54
1-500	187	46.8		
501-1000	83	20.8		
1001-2000	68	17.0		
>2001	62	15.5		

Facebook usage pattern

As part of Web 2.0 principles, Facebook is a participatory platform where users can add information or modify the information already online, for example, a user can tag names of the people in the uploaded pictures and even add a description below the picture. Facebook makes it socialization more of leisure to keep in touch with offline networks. The typical user spends more than 20 minutes daily and logs on at least once a day (Ellison et al. 2007).

The average hours of Facebook usage per day among the respondents were between 1 to 3 hours (88%), followed by 4-6 hours (7.5%) and at max of more than 7 hours (4.5%) during school or work days (refer to Table 5). It is only normal since most respondents were still in school. This finding was in line with Mustaffa et al. (2011) and Balakrishnan and Shamim (2013) study on Malaysian youth's Facebook usage pattern. The study found that Facebook has become a part of the Malaysian youth's daily activities and students in Malaysia would spend at least more than 3 hours a day, while logging in several times of the day. Then, during the weekends and during the school holidays or the semester holidays there was a rise in the hour of Facebook usage.

Table 5: The distribution of hours spent on Facebook (n=400)

Variables	Frequency	%
Average hours of Facebook usage during school days/work days		
1-3 hours	352	88.0
4-6 hours	30	7.5
7> hours	18	4.5
Average hours of Facebook usage during weekends		
1-3 hours	226	56.5
4-6 hours	129	32.3
7> hours	45	11.3
Average hours of Facebook usage during school holidays (late/mid/)/semester holidays		
1-3 hours	217	54.3
4-6 hours	118	29.5
7> hours	65	16.3

Facebook Acceptance

Facebook acceptance refers to the agreement of which users perceive Facebook usage as easy to use and useful. A high mean score (max = 4.0) would show a high level of agreement on the ease of use and useful, whereas a low mean score (min = 1) would show they strongly disagree with the statement regarding the ease of use and usefulness of Facebook.

The rural youths perceived Facebook as useful for strengthening the relationship with their distant friends and close friends, to share knowledge, and its usage facilitates communication between faraway friends (refer to Table 6). Overall, they highly agreed that Facebook usage has been useful to strengthen and sustain social bonding among close and distant friends (M=3.29). Similarly, Abu Samah et al. study (2013) also found that internet usage within rural areas have aroused community building among its online users, this was due to their sharing and exchanging of information relevant to human resources and their community.

Table 6: The mean for perceived usefulness of Facebook usage

Perceived usefulness of Facebook usage items	Mean	SD
Strengthen relationship between distant friends	3.51	.613
Strengthen relationship between close friends	3.46	.647
Share knowledge	3.44	.626
Facilitates communication between distant friends	3.43	.668
Accelerates the two-way communication process	3.27	.683
Add friends	3.26	.615
Facilitates communication between close friends	3.22	.679
Communicate with as many people in a short period of time	3.17	.712
Strengthen relationship with other ethnics	3.08	.785
Strengthen relationship with other religions	3.05	.749
Overall =	3.29	.677

*Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree

Rural youths perceive Facebook as an easy to use social media to get current news and information on politics, crimes, sports and other issues, to develop social group, and to chat (refer to Table 7). Overall, they highly agreed that Facebook functionalities has been easy to use for its news updates, up-to-date information, and interaction among close and distant friends (M=3.22).

Table 7: The mean for perceived ease of use of Facebook

Perceived ease of use of Facebook items	Mean	SD
To get news/information on politics, crimes, sports and current issues	3.34	.637
To develop a group to share information	3.33	.656
To chat	3.32	.565
To comment and to reply	3.25	.628
To invite and to approve new friends	3.25	.629
To share status	3.24	.657
To update personal information such as name, age, relationship status and more	3.22	.658
To socialize	3.17	.708
To verify the presence of a friend through chat bar	3.10	.582
To upload and download video	2.96	.827
Overall =	3.22	.654

*Note: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly agree

Therefore, TAM was used to explain the acceptance of Facebook usage among the rural youths was through the ease of use of its functionalities and the usefulness of its function. The rural youths of 1Malaysia Wireless Village had agreed that Facebook is useful social tool to sustain the relationship they have established with their offline friends and families and to socially categorize themselves and feel belonging to the community.

