

Social media connectivity and its effect on job stress among office employees in oil and gas sector Malaysia

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Abstract

The modern era with technological advancement removed physical activities. Most of the people seem busy in their androids. Especially, office workers perform duties online throughout the working hours, along with online work activities employees have developed their interest in leisure activities on social media websites. Statistically, 81% of the Malaysian population are social media users in 2020, whereas 17% spend more than 9 hours on social media websites (Statista, 2020; Yougov, 2019). The purpose of the study is to identify the effect of social media addictiveness and social media activities related to the job on job stress among office employees. A simple random sampling technique is used to collect data. Data is collected through a questionnaire survey from 253 office employees working in the oil and gas industry, Malaysia. The reliability of the questionnaire was found through Cronbach alpha. Pearson Bivariate Correlation analysis is used to identify associations among social media addictiveness and social media activities related to job and job stress among office employees. The results indicated that social media addictiveness enhances job stress by 52% at 1% level of significance, whereas social media activities reduce job stress by 12% at 5% level of significance and social media addictiveness. It is concluded that job stress among office employees can be reduced by discouraging social media addictiveness. Although social media activities related to jobs decrease job stress, it can be harmful to the reputation of the employer and can create problems for the employee in the long term. Alternative methods should be used to release job stress, such as social support within the workplace and physical interaction among employees. This study is useful for the organizations related to office employees to identify the employees with social addiction, provide them training about safety in surfing online websites, enhance physical interaction and create social support for the employees within the organization. Employees may adopt the right channel to release their stress despite social media that is actually enhancing stress. Further, this study is valuable for the forthcoming researchers to enhance research in this area.

Keywords Employee health, social media addiction, job stress, social media activities related to workplace, social media contents

1. Introduction

Occupational health and safety play a critical role for an organization to work smoothly. Job stress is one of the major issue comes under occupational health and safety, threatening health and wellbeing of the employee as they spend a maximum and important part of their time at the workplace (Thorp et al., 2012). Job stress is a meticulous challenge to the health of the employees (O'Connor et al., 2021). (Mazzola et al., 2011) concluded in a qualitative

study that works stress is more frequently reported in comparison to other stressors. It is also proved that the level of job stress is greater than pastimes. According to the report, 2017 of National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) Malaysia, job stress is at an increasing level, especially among office employees. In addition to physiological and musculoskeletal disorders, job stress causes mental disabilities also (Cooper et al., 2018). Chronic stress destroys physical health by depression, insomnia, headaches, and cardiovascular diseases (Kivimäki & Kawachi, 2015). Stress leads to suicide also (Milner et al., 2018). Rising stress outcomes are evident through the IIA report in the context of Malaysia. On the other hand, medial social engagement is also increasing. The question arises here, does social media engagement enhancing stress, or it releasing stress as many of the surveys concluded that employees use social media to release their stress. Although several factors were investigated to manage stress at workplaces, similarly social media engagement is also considered a stress releasing factor, but there is a gap to identify the impact of social media addiction on job stress.

Social media is a platform to build social relations and networks among people with similar interests, backgrounds, connections, and activities through the internet (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat etc.) is accessible through personal or workplace electronic devices like mobile phones, laptops, tablets, computers, etc. These devices connect people virtually despite spatial and temporal boundaries (Junco, 2012; Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Powell, 2009). One can share audio, video, images, and event live broadcasts through social media websites (Soliman, 2014). People of all ages across the globe spend a lot of time on social media (Schulze et al., 2014). Social media users are growing fast around the globe, whereas several users are addicted to its usage. There were 11.9 million social media users at the workplace in 2017 those are projected to increase by 15.87 million in 2022.

Rising usage and plenty of time spent on social media websites lead to social media addiction. As defined by (Andreassen et al., 2014), "social media use as being overly concerned about social media, strongly motivated and having been devoting a great amount of time and energy to use social media, to the degree that an individual's social activities, interpersonal relationships, studies/jobs, and/or health and wellbeing are impaired". Social media addiction causes a lot of problems, especially for employees, as (Clark & Roberts, 2010) argued that excessive use of social media at the workplace affects productivity and work engagement. It reduces the boundaries between personal and professional life (Dutta, 2010). (Griffiths et al., 2014) concluded that social media addiction results in wastage of time, role conflict, information overload, lack of productivity, privacy risk and low performance, but it also affects the mental and physical health of the employees. The effect of different aspect social media on employee's health and wellbeing remain unexplored (Moqbel & Fui-Hoon Nah, 2017). Another aspect of social media engagement is the activities of the social media user. Which kind of content social media user share at his wall and which type of stuff he/she likes and do comment, also play an important role in releasing stress as different people do different activities to bring down their emotional exhaustion. So, in this study it is also explored that does job related activities on social media effects their job stress in addition to social media addiction?

