Contact Addresses of the int.WOJDE

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From the Editor

Dear readers of int.WOJDE

Welcome to the eight issue of the Women Online Journal of Distance Education, intWOJDE as being Volume: 3 Number: 1, for the year of 2014. In this issue 2 articles are published, by 6 authors from 3 different countries as being Malaysia and USA.

Our first article, entitled as "Female Administrators Perceptions Of Distance Learning", written by Marie-ANNE MUNDY, Lori KUPCZYNSKI, Rebecca DAVIS from Texas A&M University-Kingsville, USA and Marydee A. SPILLETT from Walden University, USA. They indicated in their article that Gender disparity is evident in tenure track and tenured faculty positions at universities.

However, distance education may provide more supportive environments for female academicians to grow and develop. The term distance learning is used to encompass any type of instruction delivered off campus. Distance learning has increased dramatically and has gained strategic importance possibly presenting women with a new realm for advancement. Leaders in distance learning must have qualities such as good listening skills, be understanding, engage in collaboration, be cooperative, demonstrate openness, have interpersonal sensitivity and empathy; attributes traditionally associated with females.

This qualitative study utilizing a survey design, asked 21 participants, female administrators in distance education: "What are your perceptions of the role of distance learning in education today?"

They perceived the role of distance learning in education today to be of utmost import and discussed the needs of learners, the access of distance learning, value of distance learning, federal and state requirements, the future of distance learning, the significant impact on Higher Education and the improvement needed.

The second article is from Malaysia and Brunei, on "Understandıng The Negatıve Effects Of Socıal-Networkıng Facebook On Women", written by Mohd Aliff MOHD NAWI, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Institute of Education, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, from, Brunei and Chua CHY REN Faculty of Economics and Management, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

They mention in their article that phenomenon of a rapidly growing social networking site, Facebook has started to give a massive impact on the users. The aim of this study is to examine the influence of Facebook for users, especially to the women. This study will apply qualitative methods, through literature review and document analysis of past studies.

The results showed that Facebook gives more negative impact, and if it is not properly controlled, it will be exploited for other dreadful purposes. At the end of this paper, some suggestions are included for a better use the social-networking site.

Dear intWOJDE readers to receive further information and to send your recommendations and remarks, or to submit articles for consideration, please contact int.WOJDE Secretariat at the below address or e-mail us at **intwojde@gmail.com**

Hope to stay in touch and wishing to meet in our next Issue on 1st of April 2014.

Cordially,
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FEMALE ADMINISTRATORS PERCEPTIONS
OF DISTANCE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Gender disparity is evident in tenure track and tenured faculty positions at universities. However, distance education may provide more supportive environments for female academicians to grow and develop. The term distance learning is used to encompass any type of instruction delivered off campus. Distance learning has increased dramatically and has gained strategic importance possibly presenting women with a new realm for advancement. Leaders in distance learning must have qualities such as good listening skills, be understanding, engage in collaboration, be cooperative, demonstrate openness, have interpersonal sensitivity and empathy; attributes traditionally associated with females.

This qualitative study utilizing a survey design, asked 21 participants, female administrators in distance education: "What are your perceptions of the role of distance learning in education today?" They perceived the role of distance learning in education today to be of utmost import and discussed the needs of learners, the access of distance learning, value of distance learning, federal and state requirements, the future of distance learning, the significant impact on Higher Education and the improvement needed.

Keywords: Online learning, female administrators, distance learning, women, education

INTRODUCTION

Women have made great strides in the realm of enrollment in both undergraduate and graduate programs in the United States since the 1970's. Women represent 57% of all college students and earn more than half of all Ph.D. degrees granted to American citizens, yet, currently, females account for approximately 50% of assistant professors; a number which is actuality is only equal to that of male assistant professors in certain disciplines. However, females only account for 38% of associate professors, and 24% of full professors; significantly lower numbers than those of their male counterparts (Madsen, 2012; Bilen-Green, Froelich & Sukalski, 2011). Additionally females comprise only about 45% of tenure-track faculty and 31% of tenured faculty (Bilen-Green, Froelich & Sukalski, 2011). Participation of women is lowest in doctoral-granting institutions, where women constitute just 34% of full-time faculty, 26% of tenured faculty, and 19% of full professors.