Purpose of Facebook Usage

Facebook plausibly has a rich feature, the greater the information-carrying capacity, the less time needed for self-disclosure and friendship development (Mazer et al. 2007; Hollenbaugh & Ferris (2014). Facebook provides communication functionality through private or public messages, a chat, online fora, photos, videos, links, a personal Wall, and News Feed, where friends or participants can post their messages and comment on topics (refer to Figure 1).

Since Facebook is widely shared by people of different backgrounds and origins, the inequality issue seems far-fetched unless the individual is restricted from internet connection in their local area. Mingling within the virtual community space of Facebook, social interaction is one of the key aspects of the social environment which refer to the extent of connectedness and solidarity among groups (Lochner, Kawachi & Kennedy, 1999).

In Quan-Haase & Young (2010), and Raacke & Bonds (2008) studies on the purpose of Facebook usage, they found that university students tend to use Facebook to build and maintain social networks, to 'keep in touch' with offline networks (Joinson, 2008), to stalk old friends to see what they are up to and to learn about social events.

It was found that content posting on Facebook would promote a sense of visibility and belonging; by not sharing information on Facebook it reduced the members' sense of meaningful existence. Furthermore, they also discovered the causal role of feedback on belonging and related needs. Nonetheless, the main purpose for using Facebook among the respondents were mainly 'to get the latest news' (91%), followed by 'to chat' (86.35) and 'to share information' (79.8%) (refer to Table 8). Similarly, Mustaffa et al. (2011) found most students used Facebook to communicate

with friends, to reconnect with old friends, to share and to exchange information. Balakrishnan and Shamim (2013) study also showed that Malaysian students' (aged between 17 to 30 years old), main motives for Facebook usage were social networking, psychological benefits, entertainment, self-presentation, and skill enhancement. This finding was in line with Aziz et al. (2010) and Zhao et al. (2012) findings, which claimed that perceived familiarity with other members and trust in members affect the user's intentions to receive, share knowledge and intention to participate within Facebook. Besides, most of the incessant users of Facebook in this study were supposedly inclined to interact daily (in the real-world) with close friends and felt a strong connection to them (Heiberger & Harper, 2008; Subrahmanyam et al., 200).

Table 8: The distribution of respondents by the purpose of using Facebook

Variables	Frequency	%
The main objective for using Facebook		
To get the latest news	364	91.0
To chat	345	86.3
To share information	319	79.8
To be active in the groups joined	302	75.5
To check who is online	237	59.3
To maintain reputation/identity	220	55.0
To find new friends/networks	210	52.5
To watch video	145	36.3

The Frequency of Facebook Functionality Usage

In general, it was found that the rural youths have a high Facebook acceptance level. Although they highly accepted all seven functionalities of Facebook as useful in strengthening and sustaining social bonding among close and distant friends (refer to Table 6 and Table 7), it was mainly the five functionalities; Group, Conversation, Sharing, Identity followed by Reputation that were frequently used (refer to Table 9) to get news updates, up-to-date information, to share information, chatting among close and distant friends, and last but not least to be active in the groups they have joined. They frequently used the group functionality to get in touch with close and distant friends to feel belonging to a specific community in which they can categorize with and contribute to (refer to Table 8).

Table 9: The mean for Facebook functionality usage

Facebook functionality items	Mean	SD
Group	2.93	2.12
Conversation	2.86	3.32
Sharing	2.83	2.13
Identity	2.82	1.98
Reputation	2.67	4.93
Overall =	2.82	2.89

*Note: 1=Never, 1=Strongly disagree,
 2=Rarely, 2=Disagree,
 3=Frequently, 3=Agree,
 4=Very often 4=Strongly agree

Discussions and Recommendations

In this study the frequency of Facebook functionality usage is eminent through the rural youth's Facebook acceptance level. In answering the research question; in what way can TAM be used to explain the frequency of Facebook usage among rural youths? Findings from this study showed that most of the rural youths highly agreed that Facebook functionality usage has been useful and are easy to use. As a result of high Facebook acceptance, their Facebook usage was also frequent as they perceived it to be useful in strengthening the relationship between distant and close friends, sharing knowledge and accelerating a two-way communication process. Besides, they also claimed that Facebook functionalities are easy to use to get news, information on politics, crimes, sports, and current issues.