This study is useful for the employees in determining to spent time on social media and especially content sharing. It is useful for employers to take appropriate actions related to employee's problems and motivate them to get their problems solved within the organization despite disseminating organizational issues globally. To counter the negative effect of social media, further investigations are required, so this research work will be helpful for the forthcoming researchers in this context.

Further study is structured as literature is summarized in the 2nd section, research methodology is given in the 3rd section, research findings explained in the 4th section, 5th section concludes the research finding, further recommendations given in the 6th section and references are given in the end, 7th section.

2. Literature Review

Previous studies investigated in the context of social media connectivity give diverse results as (Priyadarshini et al., 2020) explored the experiences of employees related to social media usage and its consequences through a qualitative study. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews from 14 employees working in IT/ITES companies in India. It was concluded that lack of sleep, backache, and eye strain, feeling of envy, lack of depth in the relationships, tendency to seek approvals, not meeting deadlines, a distraction from work, and compromise on work quality were common among employees due to overuse of social media at the workplace. (Choi, 2018) investigated the impact of narcissism on social media addiction of the employees and its effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Data was collected through a questionnaire survey from 285 employees in Korean companies. It was concluded through hierarchical regression analysis that organizational politics increases social media addiction. Social media addiction decreases job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Whereas social media addiction mediates the relationship between narcissism and job satisfaction.

(Lam, 2016) explored the issues related to social media for employers and employees through a qualitative study. He concluded that employee's careless use of social media leads to unintentional damage to employer or co-workers related to discipline, job loss, defamation, and sour friendship, while for the employer, it could miss opportunities in attracting talent, reputation damage, time loss, decreased productivity and morale and legal ramifications. (Tang et al., 2019) identified the impact of social media connectivity on turnover intentions of supply chain professionals. Data was collected from 325 employees related to a large Chinese pharmaceutical and distribution company and concluded that emotional exhaustion mediates the relationship between social media connectivity and turnover intention and social media connectivity intensifies the intention to quit the job.

(Choi et al., 2019) investigated whether social network service addiction is due to negative behavior in the organization and the influence of social network service addiction on the organizational and social attitude of employees in the context of South Korea. Data were collected from 285 office employees through an online questionnaire survey and analysed by structural equation modelling. It was concluded that abusive supervision and workplace bullying leads to social media network addiction, whereas SNS addiction increases work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict; social network service addiction mediates the association between abusive supervision and workplace bullying.

(David & Roberts, 2017) identified the determinants of attachment to social media in the context of the United States. Data were collected from 180 respondents through a questionnaire survey after putting them in a condition of phubbing. It was concluded through sequential mediation model that phubbing has significant effect on the tendencies of individuals to feel excluded and intensity to attach to social media with the hope to gain a sense of belonging. So, phubbing has an effect on an individual's wellbeing also.

(Hu et al., 2020) investigated the adverse effect of addiction to social media on expatriate's cultural identity change in cross-cultural settings. Data was collected through a questionnaire survey from 333 international students from two public universities in China. Regression analysis showed that social media addiction has a significant negative moderating impact on the relationship with locals and cultural intelligence. Brooks, Longstreet, and (Brooks et al., 2017) identified critical negative factor technostress due to information and communication technology in the context of the workplace. A distraction conflict theory applied to social media, technostress, and addiction to theorize that one can view social media as distraction conflict, which in turn induces technostress and, subsequently internet addiction. This theoretical model was tested by conducting a survey on 1731 participants recruited from mechanical Turk and analysed through path analysis.

(Jyotsna Verma & Archana Kumari, 2016) investigated addiction to social media networking sites and the psychological wellbeing of the employees. Data were collected from 120 working adults, and it was concluded that there is a negative correlation between the use of social networking sites and psychological wellbeing. (Alim, 2016) reviewed cyberbullying studies carried out since 2012 and found that one of the important risk factors of cyberbullying is increased disclosure of personal information on social media.

Kollonna and Chamaru (2019) investigated the impact of social media connectivity on occupational stress with moderating effect of gender in the context of Sri Lanka. Data was collected through a questionnaire survey from 68 employees working in the private sector. It was found that 26.47% of the employees spend one to two hours on social media websites, whereas 22.6% use social media to update their friend's activity. Regression analysis confirmed the moderate level relationship between social media connectivity and occupational stress while there is no significant moderating effect of gender.