Gender disparity is especially evident in science and engineering departments, where only 19% of full professors are women in four-year colleges and universities, with even fewer in research institutions (NSF Science and Engineering Indicators 2008). More women than men are in part-time or non-tenure track positions, and the increasing scarcity of women as you look at higher academic ranks is clearly shown, especially as associate and full-professors with tenure are the individuals who are generally tapped for leadership

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positions (Bilen-Green, Froelich & Sukalski, 2011; Murray, Tremaine, & Fountaine, 2012; Perrakis & Martinez, 2012).

It has been suggested that non-traditional academic settings such as community colleges and distance education may provide more supportive environments for female academicians to grow and develop (Perrakis & Martinez, 2012). The term distance learning is used to encompass virtually every type of instruction delivered off campus including satellite television, video conferencing, cable, audiotapes, computer systems, fax, correspondence courses, home study, and independent study (Floyd, 2003). Over the past decade due primarily to increases in the availability of technology, distance learning has increased dramatically and has gained legitimacy and acceptance (Gopalarkrishnan, 2012). Furthermore, as the strategic importance of distance education comes to the forefront, it may also present women with a new, increasingly prestigious realm for advancement.

Distance learning advancements have taken place primarily in the form of online education and instruction, which requires instructors and administrators to utilize technology and computers in ways that may be foreign and intimidating to some (Floyd, 2003). As such, leaders in the relatively new realm of online learning must have a listening edge and be understanding, attributes traditionally associated with females again making the distance learning arena a prime area for female advancement (Floyd, 2003; Kark, Waismel-Manor, & Shamir, 2012).

Additionally, as distance learning education continues to be researched and best practices continue to change and develop with each technological advancement there will be an increased need for female leaders' general abilities with transformational leadership, which seeks to inspire employees to go beyond their assigned role, foster creativity and problem solving, mentor, establish vision, and lay plans for reaching that vision (Vinkenburg, van Engen, Eagly, & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2011).

Furthermore, the relative youngness of many popular variations in the field of distance education necessitate leaders to engage in collaboration, be cooperative, demonstrate openness, interpersonal sensitivity and empathy, and invest efforts in the development of their employees; qualities that are traditionally associated with the feminine gender (Kark, Waismel-Manor, & Shamir, 2012). The need for these uniquely feminine characteristics opens doors for many women academicians.

The importance of female leadership within higher education was touched on within The White House Report (2009), wherein the authors argued that female academicians, due to their unique experiences, offer differing perspectives from their male counterparts that have profound effects on institutions as well as knowledge and research. Furthermore, successful female faculty and administrators serve as mentors and role models for future generations of women.

This is especially important within the realm of distance education where past research has indicated that women suffer from gender specific issues such as gender identity, the prescribed view of how females should interact with technology, discrimination and sexual harassment (Arbaugh, 2000; Blum, 1999; Trepet 2006; Johnson, 2011).

The need for female mentors within distance education is also important because a majority of distance education students are women (Porter, 2013). Distance education may be very attractive for women as both students and educators simply because of the flexibility it offers. Women tend to strive for a healthy and well-maintained balance between work, or in this case school, and their personal lives, especially as their families expand, which can result in a preference for education or work that can be accessed

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during non-traditional hours. The "second shift" of traditional feminine domestic life may all play a role in a woman's choices when attempting to achieve the balance that they seek (Bilen-Green, Froelich & Sukalski, 2011).

The unique challenges and experiences of women in higher education compounded by those of distance education are likely to give women a highly unique outlook on every aspect of distance education. As women increasingly become the primary drivers of distance education as both students and educators the importance of the feminine viewpoint on distance education cannot be overstated.

METHODOLOGY

The study surveyed female administrators in distance education in an effort to thematically analyze their perceptions of distance learning in higher education. The guiding question for the study focused on attitudes about distance learning among female administrators. Subjects were selected in two ways.

> ➢ They were invited from the Texas Distance Learning Association Group Membership website. An invitation was posted on the "Members Only" webpage asking for participation in the study and providing the link to the survey. The researcher also included an invitation to share the link with other colleagues in distance learning.
> ➢ They were also invited through colleague interactions. The researcher sent out the invitation via e-mail requesting participation in the study and asking colleagues in the field to pass the invitation to other colleagues. These are colleagues the researcher has collaborated with during the last 10 years while working in the field of distance learning. They are not personal friends but are professional colleagues and the invitation clarified that participation was both voluntary and anonymous.

