

EDUCATION FOR RURAL COMMUNITY: UTILISATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG MULTI-ETHNIC STUDENTS IN MALAYSIAN BORNEO

¹Nurul Hidayati Hamid, ¹Mohd Mahzan Awang, ²Abdul Razaq Ahmad, ³Sayuti Ab Ghani, ⁴Alfitri, ⁵Crystal Lulong Linang

^{1,2,5}Faculty of Education, The National University of Malaysia, Malaysia,

³Faculty of Defence Studies and Management, National Defence University, Malaysia, ⁴Faculty of Social and Political Science, University of Sriwijaya, Indonesia. Email: mahzan@ukm.edu.my

ABSTRACT:

The current study investigated the level of the use of social media among multi-ethnic students from rural areas and the differences among them based on ethnicity. The study utilised a survey research design using a set of questionnaire that has been developed based on past studies on language learning and social media. The sample of the study consisted of 80 students from selected national secondary schools from rural areas in Borneo. Data collected was analysed using descriptive statistic. Overall, results demonstrated that the majority of students moderately used social media for learning academic subjects. Data also shows that that irrespective of ethnicity, all students are rarely used social media for academic purposes. Facebook has been found to be the most popular social media and it was used for learning academic subjects more often if compared to WhatsApp and YouTube. Therefore, students are supposed to the use of social media skills in learning especially for the improvement of academic learning as past research showed that there was a significant linkage between the use of social media and the academic performances. Indeed, parents and teachers are supposed to have skills in encouraging students to make full use of social media for education purpose in today's 21st century learning.

Keywords:

Rural education, social media, ethnicity, language learning, proficiency, multi-ethnic students.

Article Received: 18 October 2020, Revised: 3 November 2020, Accepted: 24 December 2020

INTRODUCTION

Many developing countries have experienced incomprehensible changes in the implementation of policies related to educational development for the rural community. Malaysian has experienced ethnic segregation during British administration in this region (Awang, Ahmad, & Rahman, 2017). A divide-and-rule implemented in the 1900s has resulted in a gap of intercommunication among the multi-ethnic population. In addition, some research states that there is a gap between graduates and employment; after graduating from the university, it is not easy to get an exact job because of some factors such as lack of interrelations between university, industry and business (Triyono et al., 2020). That is why it is important to get involved in these three sectors from the start of education. During pre-independence, primary schools were available in four medium of instructions namely English,

Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil. During post-independence, Bahasa Malaysia (Malay language) was declared the sole national language in 1967. In addition, a gap of regional development between urban and rural becomes a challenge in Malaysia. A rapid physical and technological development in urban areas has positively contributed to modern educational tools including information and communication technology (Oviawe, 2020). Internet networking is better in urban areas if compared to rural areas. Regardless of this gap, students nowadays require this new technology to enhance their academic achievement, skills and performances. Digital technology enables teachers and students to develop their potential such as digital competence, problem-solving skills (Kassymova et al., 2020) and cognitive competence (Lavrinenko, Arpentieva, & Kassymova, 2019).

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Schools in rural areas have embraced many approaches in teaching and learning activities. In rural areas, diverse ethnic background requires teachers' creativity to integrate socio-cultural elements to encourage students' motivation in learning many academic subjects. Language is found has a main barrier to integrate rural area students with Internet-based information where most of the information is in English. Therefore, many teachers motivate students to learn second language. A past study found that the majority of students have loved classroom instruction for the second language acquisition (Joshi, 2015; Al Muhsin et al., 2020). There are so many factors that affect the process of learning in rural schools includes attitude, self-confidence, motivation, duration of exposure to the language, classroom conditions, environment, family background, and availability of competent teachers who master the academic subjects as well as culturally responsive pedagogy (Ahmad & Awang, 2016). Among those factors mentioned, environment and family background play vital role in the success of learning process. In rural area, where majority of the people are farmer or are even jobless, have the poor background in education. Apart from that, the income of majority of the families is not sufficient to cater for the whole family to make a living. When that happens, it leads to parents' decision of not giving good education background to their children (Nwabah et al., 2020). On contrary to that, they are willing to engage the children in some jobs in order to make a living or earn some money. This is the very basic reason and the affecting factor in teaching.

