

# Exploring Students' Perspective on Online Social Networking (OSN) Use in Higher Education

Suraya Hamid<sup>1</sup>, Shanton Chang<sup>2</sup>, Sherah Kurnia<sup>3</sup> Jenny Waycott<sup>4</sup>

1 Department of Information Systems, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 3010, [s.hamid@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:s.hamid@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au)

2 Department of Information Systems, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 3010, [shanton.chang@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:shanton.chang@unimelb.edu.au)

3 Department of Information Systems, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 3010, [sherahk@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:sherahk@unimelb.edu.au)

4 Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, University of Melbourne, Victoria, 3010, [jwaycott@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:jwaycott@unimelb.edu.au)

## *Abstract*

The practice of using social web technologies for teaching and learning is gaining more prevalence in higher education. In particular, online social networking (OSN) activities, including content generating, sharing, interacting and collaboratively socialising, are enabled by social web technologies. Blogs, wikis, social networking sites and podcasts, just to name a few are entering mainstream adoption and no longer considered as hype. Using these technologies to keep students engaged with the content, their learning activities and actively interacting among themselves is now a challenge for many academics. We conducted an interview study with students in Malaysian universities, to discover how social web technologies can be leveraged to enhance student engagement and interaction. The data came from three focus groups conducted in three different universities and each focus group comprises of 5 to 8 students. The study levels include students from their preparatory stage (matriculation) up to masters' level. The aim of the focus group discussion was to explore students' experiences of using social web technologies. The findings will be analysed using Activity Theory to obtain insights into students' perspective on the impact of social web technologies on their engagement in the learning process. This study offers important implications to both theory and practice.

## **Key Words**

Online Social Networking (OSN), Interaction, Focus Group, Activity Theory.