A STUDY OF HOW UTAR SUNGAI LONG CAMPUS UNDERGRADUATES UTILISE
SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE SEARCH OF INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

LIM YU WEI

A RESEARCH PROJECT
SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
BACHELOR OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION (HONS)
FACULTY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES
UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

APRIL 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DECLARATION

I declare that the material contained in this paper is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the bibliography and references to ALL sources be they printed, electronic or personal.

Name   : LIM YU WEI

Student ID   : 19UJB02425

Signed   :

Date   : 28th April 2023

APPROVAL FORM

This research paper attached hereto, entitled "How UTAR Sungai Long Campus Undergraduates Utilise Social Media in the Search of Internship Opportunities" prepared and submitted by Lim Yu Wei in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Corporate Communication (Hons) is hereby accepted.

Date: 28th April 2023

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Supervisor,

Ms. Jullian Khor Gee Khing

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

In the era of technology, social media has become a tool among undergraduate students to search for internship opportunities. Most of them have been exposed to the usage of social media since young, their purposes of usage change accordingly to their different stages in their lives. It is a requirement for university students to undergo internship programmes within their study. The objective of this research is to find out how Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Sungai Long campus undergraduates utilise social media in searching for internship opportunities. The quantitative approach was applied by distributing online questionnaire to 100 undergraduate students from UTAR Sungai Long campus. The result of the research concludes that UTAR Sungai Long campus undergraduate students prefer using social media to seek for internships and JobStreet is their favourite platform, and the most used function is browsing companies' profiles.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Social Media

Rahadi et al. (2022) defined social media as an online platform which provides its users with the function of participating, sharing and creating content. It enables users to share anything quickly including personal information, documents, and images. Users use web-based software or applications to access social media on a computer, tablet or smartphone ("Social Media: Definition, Effects, and List of Top Apps", 2021). Zyoud et al. (2018) stated that social media, which are interactive Web apps, have become more popular across the world, especially among adults. On the other hand, Sun (2020) defined social media as the most popular application type on the Internet as it can eliminate the limitations of time and place on interpersonal communication.

Every social media user is a content creator, but they can also receive digital content of information from others where interactivity is possible in this networked digital environment (Appel et al., 2019). According to Esteban (2019), MySpace was the starting point of social media when it reached a million of monthly active users in 2004. Since then, large social media platforms such as Facebook, Youtube and Twitter were created and have maintained its popularity till now. Up until 2016, TikTok was created and has achieved fifty million users within a period of two years which shows the development of social media throughout the years. Other than that, social media platforms gradually allow users to upload visual content like photos and videos. According to Esteban (2019), Twitter users were not allowed to upload photos and videos beforehand since it focused on word content. Nonetheless, users nowadays prefer visual content since it requires less time to browse through, so Twitter has shifted its features in order to

survive in the industry. As a result, more than fifty percent of the content on Twitter includes photos and videos (Esteban, 2019). There are also different age groups of users for different types of social media. Most of the social media platforms have high popularity among young people, but some platforms like Instagram and Snapchat have lower age groups of users compared to Facebook and Youtube (Esteban, 2019).

1.1.1 Characteristics of Social Media

As technology evolves, traditional media has also evolved to new media, and social media is part of it. According to Esteban (2019), the first social media site, Six Degrees was created in 1997 equipped with mainly social networking features such as creating profiles, uploading content and interacting with other users. The distinctive characteristics of social media is its interactivity which enables users to acquire and provide useful information. However, as technology evolves, the competition between social media platforms has increased. Hence, new features were added to improve users' experience and attract more users. For instance, there are interactivity elements such as comments box, "like," and "tag" buttons to manage communication processes on the platform. Furthermore, social presence occurs when people feel the sense of being with others. Users are able to conduct instant communications and interactions with the tools integrated into social media like message boxes, icon boxes, audio or video chat (Wang et al., 2019). Besides, social media offers users the ability to personalise the content that they want to view online. Large social media platforms provide the "follow" function which allows users to keep up with the content posted by the profiles. Once you "followed" someone, their content will be shown on your news feed more often compared to the ones you did not follow.

1.1.2 Types of Social Media

According to Siddhartha et al. (2020), social media can be divided into different classes which are: social networks, bookmarking sites, media sharing and micro blogging. Social networks such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram act as an online community for people who share similar interests and backgrounds to communicate. It benefits the users by promoting social connection which may help them in satisfying their needs of acceptance and belonging (Clark et al., 2017). Bookmarking sites provide users with the feature of grouping website links in the form of images, GIFs and videos for future reference. Pinterest is one of the examples of bookmarking sites, which enables users to build their own virtual bulletin boards according to their interests or preferences (Kauffman et al., 2019). Media sharing websites allow its users to share various types of media which mainly are video hosting media and images. Youtube is the most popular media sharing platform as it could reach millions of audiences worldwide (Siddhartha et al., 2020). Microblogging platforms such as Twitter and Weibo where users could express their opinions with a maximum 280 characters. Both platforms have the culture of 'trending' according to the frequency of posts getting retweeted (Al-Sarem et al., 2019).

1.1.3 Functions of Social Media

According to Statista (2022a), the number of social media users globally has reached four point seven billion users, which is equivalent to fifty nine percent of world's population. Social media tends to offer an ever-expanding range of services, it has proven difficult to classify them according to their sort due to their multifarious networking capabilities (AlDayel & Magdy, 2021). Besides, social media has evolved into an essential media form in today's society due to

its benefits of instantaneity, convenience, and interaction (Sun, 2020). This is because different age groups of users utilise social media differently.

During the pandemic era, it has become an essential tool for the teachers to be able to communicate with their students (Al-Rahmi et al., 2018). Physical classrooms were replaced by virtual classrooms due to the pandemic, and social media are used to conduct learning and interactive activities. For instance, Facebook has contributed to the learning context by offering a platform for teachers and students to communicate, collaborate and share resources (Chugh & Ruhi, 2017). Besides that, various social media platforms have been used by higher education institutions to disseminate knowledge. Video conferencing applications such as Skype, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Hangouts are popular for conducting online classes in a situation where everyone was socially isolated during the pandemic. A master's student mentioned that online classes are able to help them enhance and support each student's educational performance despite every part of the world finding a resolution to counter the problem (Duta, 2020).

According to a study conducted by Wardhani et al. (2019), the university students of Jakarta use social media with the purpose of news consumption. The majority of respondents prefer news stories on public affairs and latest developments to get updated and broaden their perspectives. Social media usage can also help to enhance academic performance of students. Many students have expressed their satisfaction with using Facebook to gather data and search for information that is relevant to their studies. This is supported by Habes et al. (2018) by stating that social media platforms are the source of knowledge for students.

When it comes to social media, socialisation is the main function for the users. According to a study by Tayo et al. (2019), eighty three percent of undergraduates in Nigerian universities use social media to socialise. The students utilise social media to communicate with their friends

and family and maintain social relationships. Other than using text messaging, "lurking" is also used to keep up social relationships. It is a behaviour of spending time browsing others' profiles without having to engage with them but get to know what is going on in their lives at the same time (Hall et al., 2020).

1.2 Social Media in Malaysia Context

In 2021, the Communications and Multimedia Ministry secretary-general stated that 28 million Malaysians are social media users which has increased seven percent within a year (The Star Online, 2021). Malaysia is ranked second in global social media penetration by having the rate of ninety one point seven percent (Statista, 2022b). The most used social media applications in Malaysia are Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok. Among millions of users, young adults who are new entrants in the working world have the highest usage of social media. It is supported by previous research done by Abd Rahman and Abdul Razak (2019) stating people who aged from eighteen to thirty four are more likely to consume social media.

According to Kolhar et al. (2021), social media plays a big part in university student's lives since they frequently use it throughout the day and night. However, there are different motivations of social media usage among university students in Malaysia. A previous study from Moghavvemi et al. (2018) states that there are many students utilising Youtube to learn and get educated by watching videos that could answer their academic questions. Its effectiveness was proven by one of the respondents stating that the video was helpful for understanding difficult topics or doing revisions.

1.3 Internship

Internship is one of the frequently used methods that is used by the students to explore their career pathways in the industry (Chan & Anantharajah, 2019). It is a chance for them to gain working experience and earn academic credit at the same time which is a requirement for them to graduate. Internship programmes are three to six months generally as it varies with their courses' requirements (Ali & Khushi, 2018). The students may apply for internships with different sectors like corporate, government and NGOs, but they have the option to carry out their internship abroad (Hassan, 2018).