Past research revealed that rural students' attitude towards learning and technology plays important role to determine the successfulness in education. Attitude is the way you think and feel about something. The successful acquisition of a various soft-skills and academic achievement seems to a certain extent, contingent upon learning environment, learning situation, and support (Harrison, Egunsola, & Oguntunde,

2020). Likewise, the teacher's competence affects the students' learning. In fact, it plays the most important part of role in the school when it comes to the teaching and learning process that occur in the classroom between teacher and students. A teacher should not only be expert in subject content, but his or her knowledge in teaching methods and creativity are important (Simin & Sani, 2015).

A number of reasons why the use of Internet especially social media applications is beneficial to teaching and learning irrespective of geographical areas – either urban or rural students. One of them is to get various information for academic purposes (Ilomaki, 2008). Their learning how to use computers, the Internet and global communication advances students' motivation. Additionally, online tasks have an interactive aspect (students participate actively, for instance when they look up for information, and are for the most part less demanding to acknowledge by than other projects (Internet access is frequently accessible in e.g. computer rooms in schools and public computers in Internet cafes) (Mullamaa, 2010).

RURAL COMMUNITY IN MALAYSIAN BORNEO

This study was carried out in Malaysian Borneo or also known as East Malaysia comprising of two states namely Sabah, Sarawak and Federal Territory of Labuan. These states are part of Malaysia on the island of Borneo, the world's third largest island. Sabah is closer to the Philippines than to mainland Malaysia, Sarawak in the west. Malaysian Borneo is less populated and has less developed settlements than West Malaysia but larger than West Malaysia.

The total population of East Malaysia approximately was 6 million (3 million in Sabah, 2.5 million in Sarawak, and 0.09 million in Labuan which represents more than 20% of the population of Malaysia. The archaeological studies revealed that the earliest inhabitants of Malaysian Borneo were various indigenous

ethnics. At the moment, many indigenous ethnic and sub-ethnic populated in Malaysian Borneo where the majority of them still populated in rural areas. They are including Dayak, Kadazan-Dusun, Iban, Iban Bajau (Sama/Samah), Murut, Bidayuh, Biatah, Bukar/Sadong, Jagoi/Singai, Selakau/Lara, Orang Ulu (Penan, Murut, Berawan etc)., Melayu Sarawak, Melayu Brunei, Dayak, Melayu Sumatera, Melanau and etc, The indigenous populations are generally partisan and maintain culturally distinct dialects of the Malay language, in addition to their own ethnic languages.

ISSUE

It is no doubt, that social media is discovered to be virtual platform that us offering various information to students. Many past studies on the advantages and disadvantages of social media in education have been conducted in developed countries; but few have done in developing countries to investigate how social media is used among multi ethnic from rural areas. Hence, this informs the need for the current study.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study aims at identifying the level of the use of social media among multi-ethnic students from rural areas. The current study also investigated the differences between ethnicities from rural areas regarding the use of social media for academic learning. Finally, the study examined the relationship between the use of social media and academic learning.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Facebook Usage	2.576	1.0868	Moderate
WhatsApp Usage	2.576	1.131	Moderate
YouTube Usage	2.458	1.2254	Moderate
Overall mean scores	3.060	1.2198	Moderate

Table 2: The levels of the Use of Social Media

Table 1 shows that the levels of social media among multi-ethnic students was at a moderate level. The majority of students used Facebook rather than WhatsApps and YouTube for learning. Facebook seems to be more popular compered to

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on survey research design. A survey method using closed-ended questionnaires were used to collect data from multi-ethnic students from rural areas in Malaysian Borneo on the use of social media as a strategy in regards to improve their academic learning. A number of 80 students aged 16 years old were participated randomly in this. Data collected was analysed using SPSS version 22, focusing on descriptive analysis – mean scores and standard deviation. Interpretation of the mean score are as follows:

Table 1: Interpretation of Mean Scores

Mean Scores	Interpretation
3.34-5.00	High
1.68-3.33	Moderate
0.01-1.67	Low

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Out of 80 respondents, 53 female respondents were identified. It contributed to the fact that the female respondents dominated the majority of respondents in the research with 66.25%. These remaining 27 respondents left the male students with a large difference or less than half in number compared to the female respondents, with a total of 33.75% of percentage in number. The respondents were all aged 16 years old as they were all chosen from the same respective form.

