

Analysis of Social Networks Utilization in Student Learning Patterns

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The purpose of this study is to determine the use of social networking in student learning patterns. The type of research is descriptive qualitative research with ethnographic design. Data collection is performed through interviews and observation techniques. Interviews were conducted openly with four university students and two lecturers at the Accounting Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta with interview sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Data analysis is performed through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. The results of this study state that the use of social networking media by Accounting Education students has the effect of increasing students' learning independence and increasing the effectiveness of classroom learning. The use of social networking allows students to study and discuss more effectively and efficiently from long distances, and allows them to share knowledge, send files to each other easier and quicker, and establish effective communication. However, there are negative effects such as the misuse of social networks outside of learning needs, which disrupts concentration in learning, reduces social life activities in the community, increases plagiarism, and increases student dependence on the function of social networking applications.

Key words: *Social networking, learning pattern, student.*

Introduction

Internet technology is currently experiencing a significant increase. This can be marked by the increasing number of internet users worldwide. According to data from We Are Social (a media company from the UK that released the latest internet-related reports), the number of internet



and social media users reached four billion people from the total population in the world with a percentage rate of 52.96% (Internet World Stats, 2018). This is caused by the increase in electronic devices that can be used to access the internet. The internet is equipped with social media that can be used as a tool for socializing and communicating online. Social media users in the past year increased by almost one million people. That is more than 11 new users every second. Globally social media users have increased by 13% (Internet World Stats, 2018). One of facilities available on social media is social networking. Social networking has now become one of the most important communication tools used by everyone. This social network can be accessed using the internet which can be accessed by millions of people.

According to the National Development Planning Agency, the estimated population in Indonesia in 2018 will reach 265 million: 133.17 million will be male and 131.88 million inhabitants will be female (Bappenas, 2018). Indonesia is a country that has a young generation with cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. Thus, it takes a qualified young generation to reach a good future for the nation. To get competent young people, it is necessary to go through a process of education with good quality. This education is used to shape young people who are intelligent, broad-minded, have good personalities and character. But the quality of education and tools for learning have received serious criticism (Chukwunedu, Ogochukwu, & Onuora, 2015). A previous study recommends adopting technology, information and communication directly in the classroom (Nwangwu, Obi, & Ogwu, 2014).

Based on the results of a survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJIII) in 2016, 89.7% of the 10.3 million students in Indonesia use the internet. The internet can be used as a supporting tool in various activities. Many benefits derived from the use of the internet, for example in the fields of communication, business, social, and education. The internet is a technology that offers educational opportunities for many people and also provides an increase in the quality of higher education for all students (Chen, Lambert, & Guidry, 2010). In the world of education, the internet is used to support the learning process, for example, by accessing social media for network information and communication.

The use of social media for networking has increased rapidly. This social media can be applied in the world of education as a supporting media in the learning process. Social media for formal learning/teaching is used to conduct teaching and learning in class, while the use of social media for students is used for learning purposes that are indirect and informal (Mao, 2014). Social media itself is a form of online media that utilizes internet technology with facilities for social interaction that enables collaboration. It is a communication tool and a way of sharing information through blogs, chat application forums and social networks. (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2009).

One element in social media is the social networking feature, which has many uses in everyday life. Social networking is a feature in computer/electronic devices that allows one to share and exchange information about ideas, images, videos, etc (Siddiqui & Shing, 2016). The process of exchanging and sharing information is carried out in a non-conventional way through internet-based social networking (Zolkepli & Kamarulzaman, 2015). This social network itself can be accessed using various electronic devices, so it is easy for users to access it from anywhere and at any time, because the system is connected with internet technology. Famous social networks in the world include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube and other blog sites (Chung & Paredes, 2015).

Social networking pages have been accessed almost every day, so it has become part of everyone's routine. The process of interaction in social networking is not just for one person, but for sharing information from one person with many others (Pfeffer, 2012). The most commonly used social networks with an average of 5 hours a day include: Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook (Adiarsi, Stellarosa, & Silaban, 2015). Indonesia is ranked fourth in Facebook users and fifth in Twitter users, beating countries like America, Brazil and India. The use of social networking is to share experiences, activities and information to others. Social networks can also be used as entertainment media and there are still many benefits to be gained from the use of social networks.

