Understanding the Effects of Fake Profiles in SNS on Adolescents Behavior: A Grounded Theory Approach

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

OSN	Online Social Network
OSNs	Online Social Networks
SNSs	Social Networking Sites
GT	Grounded Theory
GTM	Grounded Theory Methodology
ICT	Information and Communications Technology

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LIST OF SYMBOLS

M	Male
F	Female
N	Sample Size

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Abstrak

Memahami kesan profil palsu di SNS pada tingkah laku remaja: Teori Pendekatan Grounded

Kajian ini bertujuan meninjau pemalsuan dalam Laman Rangkaian Sosial (SNSs)sebagai pendekatan teori berasas, memandangkan SNSsyang kian berkembang pesat menawarkan pelbagai kemungkinan tanpa batasan untuk orang ramai meluahkan perasaan secara terbuka, berkomunikasi bersama rakan taulan dan berkongsi maklumat ke seluruh dunia. Ini adalah kerana SNSs merupakan platform paling lazim digunakan di Internet, di mana berjuta pengguna mendaftarkan diri untuk berkongsi maklumat peribadi bersama rakan taulan. Masih terdapat kes pemprofilan palsu dalam sistem komunikasi atas talian. Oleh itu, kajian ini tertumpu kepada kajian aspek keseluruhan pemprofilan palsu dalam kalangan remaja dengan memberi tumpuan kepada pelajar pelbagai kategori umur di sekolah-sekolah dalam Kerajaan Hashimiah Jordan, dengan mencuba menjawab soalan kajian tersebut:apakah konteks dan keadaan semasa yang mempengaruhi latar belakang fenomena tersebut? Soalan kajian kedua: apakah latar belakang yang menyumbang ke arah berlakunya fenomena berpusat? Berikutan itu, soalan kajian ketiga: apakah strategi pengendalian akibat daripada kegiatan pemprofilan palsu tersebut? Akhir sekali, soalan kajian keempat: apakah akibat yang terhasil daripada strategi pengendalian yang diambil daripada informan? Satu kaedah kajian kualitatif melalui wawancara telah dijalankan untuk kajian ini menggunakan rangka kerja *Strauss and Corbin* (Teori Berasas) ke atas 78 remaja dan telah dianalisis menggunakan NVivo versi 11. Wawancara telah dijalankan sepanjang tujuh bulan, antara Mac 2015 dan September 2015. Dapatan utama kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa informan, terutamanya pembuli, mencapai konsep "***perasaan seronok***" dengan mengeksploitasi komunikasi atas talian untuk mencemuh mangsa mereka. Ini telah mencetuskan perilaku negatif yang meninggalkan kesan positif dan negatif terhadap remaja, yang boleh dianggap sebagai fenomena dalam kajian ini. Satu lagi dapatan menunjukkan bahawa informan melibatkan diri dalam kegiatan pemprofilan palsu dengan hasrat mendapat ***"rasa puas hati"***dalam kehidupan mereka. Ini juga telah menjurus kepada perilaku negatif, meninggalkan kesan positif dan negatif ke atas remaja dan perkara tersebut boleh juga dirujuk sebagai fenomena dalam kajian ini. Dapatan lain ialah sumbangan besar rangkaian sosial terhadap pemprofilan palsu terutamanya Facebook, kesan positif pemprofilan palsu terhadap remaja dan dua faktor lain yang menjadi latar belakang pemprofilan palsu – penyokong dan penghasut. Dalam hal ini, kajian ini telah menyumbang dalam menjelaskan hubung kait antara tema dan subtema fenomena pemprofilan palsu antara remaja di Jordan; menekankan fakta bahawa pemprofilan palsu ialah fenomena sosial yang tidak diterima dan jika kita boleh berkongsi idea tentang perkara ini dengan lebih pantas dan berkesan, kita akan dapat mewujudkan matlamat sasaran dengan lebih berkesan selain lebih mudah untuk kita membantu pelajar sasaran dan membentuk masyarakat sasaran yang komited. Untuk benar-benar memahami pemprofilan palsu, wajib untuk kita mendapatkan penerangan langkah-langkah yang dijangka akan diambil dan dielak. Dasar dan strategi lain yang berpengaruh ke atas pertumbuhan keseluruhan sektor remaja Jordan juga telah disyorkan menerusi dapatan idea terpilih yang dikaji.