It provides the opportunity for students to obtain hands-on experience with the knowledge they had acquired in classrooms throughout their three to four years of studies. It allows the students to develop practical skills that are equivalent with their career aspirations (Hardie et al., 2018). Hence, internship plays an important role in the country's employment rate as the problem of fresh graduates not equipped with relevant skills and knowledge is still present until today (Ng et al., 2021). Internship also provides the opportunity for students to learn other aspects of their courses which are not taught in classrooms. The programme will help to get them prepared for the challenges they might face in the real workforce (Chan & Anantharajah, 2019). The students gain their confidence by fulfilling the tasks given by their mentors or managers as the organisational environment helps to increase their confidence level and drives productivity (Ali & Khushi, 2018). On the other hand, internships could determine the possibility of undergraduates being employed. If they did well during the internship, it will improve their employability prospects to be hired as a full-time employee after graduation (Malom & Nasrul, 2020).

Before social media becomes an essential tool in our lives, students apply for internships by starting off with approaching the companies they are interested in, then wait for companies' calls to attend interviews and eventually get the opportunity if the requirements are matched. According to George (2022), the use of social media has added yet another step to the hiring process, including the interview stage. Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are the tools used by employers to know more about them that are not presented in their resumes or cover letters. According to Lee (2022), social media screening is common in the hiring process as employers will view applicants' social media profiles before making hiring decisions. Hence, it is important to build a strong profile on social media since it plays a part in the hiring process.

1.4 Searching Internship through Social Media

Recent technological developments have changed the way undergraduate students search for internships. Before the existence of social media, students would utilise traditional media such as newspapers and other printed works. There are also career days held by respective universities for recruiting purposes, and students may sign up for applications with the companies that they are interested in. According to Rahadi et al. (2022), Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Linkedin, JobStreet and company websites are the social media platforms that are used for job vacancies. Professional websites such as Linkedin and Indeed.com are becoming popular not only for job seeking, but also for recruitment processes due to providing benefits including a wide range of opportunities and no geographic restrictions, which are genuinely attractive (Kothawala, 2018).

Social media platforms such as Linkedin serve the function of building your career profiles online by filling up your details such as education, job experiences and skills. Each skill-filled profile will serve as a springboard for the students in the industry since the way they present themselves affects the HR's attention. The students may also take the advantage to understand the key competencies in their respective industries globally and nationally (Sia & Amirnudin, 2020). Loretto (2022) stated that LinkedIn provides opportunities for people to interact with possible contacts within the industry and learn about available internships and employment. Available internships that come with the "Easy Apply" button enables applicants to upload their resume along with the cover letter and it will be sent directly to the scout. If the button is not available, applicants can also be directed to the company's website with the "Apply" function.

1.5 Problem Statements

As the social media penetration rate is increasing, it has been used for a variety of purposes including internship searching. Particularly for undergraduate students who have to undergo an internship throughout their studies. One of the concerning issues is that social media provides more job opportunities for full time jobs compared with internships, as interns could only work for the organisation for a short period of time. Due to this, many undergraduates have been struggling to search for internship opportunities that are within their industries. This can be proved by a study conducted by Smith and Watkins (2020) which focused on job searching through LinkedIn among millennials. There are limited studies that focus on undergraduates which will eventually become a full timer after graduating successfully.

Moreover, there is still a lack of understanding on the features that different social media platforms can provide for career seeking purposes (Ruparel et al., 2020). Therefore, by applying Uses and Gratifications Theory on this study, it can help the users to achieve maximum utilisation when using social media platforms since it will form an understanding on their motives of usage. According to Ruparel et al. (2020), there are users that resist the new features launched by the social media platforms due to them being used with the existing features. Therefore, this study can determine whether new users would try out social media as a platform to search for internships, or the reasons existing users continue using it.

Additionally, little research has been done utilising the Uses and Gratifications theory in the context of job searching (Smith & Watkins, 2020). The theory is a perfect fit to have a better understanding of the motives of media users. As social media has become inseparable with our daily lives, it could be integrated to utilise the development that technology has brought and make our lives easier. Therefore, it is important to conduct this study to discover how undergraduates utilise social media in searching internship opportunities.

1.6 Significance of Study

The results of this study will provide an understanding on how undergraduate students use social media to search for internships opportunities in Malaysia. Lim (2022) stated that the internship programmes in Malaysia were interrupted due to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic. It has caused an economic recession which leads companies to reduce the numbers of interns employment. According to Nagel et al. (2018), they claimed that different levels of undergraduate students tend to have different thoughts on the importance of social media in their

future career. Higher-level university students, who are bachelor's and master's students, have a higher frequency of using LinkedIn compared to diploma students. Therefore, students have to compete for internship opportunities as everyone has to complete their internships in order to graduate.

Other than that, this study will act as a reference for other studies on the subject in the future. Ruparel et al. (2020) stated that there is limited research done on the usage of professional social media, it may increase its significance on professional recruitment if similar studies are conducted in different countries. Besides, there is a lack of research regarding the specific characteristics that professional social media offers to attract users' usage. Hence, future research can be conducted in a more thorough and complete manner by using this study as a source of reference.

1.7 Research Objectives

1) To study how UTAR Sungai Long campus undergraduates utilise social media in searching for internship opportunities.

1.8 Research Questions

1) How UTAR Sungai Long campus undergraduates utilise social media platforms to search for internship opportunities

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Background of Uses and Gratifications Theory

The concept of Uses and Gratifications Theory was introduced by Herta Herzog in the 1940s with the aim of investigating the motives of radio listening. She found out that the reasons why people listen to radio were: self-rating, competitive, sporting and educational. It then led to three gratifications: emotional release, wishful thinking and advice (Moon, An and Norman, 2022). The perspective of this theory views audiences as active since they select and use media according to their own needs (Eginli & Tas, 2018). Prior to the 1970s, research only focused on the gratifications but further studies were done during the 1970s. Researchers then studied the motivations of the audience and how they use the media to satisfy their social and psychological demands (Liu, 2015).

Before that, people were not exposed to the Uses and Gratifications theory until the collaborative research started between Elihu Katz, Jay Blumber and Michael Gurvitch in 1974. Many scholars have conducted numerous studies on the theory ever since. Along with the development of technology, the theory was further developed and could be applied to different media use and even behavioural intentions of users. It does not only apply to traditional media like radio and newspapers, but also the new forms of media such as social media (Hossain, 2019). According to Moon et al. (2022), there are four types of gratifications including social interaction, information seeking, convenience, and entertainment which drive social media usage.

The first gratification is social gratification. It refers to the users interacting with their friends or family and even building their circle of friends by meeting new people online. Other

than that, According to Pelletier et al. (2020), Facebook is the best platform that helps to fulfil socialising purposes since it provides means of communication such as an online community that allows people who have similar interests to connect and communicate with each other, and it has a large groups of users which leads it to become the dominant platform in the social media era.

Next, is information seeking gratification. Information seeking is referred to as the process of gathering information, views or ideas from reliable sources including websites, news outlets and social networking sites that provide current and pertinent information about a topic (Junaidi et al., 2020). Larger networks frequently link a wider variety of people for the sharing of information. For instance, Facebook provides users with a vast amount of information, so they can retrieve information from it for learning purposes or fulfil their need of collecting specific information. Once their information gratification is fulfilled and satisfied, the continuance of using social networking sites will also be higher (Zong et al., 2019).

The convenience gratification refers to when users browse social media platforms just because they are bored and want to pass time (Pelletier et al., 2020). However, Pantic (2019) stated that convenience is meant by the accessibility of social media, which means users can access them anytime and anywhere. According to the previous study of Pelletier et al (2020), Instagram is the platform that users can exert less effort to scroll through content since it focuses on visuals and reducing text. The gratification is also commonly found among students who are using social media as a learning tool for e-learning. According to Khoa (2020), students are able to seek information easily via social media platforms especially during the pandemic when classrooms were switched to online.

Entertainment is when social media provides entertainment and enjoyment For example, Instagram allows users to follow their favourite celebrities (Pelletier et al., 2020). Entertaining

content that is available on social media platforms also helps to fulfill the user's entertainment needs (Kim et al., 2021). There are numerous entertainment activities that users can engage to satisfy their entertainment needs: listening to music, playing games, watching videos and watching comics (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

2.2 Development of Uses and Gratifications Theory

According to (Mehrad & Tajer, 2016), the first developmental stage of the Uses and Gratifications Theory is in the 1940s. During this stage, research was conducted mainly to analyse radio listeners and comparison was done with other traditional media like newspapers. Berelson (1949) concluded that people read newspapers due to the motives of having shared conversation with people, a sense of security and is a part of their daily routines.

When it moved to the 1950s, there were a limited number of studies done as the tendency of the Uses and Gratifications Theory has declined (Mehrad & Tajer, 2016). Plumber and McQuail had done further research in the 1964 election context that was held in England by investigating what motivates the audiences to watch political programs via television. The results have classified four groups of audiences' motives including diversion, personal relationships, personal identity and surveillance.

