Social Networks and Their Effects on Productivity: Insights of Selected Employees in the Kingdom Of Bahrain

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Abstract:-*This study aimed to determine the perception of employee respondents on how they can utilize social networking sites in the proper manner and thereby it serves awareness on how these tools affect their level of work productivity. Respondents were the selected employees in the different companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the 3rd Trimester, SY 2016-2017. This study made use of the descriptive research method to determine the effects of social networks on employee productivity. The gathered data from this study were subjected to descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviation; one way ANOVA, t-test and Person Product Moment Correlation were also used for the inferential statistics. The result of the study showed that: general perception of employees regardless of age, sex, position in the company, number of years employed and type of work are in agreement on the usefulness of the social networks to their respective world of works; In terms of the level of productivity of the respondents the age group 18-30 yielded high significance of the importance of social networks in their job performance; employee respondents rejected the null hypothesis hence, the alternative hypothesis of significant difference on the level of their employee productivity was accepted. Moreover correlation is highly statistically significant between their perception on the use of social networks and their productivity at work. There should be suitable and useful ways of supervising employee social network involvement. Further training on effective use of social networks should be initiated by the organization. Employees should take advantage on the vast information in terms of the usefulness they can get from their exposure to social networks. Human Resource department should conduct training or seminar on the effective use of social networks in the workplace.*

Keywords*: Evaluation, Perception, Social Networks, Employee Productivity*

Chapter 1

1. Introduction

Internet exhibits limitless quantity of information that can readily gain access by everyone. The internet empowers global information for people even from totally different backgrounds, sharing insights and communicate in ways that were never possible before.

We consider the 20th century as the era of post-industrial societies which an American Sociologist, Daniel Bell termed as 'The Birth of the Information Age.' The new society has six characteristics according to sociologist Daniel Bell as cited by James Henslin in his book Sociology a Down-to Earth Approach. "1) most people work in a large sector of society, 2) people enjoy surplus of goods 3) intensive trade among nations are apparent 4) there are wider variety and quantity of goods available to almost all populations 5) there is an information overload 6) interconnected global village because, nations are linked by fast communications, transportation, and trade" [1. Internet has revolutionized humanity from chatting to selling online products. From all aspects of human life the world appears to be living in an interconnected global village with the use of online social networking sites.

"A social networking site, SNS or social media is an online programme that is utilized by people to build social relation with other people who share similar interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections." [2]

Social networks do not only aim at hitting young generation but targeting all groups. The way we utilize and respond to online media is either beneficial or detrimental.

Employees are regarded as one of the most vital assets of any institution. Kingdom of Bahrain has large number of employees in different sectors of society. Success of any country relies on employees' productivity. Employees' performance is associated to social networking sites.

A study conducted by Flynn, J. states that "in other facet, online networking sites are generating risks, drawbacks and power for organizations. Risks can surface when workers talk about internal information of the organization which can be applied by its competitors. Likewise, online social networks can be weakness when it hinders employees' performance. It can also become strength for organizations when it creates good relationship and direct employees to do their job productively". [3]

From the aforementioned statements the researcher established an understanding that online social networks are powerful tools that greatly affect employees' productivity.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the effect of social networks on employee productivity of the respondents. Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

1. What are the perceptions of the respondents on the use of social networks as an entire group and when classified as to a. age b. gender c. position in the company d. number of years employed e. type of work?

2. What is the level of employee productivity of the respondents as an entire group and when classified as to a. age b. gender c. position in the company d. number of years employed e. type of work?

3. Is there a significant difference on the level of employee productivity of the respondents when classified as to a. age b. gender c. position in the company d. number of years employed e. type of work?

4. Is there a significant relationship between the employees' perceptions on the use of social networks and productivity?

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference on the level of employee productivity of the respondents when classified as to a. age b. gender c. position in the company d. number of years employed e. type of work.