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Understanding the Effects of Fake Profiles in SNS on Adolescents Behavior: A Grounded Theory Approach

Abstract

This study aims at understanding the impact of fake profiles in SNS on teenagers' behavior as a Grounded Theory Approach, and as the rapidly growing SNSs today are offering individuals endless possibilities for publicly expressing themselves, communicating with friends, and sharing information with people across the world since SNSs are the most common platforms on the Internet, on which millions of users register to share personal facts with their friends, there are still cases of fake profiling within the online communication system. Therefore, this study focused on investigating the overall aspects of fake profiling among adolescents by focusing on students with different age categories in schools in The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, by attempting to answer the study questions: What are the contexts and prevailing conditions that influence the antecedents of the phenomenon? The second research question is what are the antecedents that contribute toward the occurrence of central phenomenon? Consequently, the third research question is what are the coping strategies resulting from fake profiling activities? Finally, the fourth research question is what are the consequences resulting from the coping strategies taken by the informants? A qualitative research method through interview was conducted for this study using Strauss and Corbin's GT framework on 78 adolescents and analyzed by using NVivo version 11. Interviews took place over a seven-month period, between March 2015 and September 2015. The main findings of this study indicate that informants, especially bullies, accomplished the concepts of "feelings of pleasure" by exploiting online communication to taunt their victims. This has generated negative behaviors that caused positive and negative impacts toward adolescents, which could be regarded as the phenomenon in this study. Another finding shows that informants engaged in fake profiling activities desired to get "a sense of satisfaction" in their lives. This has also led to negative behaviors that caused positive and negative impacts toward adolescents, and that could also be referred to as the phenomenon in this study. The other findings are the significant contribution of social networking toward fake profiling especially Facebook, the positive impacts fake profiling 'offer' to adolescents, and two other factors that become antecedents of fake profiling – the supporters and the instigators. In this regard, this study has contributed in clarifying the inter-relationships between themes and subthemes of the fake profiling phenomenon between adolescents in Jordan by highlighting the facts that fake profiling is an unaccepted social phenomenon, and the faster and more effectively we can share ideas about it, the better we can make our targeted aims, the better we can serve our targeted students, the better we can build our targeted committed society. When implementing a successful understanding of fake profiling, then the descriptions of the steps we should expect to take and avoid are compulsory. Other policies and strategies that are influential to the overall growth of the Jordanian adolescents sector are also suggested through the findings on the investigated selected constructs.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The swiftly growing social networking sites (SNSs) today offer individuals never-ending opportunities for publicly expressing themselves, communicating with friends, and sharing information with others worldwide. Recent reports indicate that the amount of personal information unwillingly disclosed by users on SNSs are astounding, and these networks are crowded with millions of fake user profiles, which may intrude the users' security and privacy, as the cyber security intrusions are not immune (Federal Trade Commission, 2015).

Therefore, this study will explore the background and the historical perspective of the development of the social networking and its prevalence and use worldwide, then examine the effects of fake profiling with an in-depth look at the consequences of fake profile occurrences in social media all over the world, as today's most large businesses believe that cyber security risks are greater than other insurable business risks, especially in Jordan (Al-Khouri, 2012; Dlamini, Eloff & Eloff, 2009).

The global trend of fake profiling phenomenon is growing in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan according to the informants interviewed as some are perpetrators and some are victims, and therefore, the researcher had put this research to raise its questions, identify its problems, and draw its objectives. It is important to make an in-depth study for this phenomenon, particularly in Jordan. Given the fact that fake profiling among online users is a global distrust, this study will initiate the investigation for future research to adapt its paradigm model for other similar analyses.