One of the benefits of social networking in education is by using it as a media in educational activities. Social networks in the world of education are used actively in lectures to meet information and social needs. Social networks are also used for exchanging tools and finding information that is relevant to academic assignments (Acheaw & Larason, 2015). The application of social networking refers to computer mediated technology that facilitates growth and various ideas, awareness, career interests, information and provides different expressions that result from posting, commenting, sharing videos and other data online (Abbas, Aman, Nurunnabi, & Bano, 2019). The benefits of implementing social networking as a learning medium are sharing opinions with others, sharing knowledge, building relationships, increasing social awareness and developing communication skills (Abbas et al., 2019).

The current social network is no doubt in the transformation that connects social interaction and communication in which students will participate in new things, various methods or information, filter, and together build knowledge and information (Gruzd, Paulin, & Haythornthwaite, 2016). Implementing social networking in learning will encourage interest in learning. Students will easily get new experiences based on their own encouragement in finding and obtaining information using social networks that they have. So, learning through social networks as an additional means used for material search and learning encourages wider knowledge. But with the switch to social networking as a learning media, it will pose challenges

in terms of infrastructure and the development of new student learning practices to build a collective learning atmosphere.

The use of social networking can be applied in learning at the university level. Social networks have provided faster growth in higher education (Falahah & Rosmala, 2012). An analysis revealed that students expressed positive things from the use of social networks to interact with one another and with their lecturers (Hamid, Waycott, Kurnia, & Chang, 2015). Changes in terms of learning are needed by seeing the rapid development of technology, so that by using social networks in classrooms, it will create a new culture in learning activities by applying technology. Technology in learning with the internet has a positive impact on learning and student involvement so that universities provide online support services for students (Chen et al., 2010). It is also the responsibility of institutional and faculty administrators to ensure that all students can receive adequate academic and technological support and they are made aware of all the online and offline resources available to them. Social networking is a technology that is currently developing widely within the student environment so that it can be applied in learning by lecturers.

Currently, students are very familiar with social networking, so lecturers are encouraged to be able to utilize social networking for learning that is more interesting and encourages student interest in learning. This tendency encourages several universities to implement social networks to support academic activities, official, and informal activities carried out by students and lecturers (Falahah & Rosmala, 2012). Social networks that are intensively used by students in education will increase insights that are quite significant (Isba, Woolf, & Hanneman, 2017). A survey stated that social networking is used as a tool for various conversations and relationships, where the most frequently visited are Facebook and Twitter, because both of them look more attractive to lecturers (Falahah & Rosmala, 2012). The advantage of using Facebook or Twitter in lectures is that the lecturer will be able to effectively spread information directly.

In regard to the use of social networks such as Facebook or Twitter in lectures, most of the incoming responses are limited to entertainment, However, it can also be used to do assignments, make announcements, conduct discussions and also for exams (Falahah & Rosmala, 2012). In reality, of course, more students use social networking as only an entertainment medium (Nisiforou & Laghos, 2015). This is concerning because of the many negative effects of misusing social networking. The average time a person spends time on social networks is approximately 6-8 hours per day (Wang, Chen, Liang, Wang, & Chen, 2011). That use of time is considerable and is feared to reduce academic performance. However, social networks involved in the learning process will increase learning hours outside of lectures, so that the academic performance of students does not decrease and will improve with the help of the proper use of social networks.



University lecturers are worried that students might replace their study time with social networking (Ikehi, 2014). Student learning patterns are influenced by social networking. However, social networking in support of learning is not too detrimental to students. In universities that provide limited access to social networking, it makes the lecturers and students access content through the available sites (Falahah & Rosmala, 2012). Students experience transitional changes from the school environment where learning patterns are more structured and stronger, to college/university where the learning patterns are not as structured so they have to control it themselves (Dörrenbächer & Perels, 2016). Each student has a different learning pattern. They have their own characteristics involving social networks in their learning patterns. All of these things depend on each individual student. The wrong learning pattern causes difficulty in mastering the material provided by the lecturer. Curriculum developers and educators need to explore several ways to help students form more appropriate beliefs about expanding knowledge. It is hoped that students can develop high-level conceptions of learning with their own learning patterns (Tsai, 2009).