2. There is no significant relationship between the employees' perceptions on the use of social networks and productivity.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 exhibits the paradigm of the study. The independent variables of this study are the age, gender, position in the company, number of years employed and type of work and the perceptions on the use of social network and its effect on employees' productivity as the dependent variable.
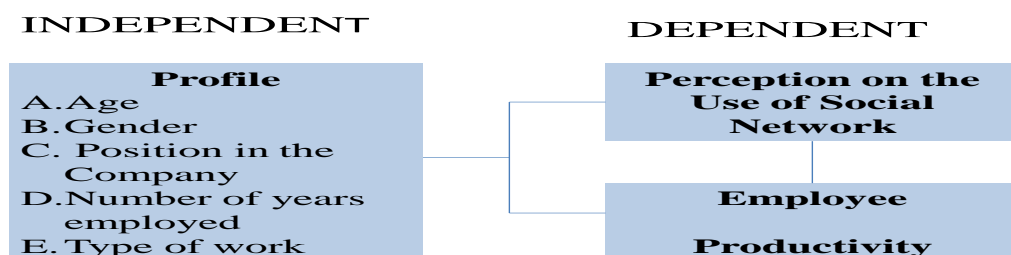
Chapter 2
Literature Review

Nowadays, almost all organizations are using online social networking sites for their professional advancement like establishing client relationship.

In the study conducted by Quan-Haase recommends that "the internet provides a realm for social interaction. It motivates group of people to connect with each other that have similar interest. The sense of friendship and solidarity that can be gained through social networking may assist in forming a loyal organizational culture, increasing morale and the general sense of unity among employees." [6] Social networks maybe good to access on the latest trends, innovations, and an excellent tools also to allow users explore business avenues or simply exercising your creativity by exploring facets of information beneficial to your personal or professional endeavors however the same tools could also use to demean you.

The study of Ollier M.A et.al exposed the perceptions of the majority of the users of social networks they stated that "when employees continuously interact with their professional contacts in online social networks such as Facebook or Twitter, they are likely to experience a conflict of their professional and personal identities unique to this new and expanding virtual social environment. Employees should be aware of their boundaries on how to use social network properly so as not to invite suspicious notions from their audience. [7]

Current studies concurred that social networks are distinctive descriptions of human behavior to carry out the requisite to communicate and connect with people they know, meet new people who would pay a greater share of common interest, cooperate, contribute and share information and knowledge as well as gain new insights and wisdom. [8, 9,10].

Basically, these are the rationale why people connect in online social networking sites through internet. Majority of the people use internet because to them the media provide effective avenues in social networking opportunities to expand their networking connections, looking for people with the same interest, discussing common topics, dating and finding for potential lifetime partners, getting connected to old friends, distant relatives and virtually meeting potential peers.

Somani and Gupta discover that majority of the organizations seek to keep employee dealing with high motivational level of work productivity. Organizations perform this for the reason that organization's productivity rely on motivational level of employees at work. They can monitor the employees' usage of social networking sites to check on their work performance. For performance evaluation, become involved in activities and sharing organizations vital piece of information. [11]

In a blog written by Jim Vasallo he substantiated the claims of the above mentioned researchers "Social media supports company's brand strategy. To strengthen the product of a company, social media is a place where marketing teams and human resource departments will take into consideration. When a company faces some issues on complaint or any related problem, the Human Resource unit can bring the idea to online social networks to emphasize the product of the company. If employees posts their activities on social media during their work hours, especially if their activities is not related to their work, by all means the company can enforce its policy on the use of social media accounts[12].

Many researchers have been carried out studies about online social networking sites. North for instance, reviewed several studies to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of using social media in the workplace, the results confirm that some respondents view social networking site to have negative aspects, however, majority of the participants concurred its application at work is worthwhile. Interacting online while at work will make them happier and increase their productivity at work [13].

Clark and Collins have the same opinion about the usefulness of social networks to the top management since this will develop an edge for the company. Both claim that companies willfully develop social networks for human resource evaluation on employees' performance. Having said this, this kind of system will help create a strong

bond between top management and employees and aid in improving employees' performance [14].

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This study made use of the descriptive research method, where a questionnaire was utilized to determine the effects of social networks on employee productivity of the respondents. Triangulation was carried out to the selected respondents to validate the responses of the employees during the 3rd trimester of SY 2016-2017.The questionnaire used was adapted from Mr. Michail Giannako's (2014) [15] research study with modification done by the current researcher to suit to the present study. Weighted mean and Standard Deviation were used to analyze the responses of the employee respondents while five-Point Likert Scale,

was also used in the interpretation of the data. In terms of the difference of the responses of employee respondents based on gender, T-Test was employed. Likewise, one way ANOVA was applied to find out the significant difference in employee perceptions and the level of productivity on the use of social networks when they are grouped according to age, position in the company, number of years employed and type of work. Similarly, to obtain the significant relationship in employee perceptions and the level of productivity on the use of social networks, Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was carried out. The test of hypothesis is at 0.05 level of significance.