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This study will explore adolescents' personal experiences and perceptions of fake profiling in Jordan and examine all factors that cause this phenomenon, including the fake profiling characteristics in SNSs, by making a beneficial input to the existing knowledge in the field of interrelated studies, particularly concerning the fake profiling incidents among adolescents in Jordan, by facilitating to identify all of the factors involved. Additionally, SNS users are ignorant of the various security risks that exist in these networks, such as privacy violation, sexual harassment, and identity theft.

Many users disclose their personal information such as phone number, date of birth, and address. Leakage of personal information is a notable concern for SNS users. Fake profiles are being created on all the sites and one's information is becoming more and more vulnerable in the past decade (Priyanga, Priyadharshini, & Hariharan, 2015). Thus, this research tries to link the approaches that will propose how adolescents should behave while communicating online and minimize the fake profiling trends among them.

As this study is actually motivated by a passionate concern on fake profiling among adolescents, it will also focus on the contexts and prevailing conditions, the requirements for a better concentration on the guardian, and address the issues specific to fake profiling. Many studies recommended that a further study be conducted on the reasons that could stand behind having multiple fake profile accounts (Ensour, 2013; Qutieshat, 2013).

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1.2 Research Background

Given that fake profiling among online users is a worldwide issue, this study will start the examination for future exploration to adjust its worldview model for other comparable investigations. This present concentration, in this manner, will investigate young people's close-to-home encounters and view of fake profiling in Jordan and look

at all components that cause this marvel, including the fake profiling attributes in online networking. There are four main SNSs, namely Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn as examples because these are the most commonly used. 95% of SNS users have a profile on Facebook, 80% have a profile on Twitter, 73% have a profile on Instagram, and 40 % have a LinkedIn profile (Viner, 2014).

The researcher tries to contribute valuable information to existing knowledge in the field of interrelated studies, especially regarding fake profiling occurrences among adolescents in Jordan. By encouraging to distinguish the majority of the components included, this study tries to discover ways to deal with how teenagers ought to act while communicating online and consequently minimize fake profiling among them.

This research is motivated by a passionate concern on fake profiling among adolescents. Many studies recommended that a further study be conducted on the reasons that could stand behind having multiple fake profile accounts, which have affirmed the researcher's belief that fake profiling is undeniably precarious for adolescents (Ensour, 2013).

SNSs are the most common platforms on the Internet, on which millions of users register to share personal facts with their peers. A social network is a public structure that comprises a group of social actors (such as individuals or organizations) and a set of dynamites between these actors. The social network view supplies a set of methods for analyzing the structure of complete social entities in addition to a variety of theories describing the patterns noted in these structures (Raza, Qazi, & Umer, 2017).

Moreover, SNSs such as Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, and YouTube allow users to create personal profiles or personal pages and interact with other users (Kemi, 2016).

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Typically, these SNSs include contents that are available to any visitor to the website. A SNS member typically has the option to make various sections of his or her personal profile, page, or other personal sections of the website as public; which means that it is available to all website visitors, or private; in which it is available only to those website members specially approved by the subject member (Conti, Poovendran, & Secchiero, 2012).

Although the account set-up process for most SNSs is free for prospective members, the members must nevertheless accept and comply with the governing website user agreement. Most SNSs require, among other conditions of becoming a member (that is, of becoming an "authorized user" of the website), that the registering member gives accurate information during the sign-up process. The leading SNS and, indeed, the world's most visited website is Facebook (Ionescu, 2010).

There are more than 800 million Facebook users worldwide and over 400 million users access the Facebook website on any given day (Westbrook, & Westbrook, 2017).

Even more, facts show that the number of American Facebook users–roughly 65 million–are between the ages of 13 and 25. For good or bad, the daily use of SNSs has become a ubiquitous part of life for adolescents (Perrin, 2015).

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1.2.1 Fake Profiles

To address the growing problem of malicious activities on social networks, researchers have started to propose different detections in exploring, analyzing, and mitigation approaches. Therefore, fake profiles which are automatic or semi-automatic profiles, mimic the human behaviors on the SNSs (Fire, Goldschmidt, & Elovici, 2014).