Learning patterns of students in other countries involve learning strategies that are more reproductive, gradual, sequential, detailed and analytic. It aims to identify the main points that build a more comprehensive picture of learning. (Marambe, Vermunt, & Boshuizen, 2012). Learning patterns are internal factors that play a role in the success of students in mastering courses. There needs to be encouragement to students so that they have good learning patterns. Because good learning patterns will lead to maximum results, the learning patterns of students that are not organized will lead to bad and disappointing results. This study aims to determine the use of social networking in student learning patterns involving the types of social networking used, the reasons students use social networking, the benefits of social networking in learning, and the positive and negative impacts of the use of social networking in learning.

Method

This research is a qualitative research with ethnographic research design. Ethnographic research design is the description and interpretation of a culture or social group system (Harsono, 2016). This research was conducted at the Accounting Education Study Program, Faculty of Teaching and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. The subjects of this study were active Accounting Education students. The data was collected through open interview and observation methods. Information was obtained from in-depth interviews, which involved students and lecturers as informants. The informants were chosen based on certain criteria. The validity of the data is tested by comparing the information obtained with information from other informants and by using the interview data which is validated with observations or documentations. Data analysis was carried out through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions.

Results and Discussion

This study is a study of the use of social networking in student learning patterns in the Department of Accounting Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta. Based on the results of the study, the use of social networking in student learning patterns using a variety of social networking applications in learning, both in lectures and in student independent learning, is detected. The most popular social networking applications used by the informants are WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook. They use these social networks for various benefits. From the interview results, there are a few students who are more likely to use WhatsApp to get information from people through private chat or joining a group. Referring to previous research, it was concluded that the social media for efficient interaction and support for educational learning are: social networks, email services, and online videos such as YouTube and Wikipedia (Hamzah, 2015). In addition, voice and video technology on social networks enables students to enhance collaborative learning more quickly and efficiently. Students can find their friends to converse, collaborate, or collaborate simultaneously through chat, forums, discussion boards or email.

From the results of this study, students use social networking accounts to simply follow the development of communication and information media, as a means of distance communication, as a medium for learning both in and outside of lectures, to find up to date information in the world of social networking, as well as fast and inexpensive information and communication media. The results of the study were also supported by a similar study, which states that students have reasons for using social networks (Dewi, 2013). The reasons for using social media include communication without time and space limitation, disseminating information, and socializing with other social media users. From the social networks that are widely used by students as well as the reasons for using social networks, there are various influences and benefits that support student learning both inside and outside of lectures. From the results of the study, it is found that various benefits are felt by students using social networks.

The informants mentioned various benefits obtained by the use of social networks in learning, such as: sharing files and exchanging information through the use of WhatsApp for communication between one study group, Facebook for discussions through groups or educational forums, and Instagram's live feature for sharing material visually from anywhere. Another benefit is using social media as learning media to facilitate the understanding of material. For example, social networking is used for discussion in a study group, YouTube for video tutorials, and private chat with lecturers related to material not understood by students. It can also be used as a media for collecting lecture assignments, including: sending lecture assignments to lecturers via e-mail, uploading assignments through mobile learning Schoology media. Gathering assignments can be done at any time, and there is no need to wait to meet the lecturer in person. Social media also functions as a modern alternative to learning media. Live



Instagram learning, for example, can be monitored by a lecturer from a distance. Indeed, social media can also serve as a resource that enables students to find learning resources through YouTube, as well as from the group on the Facebook page. Learning materials can also be shared between lecturers students using the WhatsApp group, and by downloading material from lecturers that are quickly accessed through mobile learning Schoology.