Sample and Population

Initially, 48 individuals responded, 47 agreed to participate, 22 actually participated in responding to the question. One participant was male and was removed from the line-up. There were a total of 21 participants. Race/ethnicity was mainly Caucasian with 16 participants falling into that category, two participants were Hispanic, two were African American and one participant marked other.

The participants included one Dean, one Associate Dean, two faculty, three Coordinators, eight Directors, three Instructional Designers, two Managers, and one Online Specialist. The length of time spent in these positions ranged from one to 18 years with the median and the mode both equal to four years. The participants supervised between zero and 42 employees with a median of three employees. The participants were pretty evenly split with seven employed at universities, seven at community colleges, five at K-12 institutions, one at a technical school, and one at a non-profit business. Of the 21 institutions, 10 were Traditional (majority of students are Caucasian), five were Hispanic Serving, four were Minority Serving, and two were non educational institutions. The median salary was $69,000.

RESULTS

The participants were asked: "What are your perceptions of the role of distance learning in education today?" They discussed the needs of learners, the access of distance learning, value of distance learning, federal and state requirements, and the future of distance learning, the significant impact on Higher Education and the improvement needed.

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There were 12 comments about the importance of DL including the use of descriptive words such as; important, integral, necessary, relevant, significant, mainstream, and embedded deeply, critical, vital, and essential. One respondent stated, "It (DL) is embedded deeply into the "traditional" method of teaching and learning. I believe it is becoming the "new traditional."

The participants perceived the importance of distance learning as it met the needs of students today. According to them students have been raised on technology and distance education has become an integral part of their learning. They perceived that students need this type of learning to achieve their economic goals and improve their career prospects via the flexibility provided by distance learning.

The importance of distance education in its ability to provide greater access was also discussed by several respondents. Both open and equitable access to further education was considered important aspects of distance learning. This accessibility has been furthered by the development of new technologies.

According to one respondent, "distance learning has taken on an increased role in terms of providing additional avenues for students to complete their education."

A couple of participants also discussed the importance of distance learning to the United States economy. "With distance learning, we have a phenomenal tool in our hands with which to open access to students, help them be successful in their coursework, and to help them complete degrees and certifications that are critical to the individual student's economic well being as well as the U.S. economy."

It was perceived that technology was integral to society in a time when employment was becoming more mobile as well as global, in a time period when the unsettled status of the economy was causing workers to fear losing their jobs as Distance Learning can provide the reskilling necessary.

One third of the participants discussed the importance of the growth of distance learning in the future of education. One of the reasons given for the continued growth in this area was due to the lack of facilities to offer face-to-face classes and therefore a need for further DL classes. For one, the experience of downsizing led to a realization of the benefits and values of online education. One suggested that DL has taken on an increased role in terms of providing additional avenues for students to complete their education. It was the perception of one of the respondents that the growth occurs because of the student expectation of online classes. This was reflected by a comment that growth was due to the necessity of meeting the needs of students.

Another determined that the role of DL was expanding due to the new technologies available in the classroom. The expectation of students that online classes are available has also supported this expansion. This expansion is not only occurring at the post-secondary level, it is also happening at the K-12 levels as some states have mandated that each high school student take at least one online class, providing them with much needed experience for future classes in college.

Finally, according to one respondent, we have not only experienced exponential growth in DL in the past decade but on-campus classes are also utilizing the same technologies. She predicted that within 5 years, "online classes will outnumber on-campus classes at a substantial number of institutions and most classes will at least utilize distance technologies."

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However, a caution was raised by one of the participants. She stated that we must ensure that both students and faculty are supported in their utilization of technology. She suggested that faculty need to be taught the complexities of teaching on-line because it requires a different set of skills than was utilized in face-to face classes. She also cautioned that it took a different mindset. This caution is reflected by another respondent who thought that DL was underutilized because of faculty fear of the technology as well as a fear of change in curriculum. In addition faculty and administrators need to determine the best use of DL to serve our students in a student centered approach.