Facebook Group Functionality

The most frequent use of Facebook functionality was the group function, the main purpose was to be active in the groups they have joined. Other than that, the Facebook group functionality enables them to develop an in-group in which they can share relevant information with, to chat, to comment and to reply. Similarly, Zhao et al.'s (2012) and Aziz et al.'s (2010) findings show that a perceived familiarity with the group members could affect their intentions to receive, share knowledge and intention to participate within the Facebook online community was due to the relevancy they felt with the members of that group. Thus, it could strengthen the relationship between distant and close friends if they are within the group as it facilitates their communication process. Just as Turner et al. (1987) claim, the frequent use of the group functionality shows that these rural youths perceive that they can self-categorize themselves within that virtual Facebook community group. The implication of this finding is, the more they use the Group functionality, the more they feel like they belong to the members of that virtual community. Therefore, it is recommended that the village leaders disseminate the use of group functionality on Facebook to keep the village community intact even if they live far from the village for future community development programs.

Positive Side of Facebook Usage Pattern

Facebook usage especially encourages self-disclosure among the rural youth users (Mazer et al., 2007). Self-disclosure is a crucial element in relationship development and maintaining relationships upon reciprocity in the exchange of costs and rewards in their relationships within the group (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Due to Facebook's friendly functions, the rural youths found that updating a status through the 'Post status' box as easy and thus they would frequently share information as the purpose of using Facebook. Similarly, Smock et al. (2011) also showed that people who use Facebook for expressive information sharing motivations were more likely to post status updates. Furthermore, Ross et al. (2009) found that personality traits were linked to several functions and motivations. As for this study, it was found that the rural youths frequently use the group functionality on top of other functionalities. The implication of this finding is the members who highly agreed to the ease of use and usefulness of Facebook usage for sustaining interpersonal relationship with close and distant friends were more likely to join Facebook groups to feel socially connected (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Therefore, it is recommended that a social media practitioner accentuates the group functionality in their future social media project if it involves the rural youths.

Empowering Rural Youth through Facebook usage

Previous studies by Abdul Razak (2009), Ibrahim & Ainin (2009), Bolong (2011), Sheldon et al. (2011), Sharifah Sofiah et al. (2011), and Abu Samah et al. (2013) have suggested that the frequency of Facebook usage allows social connection and the positive use of Facebook was mediated by the tendency to have positive experiences within the virtual community context, in the context of this study it was the familiar members within the virtual group that these rural youths were able to have positive experiences within the Facebook virtual community. Plus, Sheldon et al.'s (2011) study found that being offline for 48 hours could reduce the feeling of connection, but not detached during this period. In line with this study, during school days, the rural youths would frequently log in and log out of Facebook and accessed it for one to three hours per day. The implication of this finding shows that these rural youths wanted to keep feeling connected with the members of their Facebook virtual community, just as Mustaffa et al. (2011) claimed previously in their findings that Facebook usage has become part of the youth's daily life. Therefore, it is suggested that the Wireless Village project implementers would continue providing free internet access to the rural youth communities as they can use Facebook to positively feel connected and a positive youth development.

