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Users' Motivation in Sharing Information on Social Media

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Abstract

This study discusses the motivation of information sharing activities in social media. Types of information reviewed are personal, sensational, political, casual, and experience. Social media categories reviewed are social networking sites, microblogging sites, wikis, online blogs, and online forums. Responses from 255 respondents were processed using descriptive statistical methods. The results show that one's motivation in sharing information tends to be consistent for each type of information, that is to share the impression of social media users on a matter.

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Keywords: user motivation; type of information; information sharing; social media

1. Introduction

The number of people who use social media for information sharing is increasing. Social media is a digital platform used to connect people, create and share content, and process knowledge and restore that knowledge¹. Based on the interaction between users, social media is divided into four categories, namely social networking sites (Facebook/LinkedIn), micro-blogging sites (wikis), online forums, and online blogs². Approximately, there are 2.7 billion or about 37% of the people in the world who are actively using social media until January 2017³. Moreover, 40% of a total of 25 respondents who were interviewed in depth say that they use social media to share information and 80% of respondents use it to find information⁴.

Until January 2017, the total active users of social media in Indonesia has reached about 106 million users⁵. In addition, social media users are said to have grown by 34% since January 2016⁵. Those facts make Indonesia

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become one of the country with a very high social media usage. Indonesia is also the third country to have the highest growth of social media users in the world³. Further, Indonesia is the country with the fourth highest account owner in the world with the active Facebook users⁴ which is as much as 41% of the total population of Indonesia³.

Research from Osatuyi has discussed about information sharing activities in five social media, namely social networking sites, micro-blogging sites, wikis, online forums, and online blogs². Similar research has also been conducted by Hu et al. related to information sharing activities on social network Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google+⁶. Both studies indicate that there is a difference in types of information shared and exchanged in each social media.

Although social media has characteristics that support information sharing activities, it is unknown to people the motivation to use social media as a medium for sharing information. The existing research regarding this topic only discusses the motivation of tourism information sharing activities⁷ so it has not been explained for the case on various types of information and social media. Motivation of information-sharing activities is important to know as it can be exploited by certain social media owners to find out the right approach, whether in content or view, to users. Having that said, the research question that will be answered in this paper is "What are motivation to make social media users contribute in sharing information in social media?". This research will be useful for academics and organizations in knowing the motivation of information sharing activities performed by users in social media with different types of information. This paper consists of 6 sections consisting of introduction, literature study, methodology, results, discussions and implications as well as conclusions and future works.

2. Literature Study

2.1. Information Sharing Activity

Osatuyi categorizes information into four types namely personal, sensational, political, and casual². Personal information is a private information about a person and is usually sensitive, such as certain health information or family details. Sensational information is information that is discussed by a lot of people in a short period of time and attract people to share such information to other people. The example of sensational information is breaking news or celebrity gossips. Political information is a government or political related news, for example, presidential election news. On the other hand, casual information is information that is shared within the group of friends and colleagues which can enhanced a discussion, such as, a recommendation to certain restaurant or place to visit for holiday. Information with the type experience is added in this research as the meaning of experience has been changed, to become limitless, with the phenomenon of sharing information online⁷. This type is also added with the consideration of these days' trend, which is to share experience performed by a certain person on the social media.

Social media is referred as an internet-based application created with Web 2.0 foundation that puts forward the creation and deployment of user generated content or user-generated content⁸. Social media is classified into five categories based on user interaction, namely social networking sites, microblogging sites, wikis, online blogs, and online forums². In addition, social media is classified into blogs, forums, location sharing and annotation, media sharing, microblog, question and answer, rating and review, and social network based on different characteristics and customer involvement^{9,10}.

Information sharing activities have a strong connection with knowledge-sharing activities. According to Ruggles, information sharing is an important element to support knowledge management in the organization¹¹. This makes information sharing activity necessarily similar to knowledge-sharing activities. Wu et al. formulated knowledge-sharing activities in social media in general that also apply to information-sharing activities i.e. information seekers identifying information needs; sending questions related to these needs in the form of messages on social media; comparing available answers to needs; if not in accordance with the needs of the searcher will continue to seek answers¹². Then, the answer will be shared with other users in social media¹².

2.2. Information Sharing Motivation

Motivation is the desire to do a certain thing or enthusiasm for a certain thing¹³. Motivation is divided into two types, namely intrinsic and extrinsic¹⁴. Intrinsic motivation is the motivation that comes from a person and is acquired through the pleasure or personal interest of a person. Extrinsic motivation is a motivation that comes from outside factors and usually focuses on things like incentives and rewards. Extrinsic motivation can improve one's

behavior in achieving a certain goal¹⁵. Research by Munar and Jacobsen shows that there are two motivations in sharing online information, self-centered motivation and community-related motivation⁷. Self-centered motivation are self-motivation that leads to personal gain. Whilst, community-related motivation are the motivation for communities that lead to certain help or assistance to the communities. Similarly, there are two types of motivation that trigger a person in sharing information or knowledge^{16,17}. Such motivations are the desire to gain reputation and desire to help others (altruism).