One of the respondents advised that the needs of the learner needs to be put above the need for the use of technology for technology's sake and held the belief that administrators provide a pioneering service in quality assurance for DL within higher education. Learning must be made more appealing to students. Technology enhances both learning and teaching, it allows students to follow their own learning interests and proceed at their own pace.

Online courses need to be dynamic with ample interaction rather than electronic correspondence courses. Additional training, tools, and encouragement needs to be utilized to change this attitude.

It is more than just video-taping of face-to-face lectures. "Technology is an opportunity to make education better and more available to more people. It needs to be done the right way. Those in charge need to know that it's about more than just the tools."

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the perceptions of the respondents, the role of distance learning in education today is of utmost import. It is required to meet the needs of students today as technology has become an integral part of their learning. The flexibility provided by distance learning will help students achieve their economic goals and improve their career prospects. Its open and equitable accessibility has provided more students the opportunity to complete their education.

Technology was considered to be an integral part of society today due to the global nature and mobility of employment and the fluctuating labor market where the possibility of reskilling through DL could become a necessity.

One third of the participants discussed the importance of the growth of distance learning in the future of education. It was felt that this growth was necessary due to a lack of brick and mortar facilities, a need for providing additional avenues for students, student expectation of online classes, and the availability of new technologies. It was opined that both students and faculty need to be supported in their utilization of technology. Faculty, due to a basic change in mindset, a fear of the technology and the corresponding change in curriculum, specifically need to be taught the new skill set for utilizing the necessary technology.

We need to remember that distance learning advancements have taken place primarily in the form of online education and instruction, which requires instructors and administrators to utilize technology and computers in ways that may be foreign and intimidating to some (Floyd, 2003). As such, leaders in the relatively new realm of online learning must have a listening edge and be understanding, attributes traditionally associated with females (Floyd, 2003; Kark, Waismel-Manor, & Shamir, 2012).

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Further research needs to be completed comparing the male and female view of distance education. Based on this qualitative study, a survey could be created to quantify these differences.

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UNDERSTANDING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL-NETWORKING FACEBOOK ON WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of a rapidly growing social networking site, Facebook has started to give a massive impact on the users. The aim of this study is to examine the influence of Facebook for users, especially to the women.

This study will apply qualitative methods, through literature review and document analysis of past studies. The results showed that Facebook gives more negative impact, and if it is not properly controlled, it will be exploited for other dreadful purposes. At the end of this paper, some suggestions are included for a better use the social-networking site.

Keywords: Social-networking, facebook, consumers, women.

INTRODUCTION

Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Friendster, Hi5 and LinkedIn are all examples of the virtual social-networking sites which is the current trend. It has a function as a communication tool that is equipped with various applications such as personal websites, discussion forums, email, chat rooms, space to upload pictures and video as well as game software (Boyd & Ellison 2008). Therefore, the virtual social-networking site can be defined as a social site with a range of interesting applications and thus helping the users to communicate or to interact with each other.

In Malaysia, the social-networking Facebook has become the most popular virtual community of choice compared to other social sites (Siti Azaleila & Azizah 2010). This page was rapidly built into the community with users ranging from all ages, starting from childhood until the age of senior citizens (DeCosta 2010).

In fact, politicians and celebrities are not left from having a virtual social-networking site along with the progress of current technology (Rosmalina 2010).

There are study showed that females spent more time on Facebook, had more Facebook friends, and were more likely to use profile pictures for impression management (McAndrew & Jeong 2012). Study by Norizan et al. (2010) shows that the use of social sites like Facebook and MySpace in Malaysia has become in trend and is increased from time to time, whether in urban or rural areas. Refer to statistics taken from Socialbakers.com website; the amount of visitors to social-networking Facebook in Malaysia is as high as over 12 million. In fact, this number increased from time to time. Among the highest number of users in Facebook are users within the age of 18 to 24 years old
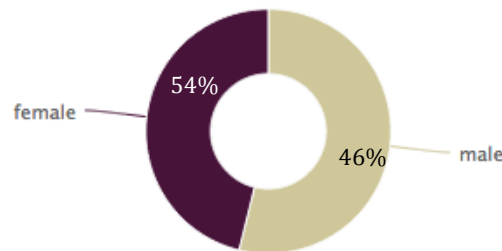
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Figure: 1
Statistical male/female user ratio in Malaysia
Source: Socialbakers.com

WORLD WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

The advancement of technology in the 21st century has produced a world without boundaries. All information either in or outside the country can be accessed with only few clicks of a computer mouse. Even in behind the computer screen, users are still able to explore the entire world and getting the updates of news in a faster way. This state will change the world towards an open policy thus creating a phenomenon of a broad discussion with no borders.