As previously mention, Asian members are from a more collectivist culture, thus are more likely to have more frequent interactions and form a close circle of Facebook friends as compared to those members of an individualistic culture (Seder and Oishi, 2009; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012). The sense of belonging can be conveyed through the depth of interpersonal 'Conversations' between virtual community members and through associations and frequent interactions, where users would communicate with each other (Kietzmann et al., 2011; Park et al., 2011; Tobin et al. 2014). In line with this study, by accepting that Facebook functionalities are useful for strengthening and sustaining among close and distant friends, its news updates, and easy to get up-to-date information and interacting with close and distant friends has highly shown the rural youth's acceptance towards Facebook usage. Indeed, to get the latest news, to chat, to share information and to be active in the groups they have joined has brought them close to the

community. Especially among their Facebook members who are within their school, village and family friends. This implies that the rural youths find Facebook useful to feel connected even among close friends and its access usage through multiple gadgets have assisted in their frequent use of Facebook. The multiplicity of digital communication could in fact heighten the rural youth community's attitudes to engage in community development by empowering them through the use of Facebook, just as Abu Samah et al. (2015) have mentioned that the rural communities are ready for local development, but they highly need support from the Village Development and Security Committees (JKKK) to enforce the use of digital technology. Therefore, it is recommended that Facebook be used as a medium to empower the village community by getting the relevant parties to involve as they mostly befriended people who they encounter daily on Facebook.

Conclusion

Social bonding groups can range from an academic online community, which support students in the development of critical thinking skills to online support groups, which provide empathy and advice for the elderly or ill patients, and online gaming communities, which support the social needs of adolescents. It was clarified that majority of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) users derive from the Y generation, also known as youth aged between 15-40 years old. Such age group was found to have actively been using social media as a medium to expand their social networks and gain more contacts or to sustain new and existing friendships. In a nutshell, these rural youth community of 1Malaysia Wireless Village frequently used Facebook to strengthen their interpersonal relationship and social bonding with their virtual community. The use of TAM can be used to explain the frequency use of Facebook among rural youths through their agreement on the perceived ease of use and usefulness of Facebook usage. Their frequent use of the five Facebook functionalities such as group, conversation, sharing, identity, and reputation have allowed them to strengthen and sustain the interpersonal relationship between close and distant friends, to get news updates, up-to-date information and interaction with close and distant friends. The use of Facebook functionalities has continuously allowed individuals to get connected through multiple platforms.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by Putra Graduate Initiative (IPS) grant of the Research Management Centre, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

References

- Balakrishnan, V., & Shamim, A. (2013). Malaysian Facebookers: Motives and addictive behaviours unraveled. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(4), 1342-1349.
- Abdul Razak, N. (2009). Empowering the Rural Communities Via the Telecentres. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(3), 425-432.
- Abu Samah, A., Sahharon, H., Yassin, S., Samah, B. A., & Shaffril, H. A. M. (2015). Empowerment, Expectations, Priorities and Attitudes Toward Development. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(6 S4), 469.
- Abu Samah, B., Badsar, M., Abu Hassan, M., Osman, N. & Mohamed Shaffril, H. A. (2013). Youth and Telecentres in Community Building in Rural Peninsular Malaysia. *Social Science & Humanities* 21, 67-78.
- Altman, I., & Taylor, D. A. (1973). *Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Argaez, E., (2014). Internet Usage in Asia. *Internet World Stats: Usage and Population Statistics*. Retrieved 27 August 2014 from <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm>
- Aziz, Z., Salleh, A., & Ribu, H. E. (2010). A study of national integration: Impact of multicultural values. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7, 691-700.
- Balakrishnan, V., & Shamim, A. (2013). Malaysian Facebookers: Motives and addictive behaviours unravelled. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 29(4), 1342-1349.
- Baron, J. & Naomi, S. (2008). *Always on: Language in an Online and Mobile World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bolong, J. (2011). *Minda Komuniti Maya*. Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Burton-Jones, A., & Hubona, G. S. (2006). The mediation of external variables in the technology acceptance model. *Information & Management*, 43(6), 706-717.
- Butt, S., & Phillips, J. G. (2008). Personality and self-reported mobile phone use. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 24(2), 346-360.
- Christofides, E., Muise, A., & Desmarais, S. (2009). Information control and disclosure on Facebook: Are they two sides of the same coin or two different process. *Cyberpsychology and Behavior*, 34, 1303-1314.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (4th Ed.). New York: Sage publications, Inc.
- Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS quarterly*, 319-340.
- Davis, F. D. (1993). User acceptance of information technology: system characteristics, user perceptions and behavioural impacts. *International journal of man-machine studies*, 38(3), 475-487.
- Ellison, N. B. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1), 210-230.
- Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook "friends:" Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. *Journal of computer-mediated communication*, 12(4), 1143-1168.
- Erwin, B. A., Turk, C. L., Heimberg, R. G., Fresco, D. M., & Hantula, D. A. (2004). The Internet: home to a severe population of individuals with social anxiety disorder. *Journal of anxiety disorders*, 18(5), 629-646.