their social media applications. The current finding is parallel with the past study of Facebook in Malaysia (Mahmud & Omar, 2013)where it was found that Facebook is the most popular social media.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
I often use Facebook to learn	2.570	1.077	Moderate
I always use communicate with my friends	2.650	1.032	Moderate
Often corrects me if have any grammatical	2.200	1.048	Low
Read English Article	3.210	1.076	Moderate
To post things related to academic subject	3.060	1.2198	Moderate
Overall Mean Score	2.576	1.0868	Moderate

Table 3: Facebook Usage

Result shows that the level of using Facebook for learning, communicating with friends, reading English articles and posting things related to academic matter is at moderate level with a mean of 2.570, 2.650, 3.210, and 2.540 respectively. Result of this study highlights the importance of English as a medium in today’s world (Borase, 2014). Results showed that most students use

Facebook as a medium or platform for learning. Facebook use in classroom is one of the strategies can be used to attract students in learning many

elements. As a professional, teachers’ creativity and initiative to make learn funs is needed (Awang, Ahmad, & Ali, 2013).

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Often use WhatsApp to communicate with others in English	2.930	1.053	Moderate
To discuss about homework	3.11	1.283	Moderate
To seek help from family	2.24	.971	Low
Share information or articles in English	2.65	1.213	Moderate
To type out the drafts	1.95	1.135	Low
Overall Mean Score	2.576	1.131	Moderate

Table 4: WhatsApp Usage

Result shows that the level of using WhatsApp to communicate with others in English, discuss about homework, and share information or articles in English is moderate with a mean of 2.930, 3.110, and 2.650 respectively. Meanwhile, the level of the use of WhatsApp to seek help from family, and to type out drafts is low with a mean of 2.240 and 1.950 respectively. It shows that the use of WhatsApp has increased alongside the modern era

today where WhatsApp technology helps in dispersing information related to education at an instant. Overall, most students use WhatsApp as a medium or platform for learning. This finding support the past studies on WhatsApp carried out by Chear (2017) and Barhoumi (2015) where it was found that WhatsApp has been used actively for learning academic subjects.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Often use YouTube to look for academic videos	2.590	1.270	Moderate
To learn English from native speakers	2.700	1.316	Moderate
To acquire more English vocabularies	2.780	1.253	Moderate
To have various information	2.440	1.221	Moderate
To upload videos	1.780	1.067	Low
Overall Mean Score	2.458	1.2254	Moderate

Table 5: YouTube Usage

The table above shows the interpretation of the usage of You Tube and mean score analysed from the questionnaires. Results show that the level of using You Tube to look for academic videos, learn English from native speakers, acquire more English vocabularies, and to have various information is moderate with a mean of 2.590, 2.700, 2.780, and 2.440 respectively. Result from this study highlights the importance of the Internet in learning language as it makes students are able to learn English online using various approaches (Wolf et al., 2008). Meanwhile, the level of the use of You Tube to upload videos is low with a mean of 1.780. Students seems to enjoy and are enthusiastic to use You Tube as a medium or platform for learning. Past studies revealed that YouTube would be a powerful tool of learning in this digital age (Rahmawan, Mahameruaji, & Janitra, 2018).

CONCLUSION

It has been indicated in the study that and past research that social media does indeed play a very important role in education especially in this era of 21st century learning where the technology is at the tips of our fingers. These days, it is almost impossible to go without working hand-in-hand together between social media and education since the world has become globalised with the use of social media being implemented everywhere across the world; various from education to business and many other aspects. The schools in the rural should have already been adapted with the modern technology alongside with today's era. It is very importance as the current study shows

that students used this new technology for learning academic subjects.