A lot of studies in the context of social media conducted up till now but not a single study is available on social media activities, and associated job stress, whereas (Whiting & Williams, 2013) found that relaxation or stress releasing is one of the biggest reasons to use social media. Uses and gratification theory support this phenomenon to use media that satisfy needs, enhance knowledge, helps in interaction, diversion and escape from stress (Severin et al., 2010 & Denis, 2010). This study identified the impact of social media activities on job stress in addition to the impact of social media addiction on job stress and job stressors.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Design

An online survey was conducted to collect data from office employees working on administrative posts. Three hundred questionnaires were sent to the respondents through the LinkedIn network, Questionnaires with inadequate information were removed and 253 (N=253) responses were found completely filled, which were used for statistical analysis.

3.2 Measures

- a) **Social media activity related to job:** Items related to social media activities modified and extracted from the exploratory study of Connor, Schmidt and Drouin (2016) and measured on a 5-point Likert scale totally positive "5", positive "4",

neutral "3", negative "2", and "1" totally negative. Cronbach Alpha used to measure the consistency and reliability of the scale and the value is 0.931.

- b) **Social media addiction:** Social media addiction is measured by a 5-point Likert scale used by Hawi and Samaha (2016) containing 8 items "1" strongly disagree to "5" strongly agree. Cronbach Alpha was used to measure the consistency and reliability of the scale and the value is 0.933.
- c) **Job Stress:** Jobs stress is measured by 6 items. 4 items taken from the scale developed by Robert and John, 1972 and 1 item (Do you have problems concentrating?) from Copenhagen psychosocial questionnaire version III and another item related to eye strain/ headache is also added due to work on personal computers (Do you feel blurred eye vision/headache?). Cronbach Alpha used to measure the consistency and reliability of the scale and the value is 0.924.
- d) **Individual characteristics:** Individual characteristics as gender, age, educational background, job type and Ethnicity measured as categorical variables. Gender is coded as "1" for male and "2" for female, age is categorized into 8 categories "1" <20, "2" 21 to 25, "3" 25 to 30, "4" 31 to 35, "5" 36 to 40, "6" 41 to 45, "7" 46 to 50 and "8">50. Educational background is divided into 4 categories, "1" diploma or less, "2" graduation, "3" masters, "4" PhD. Job type is divided into 3 categories, "1" part-time, "2" contract, "3" permanent and Ethnicity is divided into four categories, "1" Malay, "2" Chinese, "3" Indians, "4" Others.

3.3 Data analysis:

Data are analysed using the software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0. data is validated through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test and Cronbach alpha used to test the reliability of the instrument. Association between social media addiction, social media activities related to job, and job is tress is tested through Bivariate Pearson Correlation.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive analysis

Descriptive analysis showed that men and women account for 69.6% and 30.4% of respondents, respectively, among them, most of the respondents are under the age group from 31 to 35. As concerned about education background most (46.6%) of the employees were graduated, and 36% were with Master's degree. Most of the employees were working on contract (63.2%), 19.4% permanent employees and 17.4% were part-timers. 73.5% were Malay, whereas the percentage for Chinese and Indians were the same 9.5%, and 7.5% were from others (foreigners or any other ethnic group).

4.2 Factor loadings and reliability statistics

The principal component analysis is used to find out factor loading of each item after, and the reliability of each construct is measured through Cronbach alpha's statistics.

Table 01 Test for factor loading and reliability

Construct	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Item loading	Cronbach alpha
Job stress	JS1	4.0000	1.13039	.781	0.924
	JS2	4.0079	1.13036	.903	
	JS3	3.9130	1.19537	.569	
	JS4	4.0000	1.09472	.822	
	JS5	4.0395	1.11199	.725	
	JS6	3.7984	1.09240	.654	
Social media addictiveness	SMAD1	3.9684	1.07598	.693	0.933
	SMAD2	3.8419	.88119	.816	
	SMAD3	3.5059	1.12200	.798	
	SMAD4	3.7747	1.22824	.651	
	SMAD5	3.7154	.84869	.760	
	SMAD6	3.6126	1.20850	.644	
	SMAD7	3.5059	.89363	.755	
	SMAD8	3.6759	.85779	.442	
Social media activity related to work	SMA1	3.0553	1.18393	.676	0.931
	SMA2	3.0791	1.30994	.951	
	SMA3	3.1107	1.34356	.900	
	SMA4	2.8182	.99928	.487	
	SMA5	2.8972	1.00658	.738	

	SMA6	2.8498	1.26975	.729	
Overall	0.871				

Principal component factor analysis was performed to extract items loading. All the values are greater than 0.5 except SMAD8 and SMA4 (excluded). This shows that all the remaining items contributing to measuring constructs (Truong & McColl, 2011). Reliability of the data is assessed through Cronbach alpha statistics which measure internal consistency. 0.871 value of Cronbach alpha indicates good internal consistency for the overall instrument, whereas 0.924 for job stress, 0.933 for social media addictiveness, and 0.931 for social media activity shows excellent internal consistency (Salkind, 2012). These measures show suitability for further data analysis.