The second phase is in the 1970s when the researchers focused on the audience's motivations and how they utilise media to satisfy their social and psychological needs (Liu, 2015). According to Liu (2015), this may be considered as a partial answer to the severe criticism that other mass communication experts have brought up at it. Hence, Katz et al. (1973) compiled a list of social and psychological demands that media is supposed to satisfy. Moving

onto the third phase, the Uses and Gratifications has reached maturity with the contribution by Blumber & Katz (1974) and Katz et al. (1973). They stated that the individual's expectations on media are created by the social and psychological needs they are facing, and it affects the tendency of media usage.

It then led to the fourth developmental stage which a rather complicated theoretical framework was created by Palmgreen in 1974. Several theories were formed and tested during this stage. According to Ruggiero (2000), an expectancy model was created by Palmgreen and Rayburn in 1982 with the combination of Uses and Gratification Theory and expectancy value theory. It has successfully anticipated the gratifications that audiences expected from watching news on television. As the technology advances, this theory is increasingly significant since users are provided with a wider range of media options to select from (Ruggiero, 2000). Therefore, there is a need to study the needs, motives and satisfaction of users with the use of different forms of media (Mehrad & Tajer, 2016).

2.3 Uses and Gratifications Theory in the Job Searching Context via Social Media

The Uses and Gratifications Theory is relatively important in today's society as the technology evolves which creates a wide range of functions for social media. It is not only used in casual context, but also in professional context like job searching and job recruitment. According to Ruparel et al. (2020), professional social networking sites such as LinkedIn have increased the opportunities for them to meet their career goals. This is supported by Smith and Watkins (2020), who states that social networking sites can provide three of the theory's basic gratifications which are personal identity, surveillance and diversion.

The previous studies that were conducted on the Uses and Gratifications Theory mainly focused on matured social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Twitter. However, Smith and Watkins (2020) approved that LinkedIn is the main social media platform that is used by recruiters and professionals to help with personnel decisions. According to LinkedIn (2020), it reports to be the largest professional network by having more than 600 million users in over 200 countries. LinkedIn users tend to use social media for socialising with their friends and family, but they are more interested in networking with their coworkers or peers about career-related topics (Florenthal, 2015). Hence, there is a clear line between socialising and networking on social media platforms.

Social media users focus on building their personal identity on social media platforms to form a good impression in their social circles. According to Florenthal (2015), professional identities are built on LinkedIn which includes details like job experiences, education and relevant skills. It acts as a self-promotion for the users to increase their job searching opportunities. Profile optimization is also commonly used on LinkedIn since the users wanted to impress employers by presenting themselves professionally. Studies have shown that building a strong profile on social networking sites could help to increase the number of job interviews which could lead to job opportunities (O'Donnell, 2019).

According to Smith and Watkins (2020), information seeking drives social media usage as they can receive information about job or internship opportunities directly from the recruiters that posted the jobs. Besides, they can also discover opportunities that are related to their own professional field and it has also provided a new way to explore the professional network. The function of social media allows the users to exchange or share information about jobs or internships with others to comprehend their respective industries.

Last but not least, social media users could also satisfy their social needs which can be beneficial for their journey of job searching. According to Rozsa et al. (2022), the users are able to establish new relationships and expand social circles by joining a membership in open or close community groups. Social media is the perfect platform for users to do social networking as it offers the function of communicating through private messaging and sharing contacts. It is important in job searching because it could increase job offers by getting referrals. Referrals are more effective for job seekers due to the competitive environment (Fennel, 2022). Hence, the Uses and Gratifications Theory is applicable in the job seeking context since it could satisfy users' gratifications even in the professional platforms.

2.4 Reviewing Uses and Gratifications Theory

Based on the study of Smith and Watkins (2020), it is common that the gratifications sought and gratifications obtained are difficult to distinguish. There were two gratifications achieved for LinkedIn usage which are social value and hedonic value. However, the social value and functional value components were combined into one factor as the respondents were unable to differentiate between the two values (Smith & Watkins, 2020). According to Lometti et al. (1977), the gratifications sought and gratifications obtained eventually will become inseparable, and the issue might not be solvable.

According to Elliot (1974), the Uses and Gratifications Theory is individualistic, which makes it difficult to examine societal and cultural aspects of media consumption. Individual choices may be affected by peer pressure, societal conventions, historical, political, and economic tendencies are all influencing factors which leads to a narrow focus (Ruggiero, 2000).

Besides, self-reports are heavily relied on in this theory because the theory views the audience as active and expects them to define their motivations on social media usage. However, the results may be inaccurate since the theory only looks at individuals, and ignores the environment factors. Also, self-reports may measure a person's awareness and perception of their own conduct more than their actual behaviour (Ruggiero, 2000). The researchers of the theory often defined the motives, uses, gratifications and functional uses differently. It may hinder future research to be conducted since it may create confusion for the researchers (Ruggiero, 2000).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research and Data Collection Method

According to McCombes (2022a), descriptive study intends to describe a population, circumstance or phenomena precisely. The researcher chose this method for this study because it can answer how, when, what, and where questions but not for why questions. The method is suitable for this study as the research questions and objectives started with *how*. Descriptive study can be also used to identify trends, characteristics and frequencies by conducting different research methods like surveys, observations and case studies (McCombes, 2022a). It matches with the researcher who will design online survey questions and distribute it to the targeted respondents.

This study used a quantitative research method to determine the utilisation of social media among UTAR Sungai Long campus undergraduates to search for internships. According to Bhandari (2022), quantitative research is known as the process of collecting and analysing numerical data. Quantitative research makes it easier for the researcher to analyse large samples which are taken from a hundred of respondents. On the other hand, applying quantitative research could help to make comparisons for future research conducted on different demographic factors for broader generalisations (Aschauer, 2021).

There are several methods that can be used to collect data, but the researcher chose to collect data through survey. According to McCombes (2022b), survey is defined as a method of obtaining data by asking a group of people questions and analyse the results. Survey is one the commonly used methods to collect data since it provides researchers with accurate information

that can be used to assist in quantitative research.

3.2 Characteristics & Benefits of Survey

An online survey method was applied in this study by distributing questionnaires to the targeted respondents. According to Ball (2019), online surveys can be distributed quickly and reach large numbers of people at the same time. Since the study requires 100 respondents, conducting online surveys could help the researcher to save time and reduce cost.

Furthermore, the construction of online surveys is flexible. One of the examples is Google Form that will be used for this study. According to Abigail (2021), it allows the users to personalise their survey questions with different types of questions and answers like: multiple choice, dropdown and linear scale. This provides the users to create open or close ended questions according to their needs and preferences. The researcher can also integrate the questions with visuals by adding logos, photos and videos according to the theme. Moreover, there is a "Responses" tab that allows the researcher to track the responses collected. The "Google Sheets" also allows the researcher to analyse data easily by generating a spreadsheet with the information collected. The Google forms are distributed through WhatsApp and Instagram to the respondents to fill up.

3.3 Survey Method

The survey of this research was divided into four sections. The first section is demographic and psychographic questions. This section allows the researcher to ensure the

respondents fulfil the criteria of the survey. The respondents of this survey will be the undergraduate students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Sungai Long Campus. This is because the students are necessary to undergo an internship throughout their school term to graduate. The second section allows the researcher to determine whether the respondent uses social media in their daily life. Accordingly, the third section includes five multiple choice questions. It is designed to determine the utilisation of social media among UTAR Sungai Long campus undergraduates to search for internships. The last section is designed for the respondents who chose offline method as their internship opportunities. It is to understand the platforms and reasons behind. Besides, purposive sampling will be applied in this research.

Other than that, the Uses and Gratification theory plays a significant role to determine the utilisation of social media among the undergraduates to search for internship opportunities. This is because it can help to determine the functions offered by the social media platforms to fulfil their specific needs. On top of that, the researcher can understand the reasons for social media usage in the context of internship searching.