Acknowledgement

Appreciation to the funders and support: (1) Faculty of Education, The National University of Malaysia; (2) Faculty of Defence Studies and Management, National Defence University, Malaysia; and (3) Faculty of Social and Political Science, University of Sriwijaya, Indonesia.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ahmad, A. R., & Awang, M. M. (2016). Culturally responsive pedagogy: Socio-educational support and community engagement for educational development of aboriginal students. *The New Educational Review*, 43(1), 157-166.
- [2] Al Muhsin, M. A., Nisaa, M. K., Muhammad, M. M., Sarudin, A., Osman, Z., Makki, S., Etigani, M. A. M. A. (2020). THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PROPOSE ARABIC LANGUAGE MODULE FOR THE PURPOSE OF TOURISM: A CASE STUDY ON TOURISTS' MOSQUE IN KUALA LUMPUR. *Journal Critical Review*, Vol. 7(14), DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.14.89>.
- [3] Awang, M. M., Ahmad, A. R., & Ali, M. M. (2013). Professional teachers' strategies for promoting positive behaviour in schools. *Asian Social Science*, Vol. 9(12), p. 205-211.
- [4] Awang, M. M., Ahmad, A. R., & Rahman, A. A. A. (2017). Social integration practices

- among multi-ethnic youths. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 046(1), 1-9.
- [5] Barhoumi, C. (2015). The effectiveness of WhatsApp mobile learning activities guided by activity theory on students' knowledge management. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 6(3), 221-238.
- [6] Borase, D. A. (2014). Social medias in teaching and learning English. *IJSR International Journal of Scientific Research*, 3(4).
- [7] Chear, S. L. S. (2017). Teaching and learning through WhatsApp and telegram application at a private university. *Malaysian Education Journal*, 42(2), 87-97.
- [8] Harrison, G. H., Egunsola, A. O. E., & Oguntunde, G. A. (2020). Evaluation of farming skills acquisition programme of Adamawa State Government, Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Vocational Education and Humanities*, 1(1), 1-7.
- [9] Ilomaki, L. (2008). The effects of Social Media on school: teachers and students' perspectives: *Annales Universitatis Turkuensis B* 314.
- [10] Joshi, R. B. (2015). Social media in English language teaching. *IJSR International Journal of Scientific Research*, 4(12).
- [11] Kassymova, G., Akhmetova, A., Baibekova, M., Kalniyazova, A., Mazhinov, B., & Mussina, S. (2020b). E-Learning environments and problem-based learning. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(7s), 346-356.
- [12] Lavrinenko, S. V., Arpentieva, M. R., & Kassymova, G. K. (2019). Motivation of technical university students and its impact on the effectiveness of the educational process. Paper presented at the International Youth Scientific Conference "Heat and Mass Transfer in the Thermal Control System of Technical and Technological Energy Equipment (Hmttc 2019).
- [13] Mahmud, M. Z., & Omar, B. (2013). Motives and frequency of Facebook use among university students. *Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 29(1), 35-54.
- [14] Mullamaa, K. (2010). Social media in language learning –benefits and methodological implications (Vol. 3): Language Centre, University of Tartu.
- [15] Nwabah, N. I., Oluwaleyimu, O. O., Ihenskhien, I., & Oshio, L. E. (2020). Human capital development and education: A strategy for sustainable income among university undergraduates in Edo and Lagos States, Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Vocational Education and Humanities*, 1(1), 8-15.
- [16] Oviawe, J. I. (2020). Technical education lecturers' knowledge of students' engagement in application of interactive instructional strategies. *Journal of Technology and Humanities*, Vol. 1(1), p. 1–10.
- [17] Rahmawan, D., Mahameruaji, J. N., & Janitra, P. A. (2018). The potential of Youtube as an educational medium for young people. *EduLib*, 8(1), 81-98.
- [18] Simin, G., & Sani, I. M. (2015). Effectiveness of social media integration in Malaysian schools: A quantitative analysis (Vol. 2). Malaysia: University of Malaya.
- [19] Triyono, B. M., Mohib, N., Kassymova, G. K., Pratama, G., Adinda, D., & Arpentieva, M. R. (2020). The profile improvement of vocational school teachers' competencies. *Vysshee obrazovanie v Rossii= Higher Education in Russia*, Vol. 29(2), p. 151-158.
- [20] Wolf, M. L., Herman, J. L., Bachman, L. F., Bailey, A. L., & Griffin, N. (2008). Recommendations for assessing English language learners: English language proficiency measures and accommodations uses. Los Angeles: University of California.