

Information Sharing Behavior on Social Networking Sites: Comparison Across Seven Campuses: Report of Phase 1 Questionnaire Survey

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Abstract

Many people are spending substantial amounts of time on social networking sites (SNS). Although SNS are perceived mainly as a means of social networking and keeping abreast of happenings in friends' lives, information is inevitably shared and over time can have a cumulative effect on people's opinions, decisions and behaviour. This study seeks to identify the types and characteristics of information shared on Facebook and other SNS, as well as investigate how users critically assess the information posted and socially synthesize information to construct knowledge.

The proposed objectives of the project were:

1. To identify the types and characteristics of information shared on social networking sites (SNS) in Singapore, in comparison with other Asian countries.
2. To determine how users socially synthesize information into higher-level information and knowledge (i.e. the social construction of knowledge).
3. To determine how users critically assess the information received from their online networks, especially the credibility, quality and authoritativeness of the information.

4. To determine how the information received affects decision making and opinions.

As Phase 1 of the project, an online questionnaire survey is being carried out on university campuses in seven countries in Asia, to identify broad trends and patterns of information sharing behaviour. The preliminary results of the survey study will be reported at the Workshop.