A pilot test was conducted prior to the distribution of online surveys to the respondents. According to Simkus (2022), the pilot test is a small-scale study carried out prior to any large-scale quantitative research. It can help in identifying design issues and evaluating the feasibility, practicability, resources, time, and cost of a project before the core study is started (Simkus, 2022). The questionnaire was drafted during the end of January 2023, then it was submitted for ethical clearance in February 2023. Therefore, a total of ten respondents have been selected to complete the pilot test. The survey questionnaire distributed for the pilot test has the same format with the actual survey.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

According to Ahmed and Ishtiaq (2021), reliability and validity are two of the most important and fundamental components of any measuring methodology for data collection in a successful research. This is because the quality of the research could be enhanced by adopting methodology with high reliability and validity. Validity refers to the accuracy when a methodology measures the variables. On the other hand, reliability is defined as the consistency of the methodology (Ahmed & Ishtiaq, 2021). Therefore, the researcher could achieve the research objectives with the data collected.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS
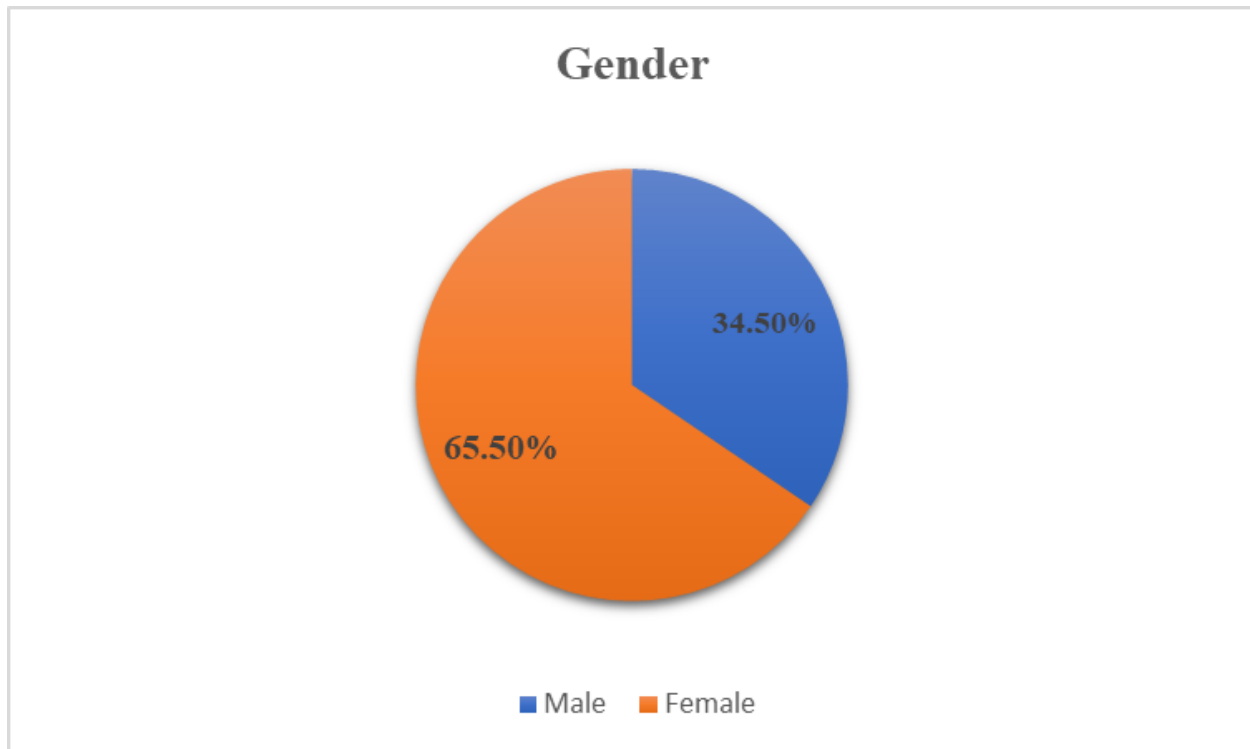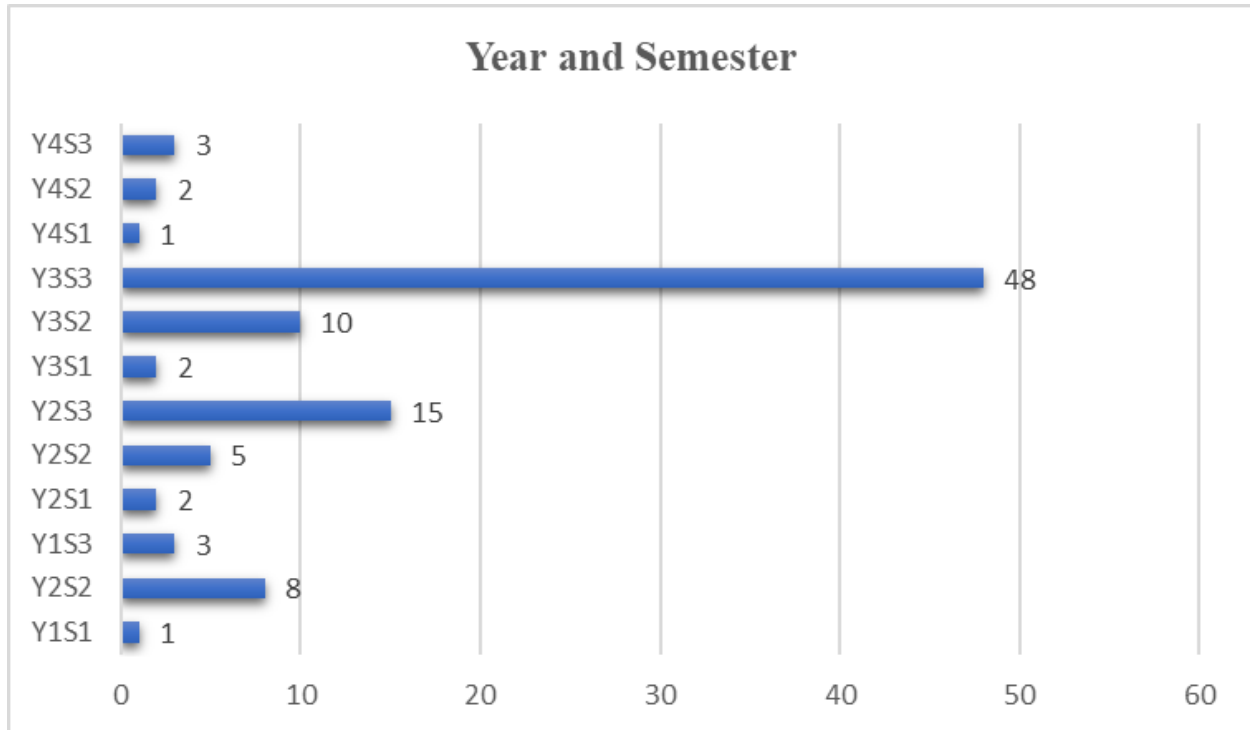
4.1 Demographic and Psychographic

Figure 4.1: The Gender of Respondents

Out of 100 respondents of the online survey, 66% which equals 66 people are females, while 34% males equal 34 people.

Graph 4.1: Year and Semester of Respondents

Based on the graph 4.1 have shown the current year and semester of the respondents. There are 48 out of 100 respondents are currently in Year 3 Semester 3 which has the highest number. The second highest is Year 2 Semester 3 and third is Year 3 Semester 2, 15 and 10 respectively. The lowest is Year 4 Semester 1 and Year 1 Semester 1 which have the lowest number of 1.

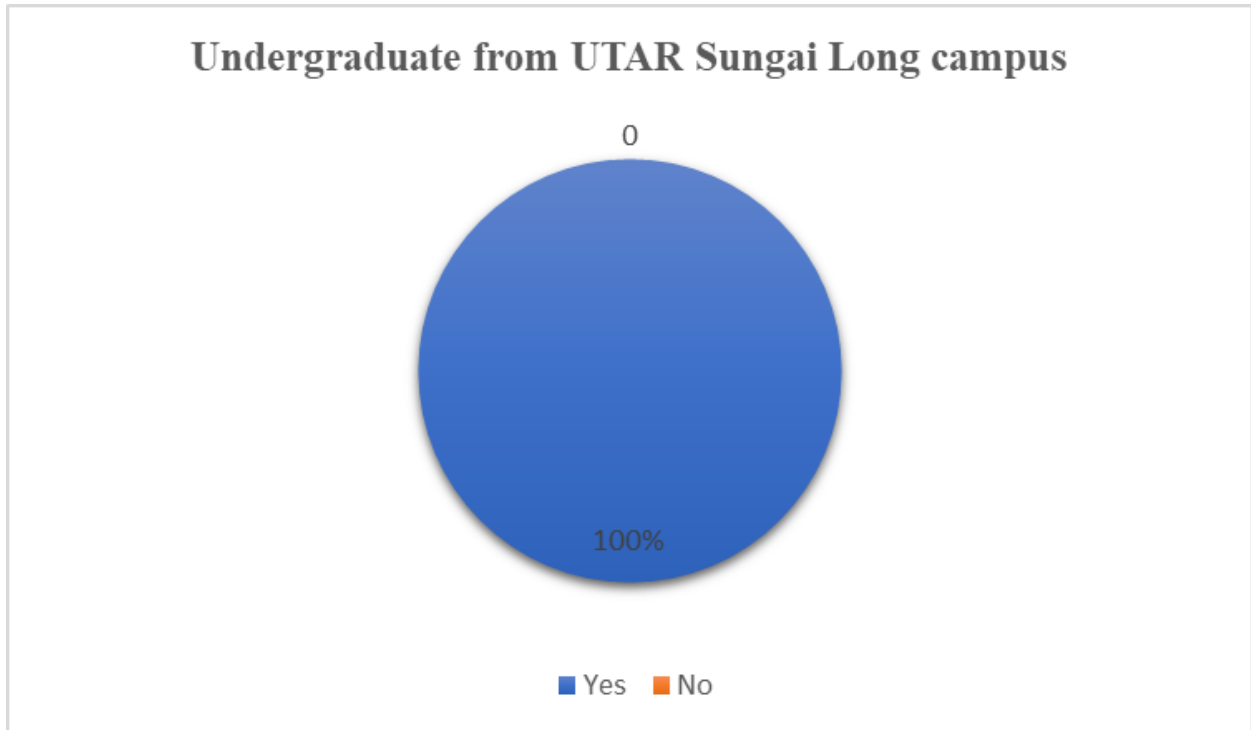**Undergraduate from UTAR Sungai Long campus**