The result of another study also states that the correct use of social media will provide benefits in learning that can have a positive influence on its users (Rianingtias, Sobri, & Nurabadi, 2014). The use of social media in learning, among others, includes sending lecture assignments, utilizing group facilities to disseminate information, and distance learning activities. The study also mentioned that the use of social media for student learning outcomes was effective but still in the low category. With the many benefits of using social networks in student learning, there are also negative impacts that arise from the use of social networks in learning. In other words, the use of social media has positive impacts and negative impacts (Khairuni, 2016). The use of social networking in student learning process brings positive impacts and negative impacts. These positive impacts include increasing learning motivation, facilitating student learning, obtaining various kinds of learning material, help solving problems, information can be obtained quickly through groups, and communication continues without being limited by distance and time. On the other hand, there are negative impacts caused by the use of social networks, namely: the abuse of social networks outside of necessity, the difficulty to focus on learning, social life becoming less favourable in the community, making plagiarism easier to do, and causing dependence on other students.

The results of this study state that the positive impacts caused are: facilitating learning activities, finding or adding friends through groups on social networks, and media for relieving stress when learning. The negative impacts caused include: reduced learning time due to the preoccupation of learning with social networks, disrupting the concentration of learning, damaging individual morale, and disrupting health, such as playing mobile phones to a degree that impacts eye health. The use of social networking in student learning patterns has proven to have many benefits. In comparison, the positive benefits are greater than the negative impacts. So, the use of social networking is still needed in learning/lectures to support student learning outcomes.

The application of social networks in learning is also not easy, because there are still obstacles in their implementation. Barriers faced in using social networking as a tool to support learning are the lack of privacy, time (because the need to adjust), and miscommunication (Jalal & Zaidieh, 2012). The results of this study stated that there are lecturers who use social networking media to support lectures, but there are those who do not use the media in the classroom because it is considered less than optimal and not all social networks can be used

intensively in lectures. But even when it is not optimal to be applied in lectures, social networking can be used to support students to learn independently.

The patterns of independent learning of students are different from one another, because the learning patterns are internal factors originating from the students themselves. To improve student learning patterns, there must be encouragement from within themselves and encouragement from outside. The current learning material should not only be from books but also the resources that can be accessed via the internet, and by utilizing social networking media that has diverse references. Previous studies stated that by using social networking media, they (students) are not just focused on one source information and are enabled to find and compare other sources more deeply by social networking media (Adiarsi et al., 2015). After getting the information, they do not immediately believe in the material given by one source.

The results of this study state that the independent learning style that utilizes social networking media as a communication medium is used to: share files and exchange information, learning media to facilitate understanding of the material, media for collecting assignments, discussion media through groups or educational forums, and alternative learning media, a modern one. Thus, to form a better pattern of independent learning, it is necessary to apply social networking media in accordance with the current development of mass media technology, because the material in the form of books is not enough anymore.

Conclusion

The use of social networking media in learning both inside and outside of lectures is needed by students. The average student uses social networking applications that are known by the wider community, such as WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook. However, students tend to use WhatsApp most, as a medium that supports their learning. Students have a strong enough reason to use social networking to support learning. The use of social networking has a pretty good influence on student learning. The students mentioned the positive benefits of social networking media related to independent learning and learning in class.

The use of social networking can support student learning because it can be accessed anywhere and anytime without the limitations of space and time. Social networks can disseminate various types of material as well as the information needed by students, so students have a lot of material and references that support their learning. The positive impacts arising from the use of social networking weighs more than the negative side, so using social networking provides more effective and efficient benefits in the process of student learning that can improve student learning outcomes to the maximum. Lecturers can make more interesting material by making videos or other materials that can be disseminated on social networks.

Students and lecturers need to make the most of social networks in order to support the teaching and learning process. This is to improve the quality of learning so that student learning



outcomes are maximized. Lecturers must also be able to implement social networking in lectures so students can study anywhere and also have a lot of reference material that is available on social networks. Therefore, lecturers are required to follow technological developments, especially in social networks.

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