- Hargittai, E., & Yu-Li, P. (2011). From Dabblers to Omnivores. In Papacharissi, Zizi (Ed.), *A Networked self: Identity, Community, and Culture in Social Network Sites*, (pp.146–168). New York: Routledge.
- Haythornthwaite, C. (2005). Social networks and Internet connectivity effects. *Information, Communication, & Society*, 8 (2), 125-147.
- Heiberger, G., & Harper, R. (2008). Have you Facebooked Astin lately? Using technology to increase student involvement. *New directions for student services*, 2008 (124), 19-35.
- Hollenbaugh, E. E., & Ferris, A. L. (2014). Facebook Self-disclosure: Examining The Role Of Traits, Social bonding, And Motives. *Computers In Human Behavior*, 30, 50–58.
- Hunt, D., Atkin, D., & Krishnan, A. (2012). The influence of computer-mediated communication apprehension on motives for Facebook use. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56(2), 187-202.
- Ibrahim, Z., & Ainin, S. (2009). The Influence of Malaysian Telecenters on Community Building. *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, 7(1), 77–86.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2005). New developments in Social Interdependence Theory. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, 131(4), 285–358.
- Joinson, A. N. (2008). Looking at, looking up or keeping up with people?: motives and use of Facebook. *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1027-1036). New York: Association for Computing Machinery.
- Kalpidou, M., Costin, D., & Morris, J. (2011). The relationship between Facebook and the well-being of undergraduate college students. *Cyber Psychology, behaviour, and social networking*, 14(4), 183-189.
- Kietzmann, J. H., Hermkens, K., McCarthy, I. P., & Silvestre, B. S. (2011). Social media? Get serious! Understanding the functional building blocks of social media. *Business Horizons*, 54(3), 241–251.
- Lenhart, A. (2005). Protecting teens online. *Pew Internet and American Life Project*. Retrieved September 23 2015 from: <http://www.pewinternet.org/>
- Li-Barber, K. T. (2012). Self-disclosure and student satisfaction with Facebook. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(2), 624-630.
- Lochner, K., Kawachi, I., & Kennedy, B. P. (1999) Social capital: a guide to its measurement. *Health and Place*, 5, 259-270.
- Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission. (2014). *Communications and Multimedia: Pocket Book of Statistics Q1 2014*. Cyberjaya, Malaysia: Author.
- Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission. (2015). *Community Wi-Fi: 1Malaysia Wireless Village*. Retrieved 8 June 2015 from <http://usp.skmm.gov.my/Projects/Wireless-Village.aspx>
- Mazer, J. P., Murphy, R. E., & Simonds, C. J. (2007). I'll see you on Facebook: The effects of computer-mediated teacher self-disclosure on student motivation, affective learning, and classroom climate. *Journal of Communication Education*, 56(1), 1–17.
- Mustaffa, N., Ibrahim, F., Mahmud, W. A. W., Ahmad, F., Kee, C. P., & Mahbob, M. H. (2011). Diffusion of innovations: The adoption of Facebook among youth in Malaysia. *The Public Sector Innovation Journal*, 16(3), 1-15.
- Nadkarni, A., & Hofmann, S. G. (2012). Why Do People Use Facebook? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52(3), 243–249.