0

100%

■ Yes ■ No

Figure 4.2: Undergraduate from UTAR Sungai Long campus

All of the 100 respondents are undergraduate students from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Sungai Long campus.
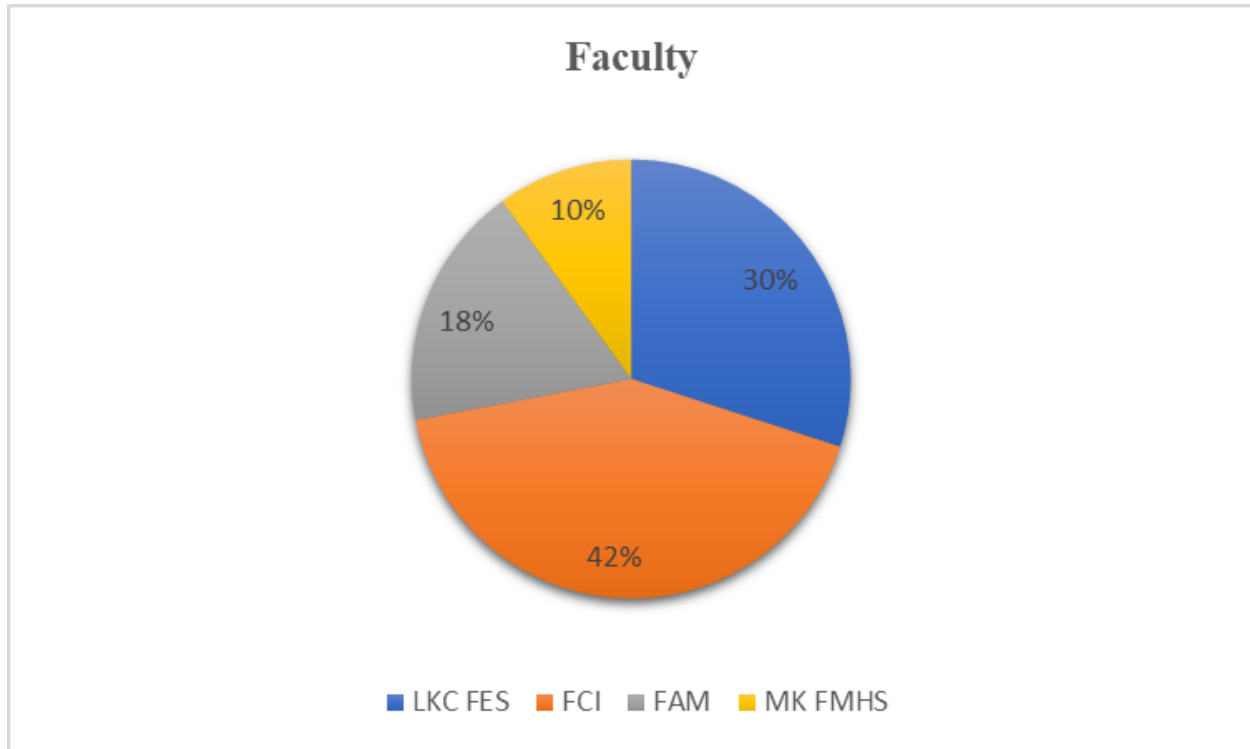
Figure 4.3: Faculty of the respondents

Based on figure 4.3, there are 4 faculties available at UTAR Sungai Long campus which are Lee Kong Chian Faculty of Engineering and Science (LKC FES), Faculty of Creative Industries (FCI), Faculty of Accountancy and Management (FAM) and M. Kandiah Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (MK FMHS). The most number of respondents are from FCI which is 42% from 100 respondents. The lowest are from MK FMHS which is 10% from 100 respondents.
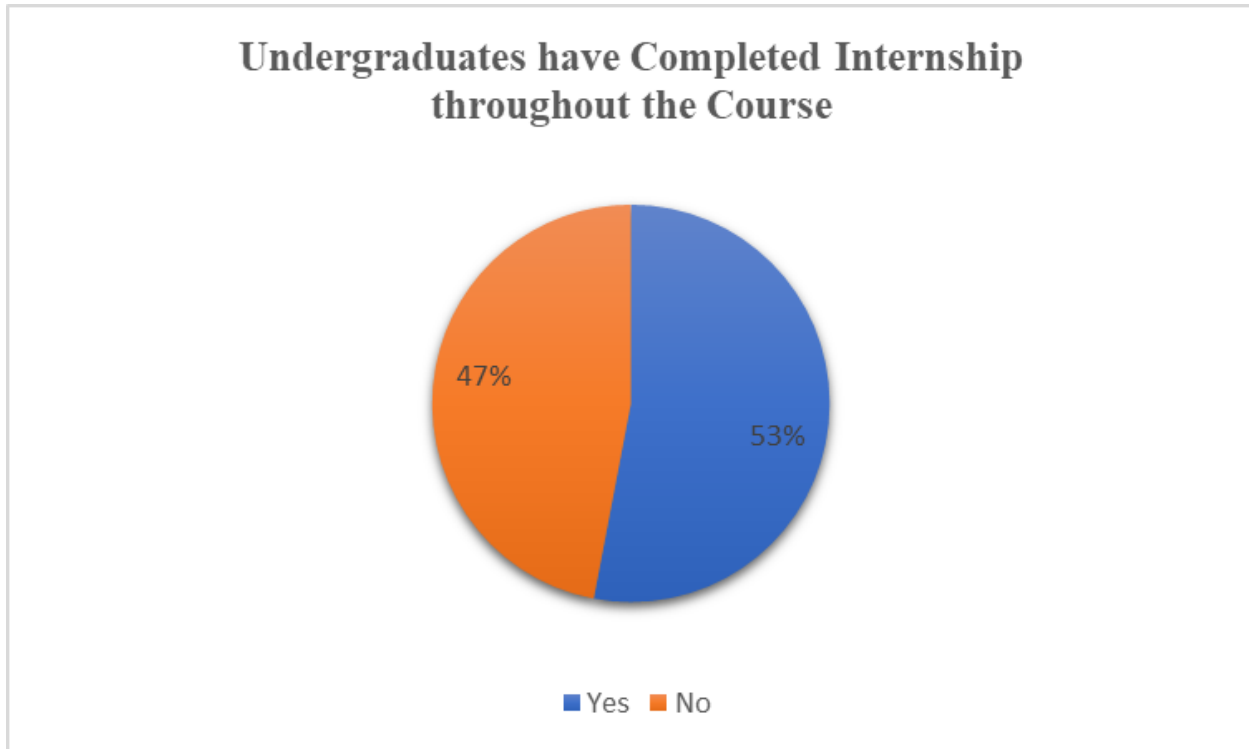
Undergraduates have Completed Internship throughout the Course