Discussions can be done by using a variety of applications that have been fitted in the social-networking Facebook. Users are able to exchange ideas and comment on the status of contacts whose are in the same network. Furthermore, the presence of a third application such as online quizzes and games in the network allows users to create a variety of desired applications. These applications can then be shared with other users around the world and at the same time helping them to add new friends on Facebook.

Before this, users can only access the social-networking site through computer or laptop, but nowadays the telecommunications network in Malaysia such as Maxis and Celcom also have offers services to receive and to update Facebook's status.

Users will have access to make updates directly only through SMS (Short Messaging System), which is not offered by other social-networking sites. This provides advantage and is appealing to many users to choose this social-networking site.

THE IMPACT OF FACEBOOK ONTO IT'S USERS

There are many researches been carried out in overseas pertaining on the social-networking, especially on Facebook. Many issues that can be bring forward and are interesting to be discussed to see how far the social-networking can give an impact to the users. There are few issues discussed and among them are issue on the addictions of social network (Barbera et al., 2009), the issue on over exposure of self-details (Koroleva et al. 2010), Issue on privacy (Herig, 2006; Dwyeret al., 2007) and the users behaviour (Morgan, 2010).

This article will focus only on the Facebook and does not intend to involve other social-networking. There are also several issues that led to the ban on the use of the Facebook by the Indonesian Ulama Council. Surprisingly, some fatwa was issued by a scholar in

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Egypt to ban the use of Facebook among the users. These issues and problems will be reviewed in detail in order to answer the question of this part of the drastic action.

NEGATIVE IMPACT TO WOMEN

Addiction

The nature of addiction can be identified when there is a conditioning process in which a person cannot be separated with a habit that exists due to the influence. This applies to the users of Facebook, who are willing to spend time in front of a computer screen for hours. The time wasted should be spent wisely for more useful activities. Research shows that the women are constantly exposed to this phenomenon, especially among adolescents (Barbera et al., 2009; Eszter Hargittai & Steven Shafer, 2006). According to Assoc. Mohamed Fadzil Che Din, the individual who got addicted to Facebook is not aware of his or her plight (Rosmalina, 2010). Therefore, it has become the responsibility of the parents, siblings or individuals to take immediate action to reprimand individuals who commit these bad habits. This is important to prevent the individuals from wasting more time.

Murder Cases

Social networking site Facebook has also contributed to variety of ills such as murder cases. According to the Cosmo magazine, a woman killed by her lover after changing the status of marriage to unmarried in the United States. While in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), one teacher who taught at international schools got stressed and died after she drank a poison because her former boyfriend had uploaded her naked photos on Facebook (Main article, Kosmo. April .15th, 2010). There is another case in Saudi Arabia, involving a father who shot his daughter for online chatting with a man who she had known through the Facebook (Farag 2010). Following of these incidents, a well-known Islamic speaker Sheikh Ali al-Maliki said that the West had brought the ideology to corrupt the youth, especially among Muslims through the use of the social-networking site.

Career

Research shows that there are employers of a company who use Facebook as a medium to find candidates with detailed background before choosing to work with them (Smith & Kidder 2010). This was done to obtain all relevant details of the candidates before selecting them to be one of the employees who can perform or not. Apart from that, there is a company in London that has fired a female employee after the women complaint on Facebook about atmosphere in the workplace, and revealed that she hated her job (main article, Kosmo. April. 15th, 2010). This has given a bad reputation to the company, and thus they took action to remove the woman from continue working with them.

Divorce cases

A study was conducted by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (AAML) shows that 81% of the 1600 members of the Association has acknowledged in the past five years, the divorce cases had increased drastically due to the social-networking site such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter (http://www.aaml.org). They often take over divorce cases due to the existence of third party in their relationship. This came out when the husband or wife has looked to their partner's messages whos discussed about sensitive matters, domestic issues and even sex.

