Chapter 6

The Use of Online Social Networks and Its Influence on Job–Related Behavior: The Higher Education Context

Vera Silva Carlos
University of Aveiro, Portugal

Ricardo Gouveia Rodrigues
Universidade da Beira Interior, Portugal

ABSTRACT

Web 2.0 technologies have progressively transformed social interactions among people. In addition, there is plenty of evidence of a positive influence of social relationships on work-related attitudes and behaviors. Within these frameworks, the purpose is to evaluate the effect of using online social networks on the workers’ attitudes and behaviors, particularly in the context of higher education. The authors used an online survey to evaluate the attitudes and behavior of 157 faculty members. To assess the use of OSNs, they used a dichotomous variable. The t-student test and the PLS method were used to analyze the data. They conclude that the use of OSNs influences the workers’ performance, but not job satisfaction, organizational commitment, or organizational citizenship behaviors (extra-role performance). The relationships they propose in what concerns the workers’ attitudes are all empirically supported. Lastly, they describe the study limitations and we suggest some perspectives for future research.

INTRODUCTION

Social networks are a means to conceptualize social groupings and interaction. At a time when technologized sociability is the norm, this blend of everyday human experience with mediated communication is quite significant since social interaction turns out to be a synonym of, and sometimes inseparable from, the technology that allows it. Social networking might, on the whole, be considered a way of describing the design of social interaction practices, which include the ones among family members, friends, neighbors.

The Use of Online Social Networks and Its Influence on Job-Related Behavior

and people from different communities. Thus, we could refer to the social networks of previous school friends, workmates or those that form a hole variety of groups within social institutions, organizations or clubs and that serve our needs and interests. In fact, social institutions and the informal or casual meetings that happen among people give significant background for the keeping and the developing of a wide variety of relationships (Merchant, 2012). The growth and popularity of Online social networks (OSNs) have completely modified cooperation and communication (Cheung, Chiu & Lee, 2011) and social interaction using these sites is abruptly intensifying (Antonci & Sabatini, 2018).

OSNs have affected all Internet users and they are an essential communications tool nowadays (Paul, Baker & Cochran, 2012). All over the world, by being connected, more than a million people cooperate by sharing ideas, work, knowledge and creativity (Cheung, Chiu & Lee, 2011). More than organizations, Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have a better insight of how to make environments easier, where people cooperate by sharing, creating and advancing knowledge (Barnatt. 2008). As well, academic institutions are using social networking sites such as Facebook and LinkedIn more and more to put in contact nowadays students and potential ones and to provide instructional content (Paul, Baker & Cochran, 2012), so HEI would better be ready to harvest value from these new online tools (Barnatt, 2008). This has made the impact of OSN on academic performance and the accuracy of using it as an effective teaching tool an important topic (Paul, Baker & Cochran, 2012). Taking this into consideration, it seems adequate to use the Higher Education (HE) context to assess the influence of using OSNs on the workers’ attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, the intention is to evaluate to what extent the use of OSNs to keep contact with co-workers has an influence on Job satisfaction, Organizational commitment, Organizational citizenship behaviors and Individual performance. On the other hand, we intend to check whether there are positive relationships between the workers’ attitudes and behaviors – previously supported fully or partially. If the proposed relations are positive, it will be possible to better understand each of the concepts studied and increase their importance in the HE context.

Firstly, the concepts that are being studied are briefly summarized. Then, two research models, based on 10 hypotheses, are proposed. After explaining and stating the hypotheses, the methodology is described and the results are presented and discussed. Finally, we describe the findings, the limitations of the study are explained and some guiding lines for future research are suggested.

THE WEB 2.0

The term Web 2.0 is used to describe applications that distinguish themselves from preceding generations of software by a number of principles (Ullrich et al., 2008). The appearance of Web 2.0 technologies has created new opportunities for producing and sharing content and interacting with others. Also called ‘social media’. Web 2.0 includes tools that permit individual and collective publishing, sharing of images, audio and video; and the creation and maintenance of OSN (Bennett, Bishop, Dalgarno, Waycott & Kennedy, 2012).

Initially, the World Wide Web was intended to be used to share ideas and encourage discussion within scientific communities. Web 2.0 heralds a return to these original functions and prompts significant changes in the ways the World Wide Web is being used in education. In this context, there is a need to increase awareness of Web 2.0 tools and the opportunities they offer, and an imperative need to carry out quality research to inform better use of Web 2.0 applications (Boulos & Wheeler, 2007).
Related Content

Scaffolding Role of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning Environment on Collaboration and Academic Literacy: Possibilities and Challenges
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/scaffolding-role-of-computer-supported-collaborative-learning-environment-on-collaboration-and-academic-literacy/180116?camid=4v1](www.igi-global.com/chapter/scaffolding-role-of-computer-supported-collaborative-learning-environment-on-collaboration-and-academic-literacy/180116?camid=4v1)

C3EEP Typology and Taxonomies: Knowledge Based (KB) Strategies
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/c3eep-typology-taxonomies/58119?camid=4v1](www.igi-global.com/chapter/c3eep-typology-taxonomies/58119?camid=4v1)

Exploring Expansion and Innovations in Cloud Computing

From Information Management to Knowledge Management: Beyond the “Hi-Tech Hidebound” Systems
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/information-management-knowledge-management-beyond/129623?camid=4v1](www.igi-global.com/chapter/information-management-knowledge-management-beyond/129623?camid=4v1)