47%

53%

■ Yes ■ No

Figure 4.4: Undergraduates have Completed Internship throughout the Course

Based on the statement of "Undergraduates that Completed Internship Throughout the Course" have been shown on figure 4.4 above. In response to this question, 53% of respondents which is 53 out of 100 answered 'Yes' while 47% of the respondents equal to 47 respondents answered 'No'. Hence, it can be concluded that most of the respondents have completed their internship throughout their courses.
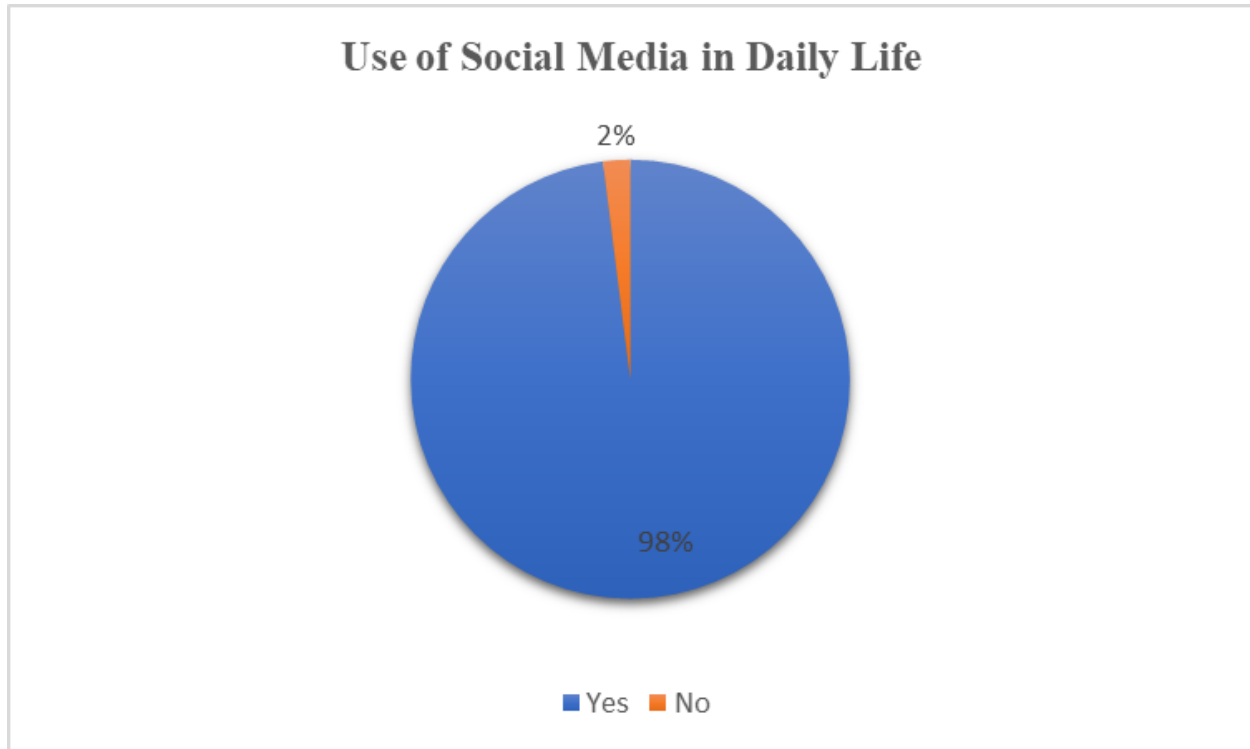
Use of Social Media in Daily Life

Figure 4.5: Social Media Usage in Daily Life

Based on the figure 4.5 above, the statement of "I Use Social Media in my Daily Life" has been shown. In response to this question, 98%, which is 98 out of 100 respondents, replied 'Yes', while 2% of respondents equal to 2 respondents replied 'No'.

Reasons for Using Social Media

0%

8%

14%

25%

53%

■ Information seeking ■ Entertainment ■ Social interaction ■ Pass time ■ Escapism
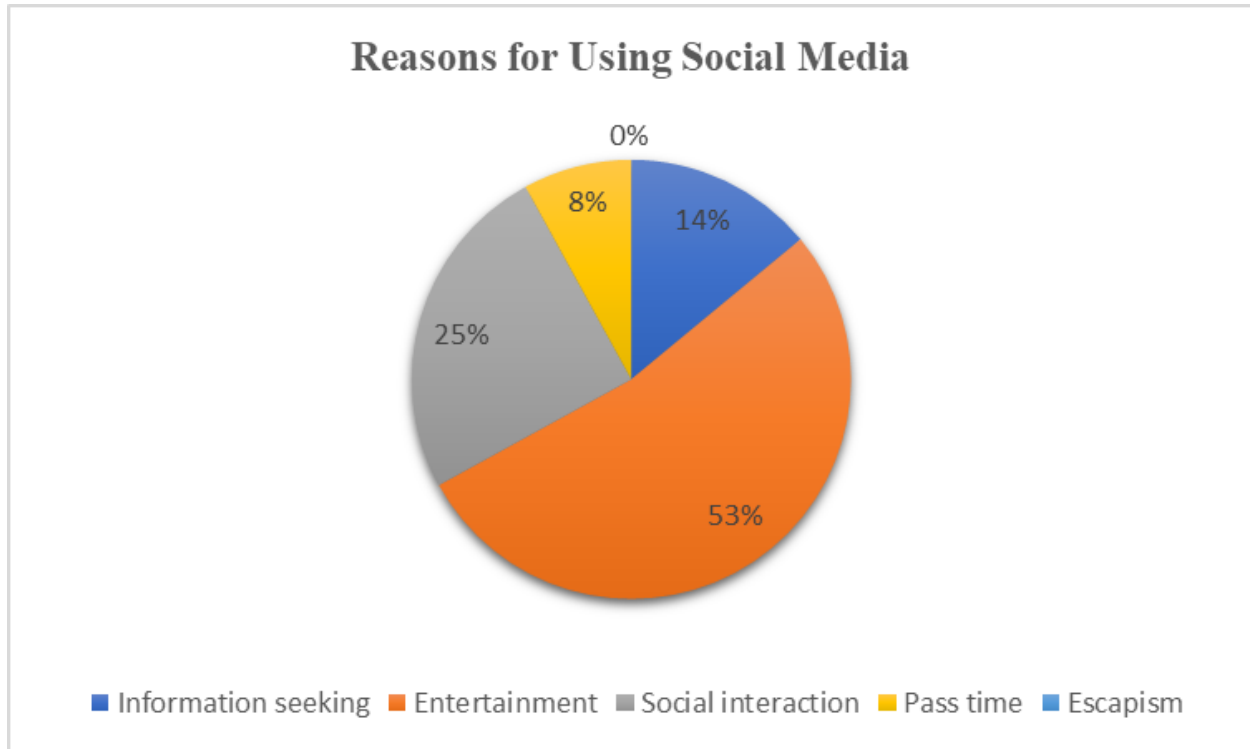
Figure 4.6: Reasons for Using Social Media

Figure 4.6 has shown the reasons for using social media which are information seeking, entertainment, social interaction, pass time and escapism. The highest respondents have chosen entertainment, which consists of 53% out of 100 respondents. The second highest is social interaction which was selected by 25% out of 100 respondents. The lowest is escapism which was not chosen by any respondents.
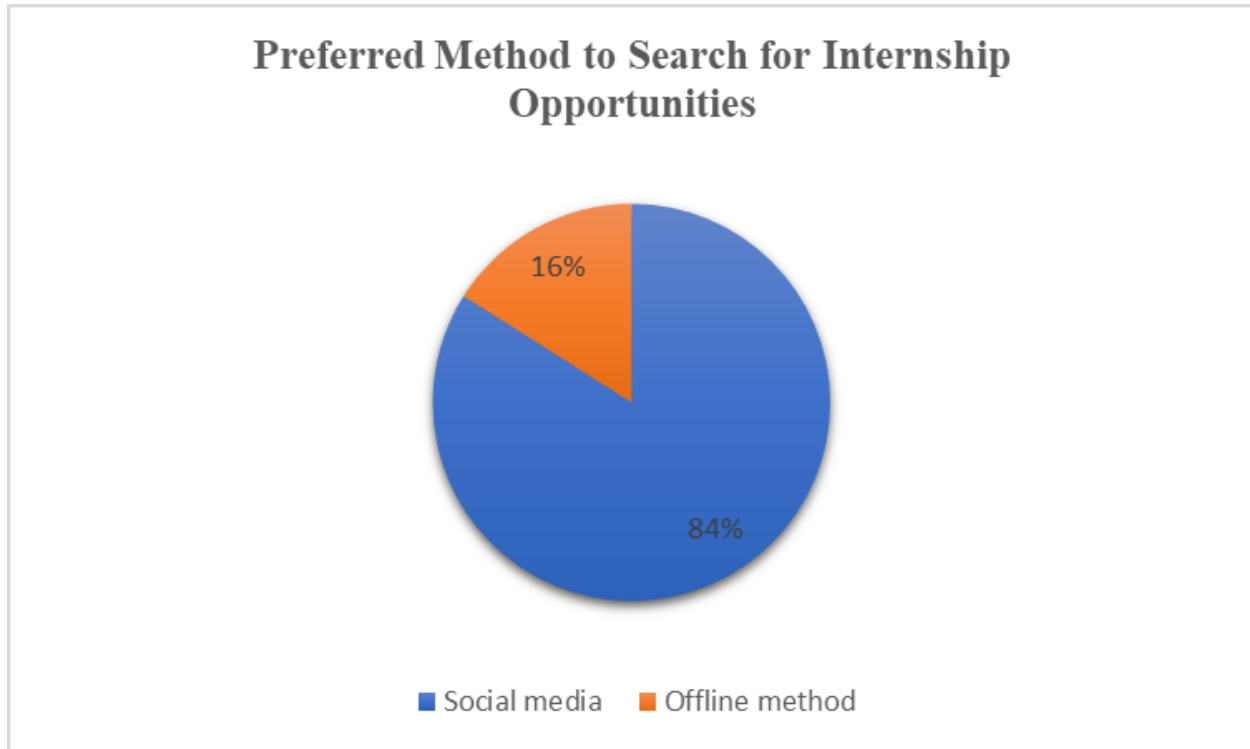
Figure 4.7: Preferred Method to Search for Internship Opportunities

Based on the statement "Preferred Method to Search for Internship Opportunities" have shown in figure 4.7 above. The result has shown that 84% which equals 84 respondents chose social media as their preferred method to search for an internship while 16% which equals 16 respondents chose an offline method.