Chapter 4

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Perception of the Employee Respondents as an Entire Group and when Classified by Age, Sex, Position in the Company, Number of Years Employed, and Type of Work

Age	Mean	DI	Sex	Mean	DI	Position in the Company	Mean	DI	Number of Years	Mean	DI	Type of Work	Mean	DI
18-30 (61)	4.40	A	Male (118)	4.37	A	Top Management (27)	4.50	SA	1-5 (139)	4.45	A	Banks/Business/Airport (109)	4.65	SA
31-45 (94)	4.50	SA	Female (86)	4.44	A	Middle Management (77)	4.20	A	6-10 (46)	4.49	A	Education (32)	4.38	A
46-55 (40)	4.40	A	WM	4.405	A	Rank and File (100)	4.60	SA	11-15 (4)	4.45	A	IT (23)	4.24	A
56-65 (9)	4.30	A				WM 4.43		A	16 and above (15)	4.36	A	Telecom (40)	4.40	A
WM 4.375		A							WM	4.44	A	WM	4.42	A
General Weighted Mean of the Entire Group (GWM)										4.397				A

Employee respondents were solicited to give their perceptions on the use of social networks. As an entire group based on the 204 respondents with the (GWM) of 4.397 in Table 1, all of the employees

regardless of age , sex, position in the company, number of years employed and type of work agree

on the usefulness of the social networks to their respective world of works. In terms of the age classification the age bracket of 31-45 received a

highest Mean Score of 4.50 which interpreted as strongly agree. While respondents aged 56-65 received the lowest Mean (4.30) this implies that they found the usefulness of the social media as somewhat less significant to them compared to the 31-45 age bracket (4.50) where this group perceived the social networks as highly significant to them in their work.

In terms of sex, both male and female agree to the usefulness of the social networks to them.

For the different positions in the company it can be gleaned that the top management and rank and file viewed the social networks as highly valuable tools for their work (WM 4.55), whereas the middle management perceived social networks to be less valuable to them (WM 4.20). This findings is supported by study of Ollier M.A et.al they exposed the other side of the social networks "when employees continuously interact with their professional contacts in online social networks such as Facebook or Twitter, they are likely to experience a conflict of their professional and personal identities unique to this new and expanding virtual social environment. Employees should be aware of their boundaries on how to use social network properly so as not to invite suspicious notions from their audience [7]. Some employees found the use of social networks as less valuable to them when they experience conflict whether it is work related or personal.

The employees' perception of the usefulness of social networks had been backed by Quan –Haase [6] he stated "the internet provides a realm for social interaction. It motivates group of people to connect with each other that have similar interest. The sense of friendship and solidarity that can be gained through social networking may assist in forming a loyal organizational culture, increasing morale and the general sense of unity among employees."

Table 2 Level of Employee Productivity as an Entire Group and when Classified by Age, Sex, Position in the Company, Number of Years Employed and Type of Work

Age	Mean	DI	Sex	Mean	DI	Position in the Company	Mean	DI	Number of Years	Mean	DI	Type of Work	Mean	DI
18-30 (61)	4.52	SA	Male (118)	4.49	A	Top Management (27)	4.29	SA	1-5 (139)	4.45	A	Banks/Business/Airport (109)	4.65	SA
31-45 (94)	4.26	A	Female (86)	4.32	A	Middle Management (77)	4.34	A	6-10 (46)	4.49	A	Education (32)	4.38	A
46-55 (40)	4.31	A	**WM 4.405**		A	Rank and File (100)	4.44	SA	11-15 (4)	4.45	A	IT (23)	4.24	A
56-65 (9)	4.30	A				**WM 4.36**		A	16 and above (15)	4.36	A	Telecom (40)	4.40	A
WM 4.35		A							**WM 4.44**		A	**WM 4.42**		A
General Weighted Mean of the Entire Group (GWM)												4.395		A

To determine the general perception of the employee respondents in terms of the level of their work productivity it can be viewed from the data in Table 2 with the (GWM 4.395) all of them agreed on to the importance of social network in the conduct of their work activities.