Table 04. Bivariate Pearson Correlation Analysis

Variables	Job stress	Social media addiction	Social media activity
Job stress	1.00	.522***	-.128**
Social media addiction	.522***	1.00	-.048
Social media activity	-.128**	-.048	1.00

***1% level of significant

**5% level of significant

The results show that the Pearson correlation coefficient for social media addiction and job stress is .522, which is significant as the p-value is less than .001 for a two-tailed test. The direction of the relationship is positive; it shows that both the variable tends to increase together. The strength of the association between job stress and social media addiction is moderate ($.3 < |r| > .5$).

The correlation coefficient for social media activity and job stress is -.128, which is significant at the level of 5% as the p-value is less than .005. The direction of the relationship is negative, it indicates that if social media activity related to job increases, job stress will decrease, but the strength of the association between these two variables is weak.

5. Discussion

Occupational health and wellbeing need much attention in this era of technological revolution. Social media connectivity is one of the creations of this revolution, which has brought the entire world to one forum along with its advantages and disadvantages as well, based on activity, time to use, and the users themselves. Although no group of people remains unaffected from social media but as concerned about employees, it emerged in diverse results based on employees as operational workers are less likely to use social media due to practical work, but office employees have access to IT equipment and they use their own androids as well besides social media regulations, due to which many academic researchers and industry experts investigated and viewed it in depth due to employees and organizational productivity. Whereas employee's productivity depends on their health and job stress. Therefore, this study found the impact of social media connectivity on job stress, considering the increasing level of job stress in the presence of health and safety standards implementation.

Previous studies showed that social media addiction decreases stress as the people use it to release their daily stress and overcome negative emotions (Brailovskaia et al., 2020). Whereas on the other hand, it affects negatively to work performance (Lau, 2017) but this study found a significant positive impact of social media addiction on job stress; it indicates more time spent on social media decreases allocated work time and increase work burden, which leads to an imbalance in job demand and control and causes job stress. On the other hand, social media usage distracts the employees from office work, and after the usage of social media it took much time to create interest in work again. Whereas eyes strain or headache is another reason that reduces the capability to cope with work demands.

Social media activities related to job releasing employee stress or enhancing. It was found that social media activities related to job decrease job stress at 5% level of significance. There is a weak negative correlation between job stress and job-related social media activities. It shows that employees are very well aware of social media policies, therefore less likely share job-related issues on social media websites. However, use to share bad work experiences when they are near to burnout due to work problems, to release their stress, even know the policies.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Social media addiction is significantly positively related to job stress by widening the gap between job demand and control. To eliminate social media addiction among employees, it is required to provide safety training related to work on IT equipment and design working hours as to enhance physical, social interaction among employees and social support within the workplace (Brailovskaia et al., 2018). Consequently, there's no space to surf social media websites along with online office work. Secondly, it was found that social media activities related to work are negatively weakly related to job stress and decreases job stress. Although, employees are less likely to post job-related issues on social media because of social media policies. However, it is suspected that injustice or no social support at the workplace motivates employees to share their sufferings on social media [35], which reduces their job stress for the time being. Social media posts related to work can create problems for the employee as well as employer in the future. There is also a need to enhance social support within the workplace and the atmosphere of fairness in the best interest of employees. Currently, most of the employees are getting addicted to social media by perceiving it as a stress releaser, but it has the worst effect on job stress, employee health, and productivity. This study motivates employers to identify the employees, those addicted to social media, give them safety training related to online surfing, and create a healthy atmosphere at workplaces by incorporating social support and physical interaction among employees. The population of the study was office employees only. Further investigations can be done on other employees as marketing and operational to explore their behaviour towards social media addiction and activities and job stress. Impact of social media activities related to work on job stress identified in this study, further it can be extended by looking into type of job-related activity that decrease job stress and which factor of job stress more likely get effect.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest with respect to authorship, publication, or presentation of the paper.

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