4.2 The ways of how social media is utilised to search for internship among the UTAR undergraduates.
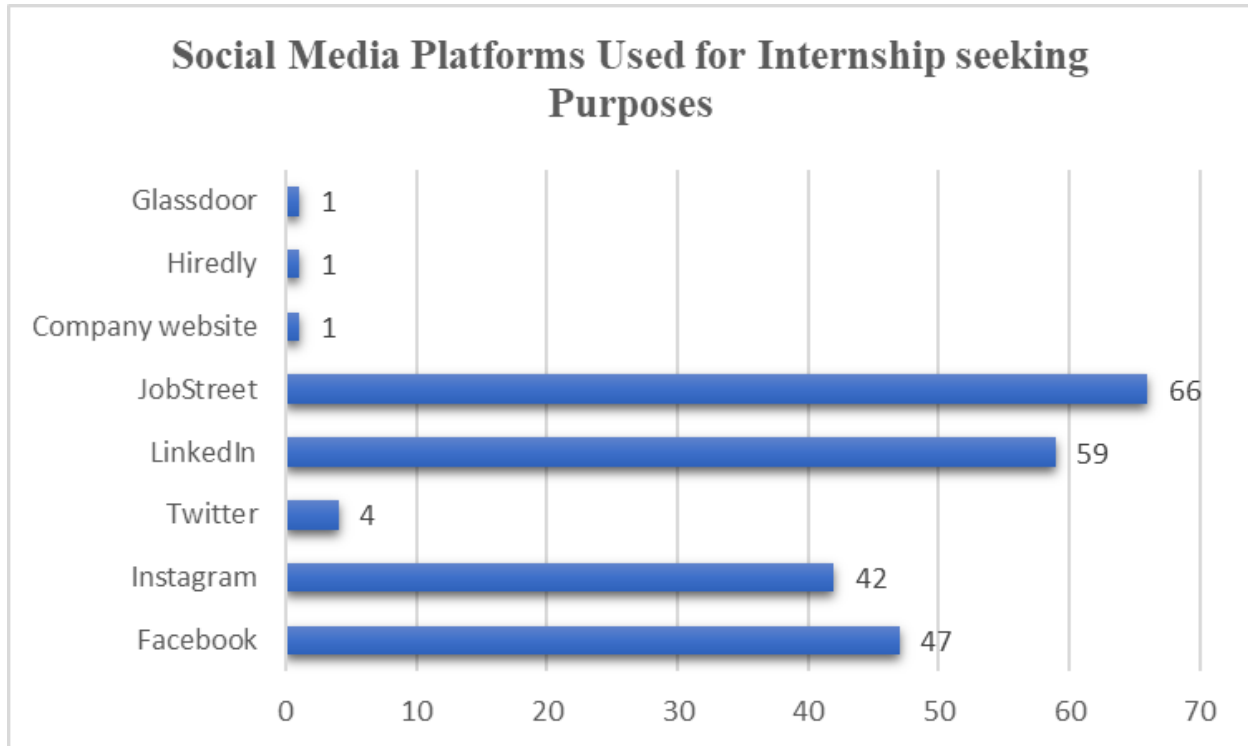
Graph 4.2: Social Media Platforms Used for Internship Seeking Purposes

This section has provided us the result of the social media platforms used by the respondents for internship seeking purposes. A total of 84 respondents who chose social media as their preferred method are allowed to choose more than one answer. There are 78.6% respondents which equals 66 respondents who have used JobStreet to search for internships. This was followed by 70.2% respondents who used LinkedIn. The third most used social media platform by the respondents for internship seeking purpose is Facebook which consist of 56% respondents which equal to 47 respondents.
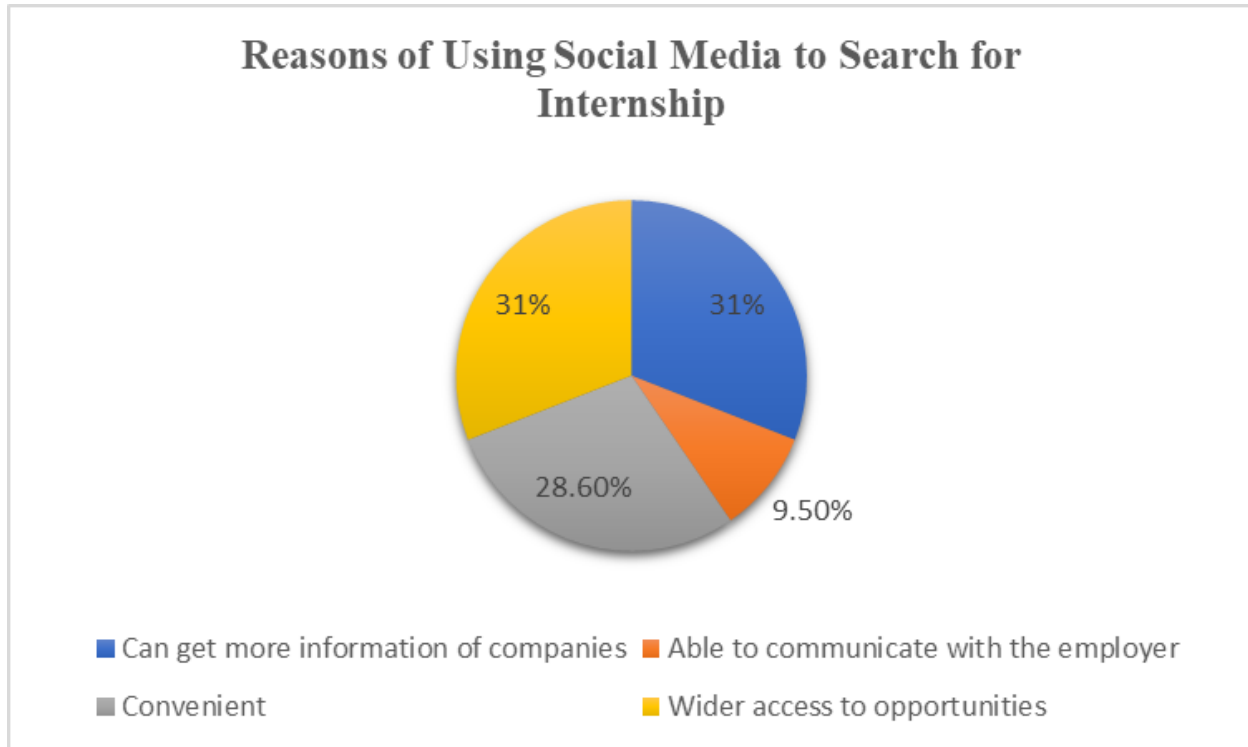
Figure 4.8: Reasons of Using Social Media to Search for Internship

