Thematic Analysis Using Excel for Analysing Ethical and Social Issues in Social Media

MUHAMMAD FADZRIN OTHMAN[1]*, MASLIN MASROM[2], NIK HASNAA NIK MAHMOOD[3], HASNIZA YAHYA[4], WAN NORMEZA WAN ZAKARIA[5], JULIANA JAAFAR[6], NOR RAIHANA MOHD ALI[7], ASLINDA HASSAN[8]

[1,2,3,5,7] Razak Faculty of Technology and Informatics, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Kuala Lumpur
[4]   College of Computing and Informatics, Universiti Tenaga Nasional
[6]   Malaysian Institute of Information Technology, Universiti Kuala Lumpur
[8]   Faculty of Technology and Communication, Universiti Teknikal Melaka

*Corresponding Author: ofadzrin@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Social media (SM) is rapidly evolving a set of technologies primarily encompassing a group of social networking sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok, and Twitter, that enable efficient, free global communication within a social network. For many people, SM is reshaping their social world, rewriting the rules of social engagement and sociability. The use of SM has grown drastically in the past decade. Referring to the data released by the Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), more than half of the population are internet users and more than 90 percent of the internet users visit social networking platforms as their online activities. Referring to the same data, most of the internet users are between the age of 20s to 40s. Despite the drastic changes in SM uses, many ethical and social issues arise. The critical issues that occur in the existence of SM among others are the spread of fake news, online harassment, privacy issues, and cyberbullies. Therefore, this research aims to gain some insights into the ethical and social issues in SM among university students in Malaysia. Ethnography will be the qualitative approach for the study whereby this approach is the best approach to study people in their own environment through the use of methods such as participant observation and face-to-face interviewing. The research will apply purposive sampling as an approach to seek subjects who have some specific knowledge or expertise relevant to the topic. In other words, they are rich in the information needed for this study. Online interviews will be conducted as a method for data collection from twenty-eight (28) students from Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM). The data will be analysed using thematic analysis whereby Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel (since most higher education institutions (HEIs) have Microsoft licenses for both faculty and students to use the Microsoft Office 365 suite) will be used as a tool to code and organise the key point and themes. The thematic analysis is a data analysis process in which themes and relationships are established by identifying statements or phrases of the data. This research involved six phases, from; i) familiarization the data set from both respondents and moderators, and ii) generating systematic codes, by identifying the relevant data within the data set, and iii) tagging the data with specific phrases or words. Next, iv) process the pattern formation, and v) identification of the first version of theme development. Theme development involves examining codes and combining, clustering, or collapsing the codes together into bigger or more meaningful patterns. Finally, vi) generate and review the top five key points per theme in addition to the key points related to the research. The approach integrates a widely used application software suite for organizing, coding, and classifying data. The features that Microsoft Excel offers as a tool to organize the key points or themes, crucially do not require advanced knowledge of the software. This research will emphasize the importance of the data analysis step in increasing the validity and reliability of findings and outline a method of analysis that is accessible to the researchers.

Keywords: ethical issues, social issues, social media, thematic analysis, excel