3. Methodology

The research is prepared systematically through several stages, ranging from problem formulation, literature study, instrument determination, legibility test, data collection and analysis to get the conclusion of research's result. The approach used for this research is a quantitative approach with survey as a method. In this study, the instrument used is an online questionnaire (www.survey.ui.ac.id/745162).

The questionnaire contains questions on user profiles and information sharing motivation for each type of information being researched. Questions related to demographic data are gender, age, education level, occupation, social media most frequently used, and frequency of using social media to search for information in one day. Questions are divided based on the type of information and for each type of information the respondent is asked to answer his/her motivation to share a certain type of information in a social media. Respondent is asked to choose one or more motivation that suited the most, but could also give other input, in the form of short answer, other motivation that is considered in sharing a certain information in a social media.

In addition, the legibility test is also performed to ensure that the questionnaire is well understood, lacks ambiguous words, and has the right sentence structure. This legality test is performed twice in iteration with a total of six Psychology majored students. The respondent's target of the questionnaire is Indonesian people who have used social media with minimum age 12 years old and above (purposive sampling). After all data is collected, the analysis is executed by using descriptive statistics using SPSS version 23 tools.

4. Results

4.1. Respondents' Demographic

The data of respondents were taken from March 11, 2017 to April 30, 2017 (7 weeks) and as many as 255 data were collected. Demographic data collected consists of several categories, namely gender, age group, recent education, occupation, social media most frequently used, and frequency of seeking information on social media every day (Table 1).

Table 1. Respondents' demographic.

Demographic Data	Number		Demographic Data	Number				
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage			
Gender	Male	83	32.50%	Occupation	Student	183	71.80%	
	Female	172	67.50%		Private employee	47	18.40%	
Age	12-16 years	12	4.70%		Civil servant	1	0.40%	
	17-25 years	195	76.50%		Entrepreneur	7	2.70%	
	26-35 years	19	7.50%		Not working	7	2.70%	
	>35 years	29	11.40%		Others	10	3.90%	
Last education	Primary school	0	0.00%		The most used social media	Social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)	215	84.30%
	Junior high school	10	3.90%			Microblogging sites (Twitter)	25	9.80%
	Senior high school	124	48.60%			Online blogs (Blogspot, Tumblr)	2	0.80%
	Diploma	9	3.50%			Online forums (Kaskus)	3	1.20%
	Undergradu	102	40.00%	Wikis (Wikipedia,		10	3.90%	

Demographic Data	Number		Demographic Data	Number		
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage	
ate			WikiHow)			
Master	10	3.90%	Frequency of information seeking in social media every day	1-3 times	61	23.90%
				4-6 times	71	27.80%
Doctor	0	0.00%		>6 times	123	48.20%

4.2. Analysis of Users' Motivation on Sharing Information

Motivational information sharing is classified by the type of information to be shared in social media. This is done because the authors want to identify if there are differences in motivation in sharing information between types of information. Respondents could choose more than one motivation option in the questionnaire, but could also provide a different perspective by filling in the other options in the questionnaire, which is recorded as other motivations (Table 2). Every motivation that is chosen by a respondent is recorded as one vote and will be totaled in each type of information.

Table 2. Motivation of information sharing by type of information

Motivation	Personal Information		Sensational Information		Political Information		Casual Information		Experience	
	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
I want to keep my connection and friendship	117	45.90%	79	31.00%	38	14.90%	129	50.60%	113	44.30%
I want to share my impression of something on the internet	105	41.20%	125	49.00%	119	46.70%	159	62.40%	175	68.60%
I want to prevent others from experiencing similar issues or receiving false information	103	40.40%	120	47.10%	112	43.90%	63	24.70%	88	34.50%
I want to help others	77	30.20%	93	36.50%	65	25.50%	116	45.50%	110	43.10%
I want to contribute to social media that once served me	41	16.10%	58	22.70%	63	24.70%	76	29.80%	80	31.40%
I want to be better known	28	11.00%	13	5.10%	5	2.00%	27	10.60%	32	12.50%
Others motivation:										
Do not want to share information	16	6.30%	4	1.60%	22	8.60%	1	0.40%	0	0.00%
I want to give myself a picture to others	2	0.80%	0	0%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.40%
The information is funny or unusual	1	0.40%	0	0%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Forced	1	0.40%	0	0%	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0.00%
To let others know	0	0%	2	0.80%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
I want to discuss with others	0	0.00%	1	0.40%	2	0.80%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Do not like the topic	0	0.00%	0	0%	4	1.60%	0	0	0	0.00%
As an entertainment	0	0.00%	0	0%	0	0.00%	3	1.20%	0	0.00%
I would like to share a recommendation	0	0.00%	0	0%	0	0.00%	1	0.40%	0	0.00%