- Indian, M., & Grieve, R. (2014). When Facebook is easier than face-to-face: Social support derived from Facebook in socially anxious individuals. *Personality and Individual Differences, 59*, 102-106.
- Park, N., Jin, B., & Jin, A. S.NA. (2011). Effects of self-disclosure on relational intimacy in Facebook. *Computers in Human Behavior, 27*(5), 1974–1983.
- Porter, C. E., & Donthu, N. (2006). Using the technology acceptance model to explain how attitudes determine Internet usage: The role of perceived access barriers and demographics. *Journal of business research, 59*(9), 999-1007.
- Quan-Haase, A., & Young, A. L. (2010). Uses and Gratifications of Social Media: A Comparison of Facebook and Instant Messaging. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society, 30*(5), 350–361.
- Raacke, J., & Bonds-Raacke, J. (2008). MySpace and Facebook: Applying the uses and gratifications theory to exploring friend-networking sites. *Cyberpsychology & behavior, 11*(2), 169-174.
- Ross, C., Orr, E. S., Sisic, M., Arseneault, J. M., Simmering, M. G., & Orr, R. R. (2009). Personality and motivations associated with Facebook use. *Computers in Human Behavior, 25*, 578–586.
- Sahharon, H., Omar, S. Z., Bolong, J., Sh, M. H. A., & Lawrence D, J. (2014). Potential benefits of the wireless village programme in Malaysia for rural communities. *Journal of Applied Sciences, 14*, 3638-3645
- Seder, J. P., & Oishi, S. (2009). Ethnic/racial homogeneity in college students' Facebook friendship networks and subjective well-being. *Journal of Research in Personality, 43*(3), 438-443.
- Sofiah, S. Z., Omar, S. Z., Bolong, J., & Osman, M. N. (2011). Facebook addiction among female university students. *Revista De Administratie Publica Si Politici Sociale, 2*(7), 95-109.
- Sheldon, K. M., Abad, N., & Hirsch, C. (2011). A two-process view of facebook use and relatedness need-satisfaction: Disconnection drives use, and connection rewards it. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 100*, 766–775.
- Sheldon, P. (2008). Student favorite: Facebook and motives for its use. *Journal of Mass Communication, 23*(2), 39–55.
- Smock, A. D., Ellison, N. B., Lampe, C., & Wohn, D. Y. (2011). Facebook as a toolkit: A uses and gratification approach to unbundling feature use. *Computers in Human Behavior, 27*(6), 2322-2329.
- Subrahmanyam, K., Reich, S. M., Waechter, N., & Espinoza, G. (2008). Online and offline social networks: Use of social networking sites by emerging adults. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 29*(6), 420–433.
- Thibaut, J. W., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The Social Psychology of Groups*. New York: JohnWiley & Sons.
- Tobin, S. J., Vanman, E. J., Verreynne, M., & Saeri, A. K. (2015). Threats to belonging on Facebook: Lurking and ostracism. *Social Influence, 10*(1), 31-42.
- Tosun, L. P. (2012). Motives for Facebook use and expressing “true self” on the Internet. *Computers in Human Behavior, 28*(4), 1510-1517.
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. New York: Blackwell.

- Wellman, B., & Gulia, M. (1999). Net surfers don't ride alone: Virtual communities as communities. *Networks in the global village*, 331-366.
- Wixom, B. H., & Todd, P. A. (2005). A theoretical integration of user satisfaction and technology acceptance. *Information systems research*, 16(1), 85-102.
- Xiang, R., Neville, J., & Rogati, M. (2010). Modeling relationship strength in online social networks. *Proceedings of the 19th International Conference on World Wide Web – WWW*(pp. 981-990). New York: Association for Computing Machinery.
- Yang, C. C., & Brown, B. B. (2013). Motives for using Facebook, patterns of Facebook activities, and late adolescents' social adjustment to college. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 42(3), 403-416.
- Yus, F. (2011). *Cyberpragmatics: Internet-Mediated Communication in Context*. Philadelphia, United States: John Benjamins.
- Zhao, L., Lu, Y., Wang, B., Chau, P. Y. K., & Zhang, L. (2012). Cultivating the sense of belonging and motivating user participation in virtual communities: A social capital perspective. *International Journal of Information Management*, 32(6), 574–588.