It makes the husband or wife feeling jealous and thus choosing the divorce as a way out. The implications of this issue have caused a religious scholar, Sheikh Egypt Abdel Hamid al-atrás to issue a fatwa prohibiting the use of Facebook. He said that a Muslim cannot use the social-networking site and can be considered "guilty" or "sinful" if they continue to use it.

"This is one of the factors that destroyed the family institution as it provokes the married couple to have a relationship with another person that contravenes the Islamic Sharia law…"

Egypt Abdel Hamid al-atrás was also a former head of the fatwa council member in Al-Azhar University, Cairo, said that Facebook is like a TV satellite or the "double-edged sword" which means the social-networking Facebook will allow the users to use for either good or bad purposes. This has made the social-networking Facebook to spread missionary activities but at the same time the users also did not prevent the occurrences that are forbidden in Islam. For that reason, he considers that any Muslim who uses the social-networking Facebook as "guilty."

Decline in Student Performance

Study by Chowdhry (2009); Hamilton (2009); Kirschner & Karpinski (2010) and Leake & Warren (2009) have proven that there has been a decrease in achievement of students who use Facebook in their learning performance. According to Aryn (2009), of the total 214 students who sat for the examinations, 148 students obtained lower grades, and they have Facebook's account compared with the remaining students who do not have a Facebook account. Students who do not have a Facebook account told that they can review the lesson up until 11-15 hours a week compared to students who have Facebook's account and studied for only 1-5 hours per week. Similarly, a study conducted by Kirschner & Karpinski (2010), showed that the Facebook has given a negative impact on the students and causes them to get a low CGPA. Findings indicate that students spend only few hours to study compared to students who do not have a Facebook account.

Uploading Photos and Videos

One of the attractions of social Facebook to the users is providing a platform for upload multimedia like photos and videos. The eminence level of interactivity in social sites Facebook makes many users upload multimedia material for the sharing purpose with their friends. However, there are cases where women upload personal sexy photos and it's been spread wide by thirty party (inserbia.info).

Besides that, there are also some cases where there some of couples who took intimate photos with their partners. However, this picture uploaded and spread when they were separated. Besides that, there are some cases reported where those intimate photos with ex-partner had been spread after crash.

In perspective of Islam, the actions of uploading personal photos or videos among women are not recommended. This is the purpose of avoiding abuses by irresponsible parties. In addition, all pictures and video must be filtered before uploading to ensure all media materials are covered the intimate path/compliance with the dress for avoiding the unnecessary problems come in the future.

Sexting

Sexting is sending or posting a sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude photo or video of oneself. Delevi & Weisskirch (2013) investigated about personality factors as predictors of sexting, and the result indicated that, those in romantic relationships are more likely to sext, particularly through text messaging. Those in relationships and women indicate required greater commitment in a relationship in order to engage in sexting.

According to Phippen (2009), when 535 students from 18 schools in South West UK responded to a survey, about 4 out of 10 expressed at least one of their friends has shared intimate pictures or videos with a boyfriend or girlfriend

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This is the result of most of the women like to disclose and expose their identity on the Facebook such as uploading personal pictures and videos. This situation increased the possibility of women exposed to the dangerous situation or victim of online predators. There are many cases reported and increased continuously, especially among young adult (Drouin et al. 2013).

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, based on a number of issues that have been explored above, Facebook has the more negative impact on consumers rather than the positive impact. This indicated that the use of the social-networking site can be potentially harmful if the user misused it and is not wise in spending the time on Facebook. At the same time, we cannot deny the existence of positive effects resulting from technological advances in the cyber field.

People need to be aware that the information contained in the social-networking site is not fully accurate and should be investigated first. Parents and teachers as mentors for the students must control the behavior of students when they use the social sites so that they do not go astray from the teachings of Islam.

Apart from that, researchers also suggested the authorities to create a software that can control and monitor students' activities while they use computers and the internet. The proposal to establish guidelines for teenagers to use the social site can also be made. In addition, parents can also restrict the use of the social-networking site to avoid their children from wasting time with useless activities.

The usage of the internet can also be beneficial if it is used properly. This issue is also important in order to educate students to not misuse the ICT and avoiding them to use it is unethical. The application of Islamic values within the Muslim person needs to be practised from school-going age. Through this early step, sustained guidance and education will holistically give birth to the kind of Muslim who lives up to Islamic requirements.

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