With regards to the level of employee productivity of the respondents when classified as to their age,

Aged 18-30 received Strongly Agree with a (Mean 4.52) this means that this group gave high significance of the importance of social network in their job performance while the rest of the age

brackets agree but not as intense compared to the first group. This holds true in terms of sex, position in the company, number of years employed. This group of employees perceived the use of social networks as valuable tool to them to bring out the high level of performance in their work activities. This finding corroborated with the study conducted by Somani and Gupta "majority of the organizations seek to keep employee dealing with high motivational level of work productivity. Organizations perform this for the reason that organization's productivity rely on motivational level of employees at work. They can monitor the employees' usage of social networking sites to check on their work performance."[11]

Table 3 Significant Difference on the Level of Employee Productivity of the Respondents when classified by Age, Sex, Position in the Company, Number of Years Employed and Type of Work

Productivity		F	Sig.	Interpretation
A.Age				
Between groups		7.002	.000*	Statistically Significant
Within groups				
Multiple Comparisons		**Mean Diff.**	**Sig.**	Interpretation
18-30	31-45	.1557	.010*	Statistically Significant
	56-65	.5213	.000*	Statistically Significant
31-45	18-30	-1557	.010*	Statistically Significant
	46-55	-1344	.049*	Statistically Significant
	56-65	.3656	.004*	Statistically Significant
56-65	46-55	-5000	.000*	Statistically Significant
B. Sex				
Both Male and Female		.1685	.002*	Statistically Significant
C. Position		**F**	**Sig.**	
Between groups		4.189	.017	Statistically Significant
Within Groups				
Multiple Comparisons		**Mean Diff.**	**Sig.**	
Top Management	Rank and File	-.2051	.012	Statistically Significant
Middle Management	Rank and File	-.1177	.039	Statistically Significant
D. Years of Service		**F**	**Sig.**	
Between Groups		4.656	.000*	Statistically Significant
Within Groups				
Multiple Comparisons		**Mean Diff.**	**Sig.**	
1-5	16 and above	.4348	.000*	Statistically Significant
6-10	16 and above	.5200	.000*	Statistically Significant
11-15	16 and above	.4000	.049*	Statistically Significant
E. Type of Work		**F**	**Sig.**	
Between Groups		31.931	.000*	Statistically Significant
Within Groups				
Multiple Comparisons		**Mean Diff.**	**Sig.**	
Banks/Business/Airport	Education	.6392	.000*	Statistically Significant
	IT	.2883	.000	Statistically Significant
	Telecom	.3043	.000	Statistically Significant
Education	IT	-.3504	.000	Statistically Significant
	Telecom	-.3348	.000	Statistically Significant

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The data in the table provided directed at ascertaining whether there were significant difference on the level of employee productivity of the respondents when classified as to a. age- between groups, within groups (F 7.002) (Sig .000*) and with multiple comparisons (Sig .010*,000*, .010*, .049*, .004*, .000*) Statistically significant. Age group between18-30 perceived that

their level of productivity at work was higher when using social networks while the rest of the groups responded in the study viewed Social Networks as less significant to their level of work productivity. b. Sex-both male and female (F.1685) (Sig.002*) statistically significant; the level of productivity of male has significant difference based on their perception. Female has higher work productivity than male c. Position- top management compared with the rank and file got a (mean diff. of -.2051)and (Sig.012); Middle Management compared with the rank and file (Mean Diff. -.1177) (Sig.0.39) -Statistically significant- Similarly Rank and File and Middle Management employees when using social networks at work has higher productivity than the top management group d. Years of Service –between groups and within groups (F-4.656) (Sig. .000*) statistically significant –Furthermore, the level of work productivity of employees with more than sixteen years and above in the service has significant difference based on their perception about the use of social network. Five years and above in the service

has higher productivity at work when they were given the opportunity to explore the vast contributions that the social networks can bring them. e. Type of work –between groups and within groups (F31.931) (Sig,.000*) Statistically significant. In terms of the employees who work in the banks, airports and business establishments they depicted a higher level of productivity than those who worked in Education, IT, and Telecom. From the data provided employee respondents rejected the null hypothesis "there is no significant difference on the level of employee respondents when classified as to the abovementioned variables." Therefore the alternative hypothesis was accepted. As perceived by the employees there was statistically significant difference on the level of productivity in their work performance as clearly discussed above. The findings of this study corroborated with the study of Jim Flyyn [3] that social networks have an effect on employees' performance by improving their motivational level at work and working harmoniously with colleagues and the organization as a whole [12].

Table 4 Significant Relationship between the Employees' Perception on the Use of Social Networks and their Work Productivity

Employees' Productivity		Employees' Perception	
	Pearson Correlation	.242*	Moderate Positive Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	Correlation is significant
	N	204	

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results signifies that there is linear moderate positive correlation at .242* between the employees' perception on the use of social networks and productivity at work. Moreover correlation is highly statistically significant at .001 level. The employee respondents perceived that work skills, information gathered, efficiency, and enthusiasm highly correlate with the use of social networks. This finding reaffirmed the study of North that some respondents view social networking site to have negative aspects, however, majority of the participants concurred its application at work is

worthwhile. Interacting online while at work will make them happier and increase their productivity at work [13]. Furthermore Clark and Collins claim that companies willfully develop social networks for human resource evaluation on employees' performance. Having said this, this kind of system will help create a strong bond between top management and employees and aid in improving employees' performance [13].