Majority of respondents share personal information in social media because they want to keep their connections

and friendships. These results are consistent with Lewis¹ who mentions that social media is used to maintain relationships with friends. The motivation to share the least-selected personal information by the respondent is to become better known. These results suggest that respondents focus more on relationships with other individuals than for self-satisfaction as every human being tends to assist others in solving their problems¹⁸. The motivation to share that most widely selected sensational information is to share an impression of something on the internet and then to prevent others from knowing wrong information. This is because the characteristics of sensational information tend to invite someone to share information to get a certain impression¹⁹. The motivation to become better known is the motivation least chosen by the respondents in sharing sensational information. These results relate to human traits that tend to use social media to establish relationships¹. A total of four respondents also did not want to share sensational information in social media so not to have the motivation to share the information. Based on Table 2, majority of respondents prefers to share an impression of something on the internet as a motivation to share political information. This result relates to the characteristics of political information shared by opinion and there are many different views among social media users². The least motivation chosen by the respondents is to become better known. This is because social media users share political information to share opinions and doing discussions, thus focusing more on the relationships between users². Table 2 also shows the results of data collection of respondents related to the motivation of sharing information casual type. Similar to the motivation of other types of information, majority of the respondents share casual information because they want to share their impression of something on the internet. This is because casual information includes information such as recommendations based on the impression users of social media on a particular product or service. Further, the motivation to become better known is the least chosen motivation by the respondents because casual information relates to recommendations and casual discussions on a subject, making it more focused to connect with others¹.

Furthermore, Table 2 shows respondent motivation to share information of type experience. Majority of the respondents share information type of experience because they want to share the impression of a thing on the internet. This result is obtained because the characteristics of the experience information related to one's personal life, so that social media users tend to share their impression on the things they experienced. On the other hand, only 32 respondents (12.5%) share information because they want to become better known. This is because the experience information is an experience related to an activity and shared to tell an interesting experience, so it is less appropriate if it is shared to become better known. Based on the results obtained, it can be mentioned that in general, one's motivation in sharing information in social media is consistent for sensational, casual, political, and experience information, that is to share the positive or negative impression of a thing on the internet.

5. Discussions and Implications

Motivation to share personal information focuses more on relationships with other individuals. This result support Lewis's statement that the use of social media for personal activities is to maintain relationships with friends¹. The result for sensational information show the most preferred motivation is to share the impression on the internet. This result relates to the characteristics of sensational information that invite a person to share that information to get a certain impression¹⁹. Political information also provides similar result with sensational information, i.e. the most preferred motivation is to share the impression. Political information is the information shared by opinion and there are different views among individuals making the motivation to share the most chosen impression². The most chosen motivation for casual information and experience for respondents is also to share the impression. Casual information has a close relationship with the recommendation of a particular thing and makes the impression of social media users becomes the motivation of users to share information on social media. Sharing experience information to social media shows that users want to share an impression of a perceived experience in social media that can be addressed to other parties in general. It becomes the basis of the election of motivation to share the impression on the internet as the most appropriate for the respondents.

The results of data analysis show that the motivation obtained for all types of information tend to be consistent, that is to share the personal impression of social media users. In addition, the least compatible motivation is also consistent, that is to become better known. This result adds to the knowledge-related motivation of information sharing activities proposed by Munar and Jacobsen where Scandinavian tourists choose at least this motivation to gain recognition from others as a motivation to share information⁷. These results also show that Indonesian social media users share information with an intrinsic motivation.

The motivation of social media users in sharing information from this research can be used as a guide for social

media stakeholders to improve one's experience in the perspective of information sharing. Social media parties can create a more encouraging look and features for people to share their impression on social media, according to the motivation most selected by social media users. For example, the motivation on personal information is more in the direction of maintaining relationships so that the appearance of social media can be created by promoting relationships or interactions between users. By improving user experience for information sharing in a certain social media, social media stakeholders could achieve a greater success by having a higher revenue.

6. Conclusions and Future Works

The result of motivational research shows that one's motivation to share information is consistent in the type of sensational, political, casual, and political information, which is to share the impression of social media users on a matter. Motivation for personal information is to maintain a person's connection or friendship. In addition, the motivation that is least compatible with social media users in Indonesia is to become better known. Further research can develop a motivational analysis of information sharing activities by looking at the relationship between the user profile with the motivation to share information or the credibility factor of the information so that it can be seen how the influence of demographic factors on information sharing activities in social media. Subsequent research on linkage profiles can use multivariate methods that can be used for many variables.

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