On Qualitative Data, Insights of the Employees were carried out to Support the Findings of the Quantitative Data.

Insights from the employees were carried out on their perception of the use of social network whether they have enjoyed and found helpful means to improve their work productivity. They have also given their comments on the disadvantages of the social networks in the workplace. Six groups of employees (fifty eight in total), revealed the data below.

What I enjoyed and found helpful in using social network for work?

Eight IT managers expressed their perception on the use of social network "I gain additional information and my work performance improves faster than ever before. Because it is quite easy now to get the latest information."; "Social Network is helpful in colleagues at work and obtaining knowledge and information related to work. I enjoyed using facebook during my free time." Fifteen Call Center Representatives also affirmed "I am working in the telecom company and I believe it is helpful to get connected with the customer to find out their needs in terms of specifications of the product we offer." Likewise insights from the sixteen educators revealed their agreement "As an educator I use social network to link with professionals in the same field and share up-to-date information regarding my profession; it is the trend of time. I am teaching with the millennial students who were born with the use of high technology" Eight Librarian staffs reflected their views, "I use social network sites for communication and research work; It helps me get news about the company especially about publishers, their events; it helps me keep connected with the people globally, gives me updates as well about the new information related to my work." Operation Agent, Dispatchers and Attendants (six in total) opined "Social networks keep me in contact with my colleagues and my immediate superior since most of us in the workplace use social media; it is accessible to get the latest information about the travels, delays of the trips of the passengers." The Bank Managers, loan Officers, Bank Tellers also shared their opinions, "Social Networks make everything easy to reach prospective clients. Even if you are in the other part of the continent, using emails, facebooks, whatsapp, viber you can immediately get connected with people around the world." "There are enough information you can also get in youtube to find ways on how you deal with fraud."

Disadvantages of the Social Networks to their Work Productivity

Most of the respondents gave their positive gains from the use of social network with few disadvantages were noted hence, the summary.

" It makes you feel alone and lonely in your room getting a lot of information yet you are dealing with your work by yourself; "The use of social network is just a waste of time, it does not actually provide benefit at much,"; " It affects your health and the level of work productivity," " Getting latest applications with charge," ;"Some information in Wikipedia are not reliable," "It requires internet connection, it's costly and not everybody can afford the internet fees." Fluctuation of internet signal are also noted, fake news and advertisement are apparent; "Some issues of cyber bullying, information overload, use for fraud activities and theft identity." "Getting diverted to other unrelated matters."; "Disadvantages to people who do not know how to control and manage the use."

Chapter 5
Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are hereby formulated:

1. The general perception of employees regardless of age, sex, position in the company, number of years employed and type of work are in agreement on the usefulness of the social networks to their respective world of works; However, it can be noted that respondents aged 56-65 received the lowest mean which implies that they found the usefulness of the social media as somewhat less significant to them. They can work productively even in the absence or little influence of the social networks to them.

2. With regards to the level of productivity of the respondents when classified as to their age, aged 18-30 group yielded high significance of the importance of social networks in their job performance while the rest of the age brackets agree but not as intense compared to the first

group; for the type of work provided by employees working in the banks, business and airport group, they perceived the social networks as valuable tool to them in bringing out the high level of performance in their work activities;

3. Employee respondents rejected the null hypothesis "there is no significant difference on the level of employee respondents when they are classified as to age, sex, position in the company, number of years employed and type of work." Hence, the alternative hypothesis of significant difference on the level of their employee productivity was accepted; and

4. There is linear moderate correlation, in terms of the significant relationship between the employees' perception and work productivity. Moreover correlation is highly statistically significant between their perception on the use of social networks and their productivity at work.

Recommendations

In the light of the significant findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. There should be suitable and useful ways of supervising employee social network involvement. Further training on effective use of social networks should be initiated by the organization.

2. Employees should take advantage on the vast information in terms of the usefulness they can get from their exposure to social networks.

3. Human Resource department should conduct training or seminar on the effective use of social networks in the workplace.

4. Further work or researches should replicate this study to determine its usefulness or applicability in the workplace.

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