Based on the figure 4.8 above, it has shown that there are 4 choices of selections for the statement "Reasons of Using Social Media to Search for Internship". There are 26 out of 84 respondents which equals to 31% who agree that social media can help to get more information about companies and have wider access to opportunities. Convenient has 24 respondents which equals 28.6% while 8 respondents agree that social media enables them to communicate with employers equal to 9.5%.
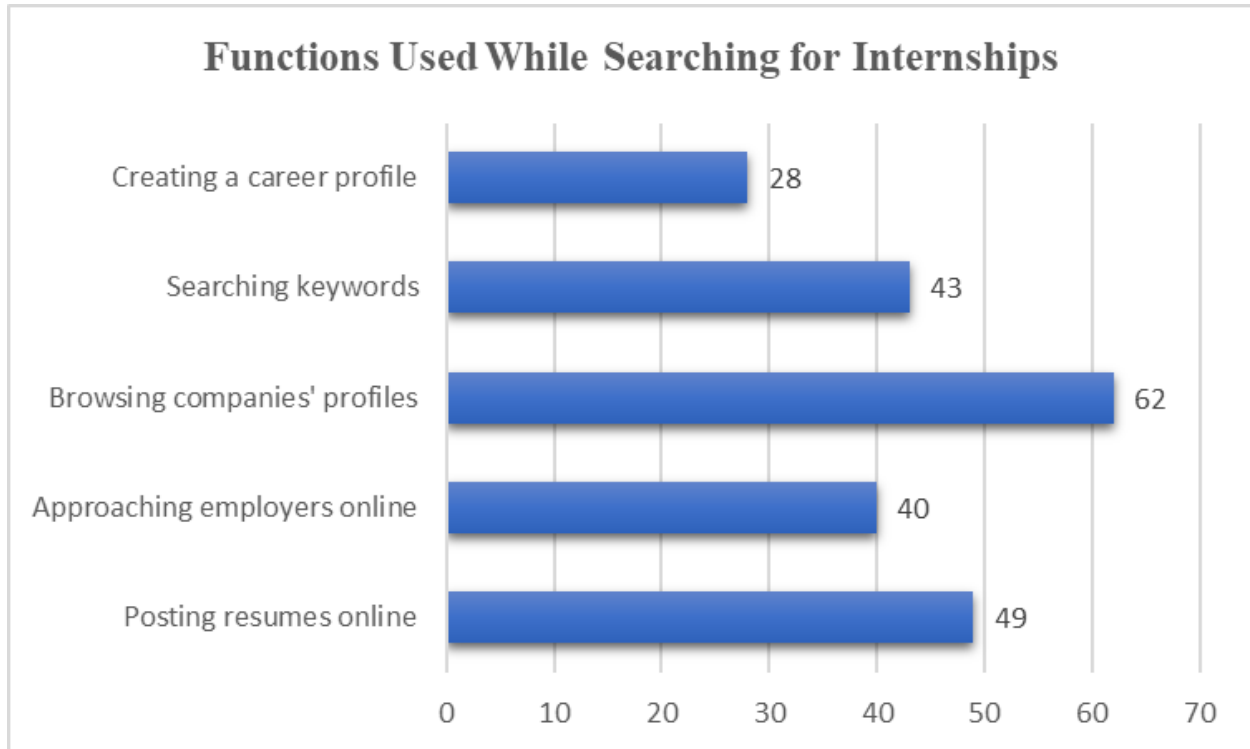
Graph 4.3: Functions Used While Searching for Internships

Graph 4.3 has provided the functions used by the respondents while searching for internships. In this question, the respondents are allowed to choose more than one option. The most chosen option is browsing companies profiles which was chosen by 62 respondents (73.8%). Posting resumes online have 49 respondents which equals 58.3% of the respondents while 43 respondents equal to 47.6% searched for keywords. Creating a career profile was the least chosen function which has 28 respondents equal to 33.3%.

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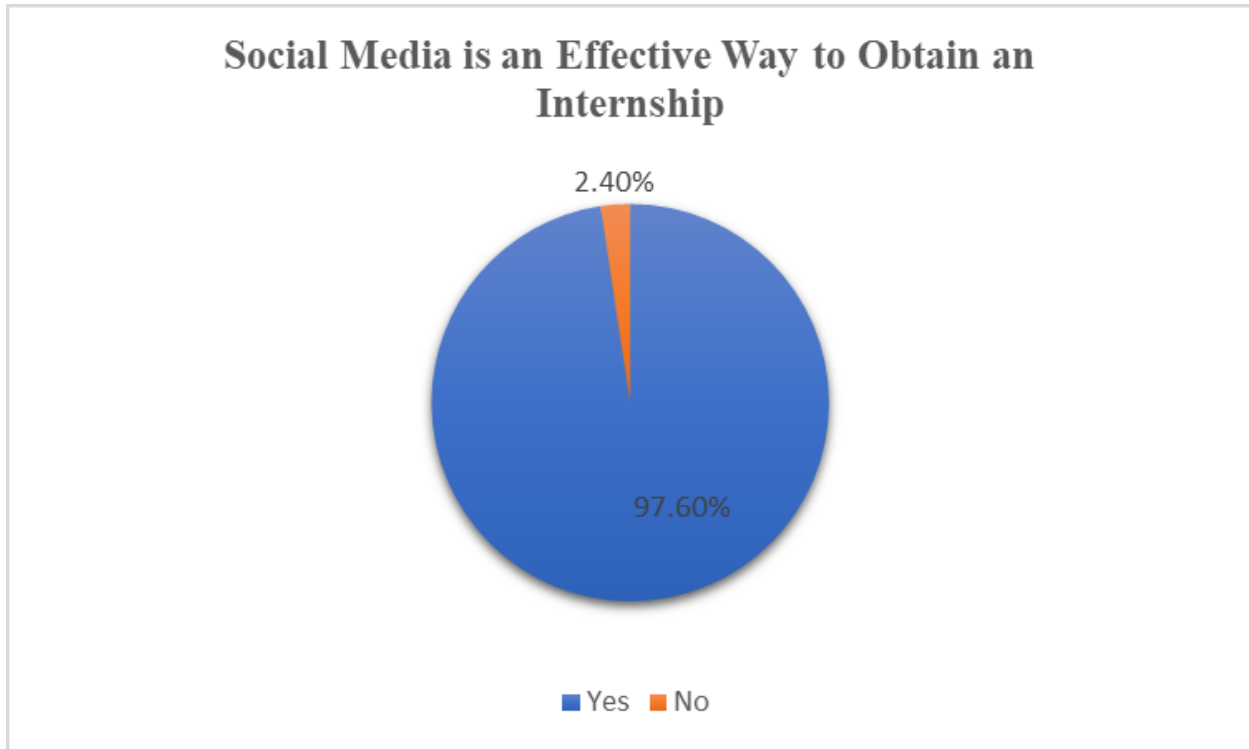
Figure 4.9: Social Media is an Effective Way to Obtain an Internship

There are a total of 82 respondents out of 84 respondents (97.6%) agree that social media is an effective way to obtain an internship while 2 out of 84 respondents equal 2.4% diagrees to the statement.

Recommending to Your Friends

2.40%

97.60%

■ Yes ■ No
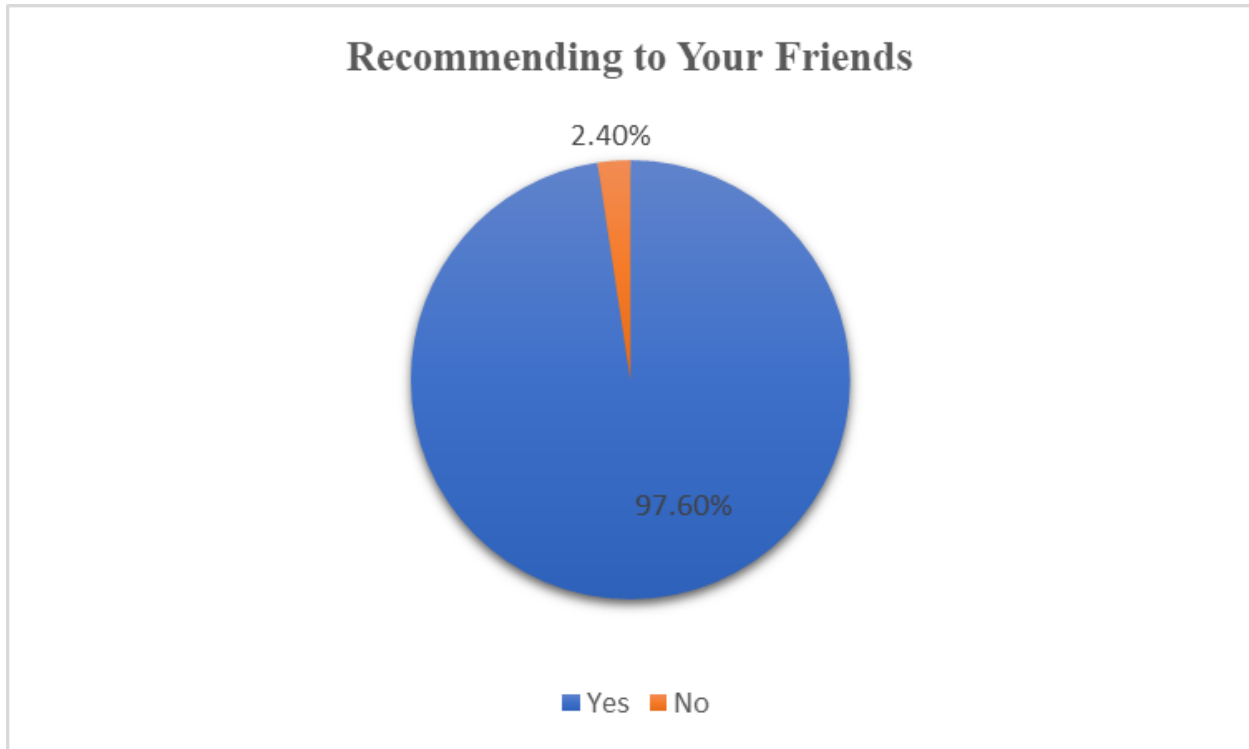
Figure 4.10: Recommending to Your Friends

The statement "Recommending to Your Friends" was agreed by 97.6% of respondents equal to 82 respondents while the remaining 2.4% of respondents with 2 respondents disagreed.
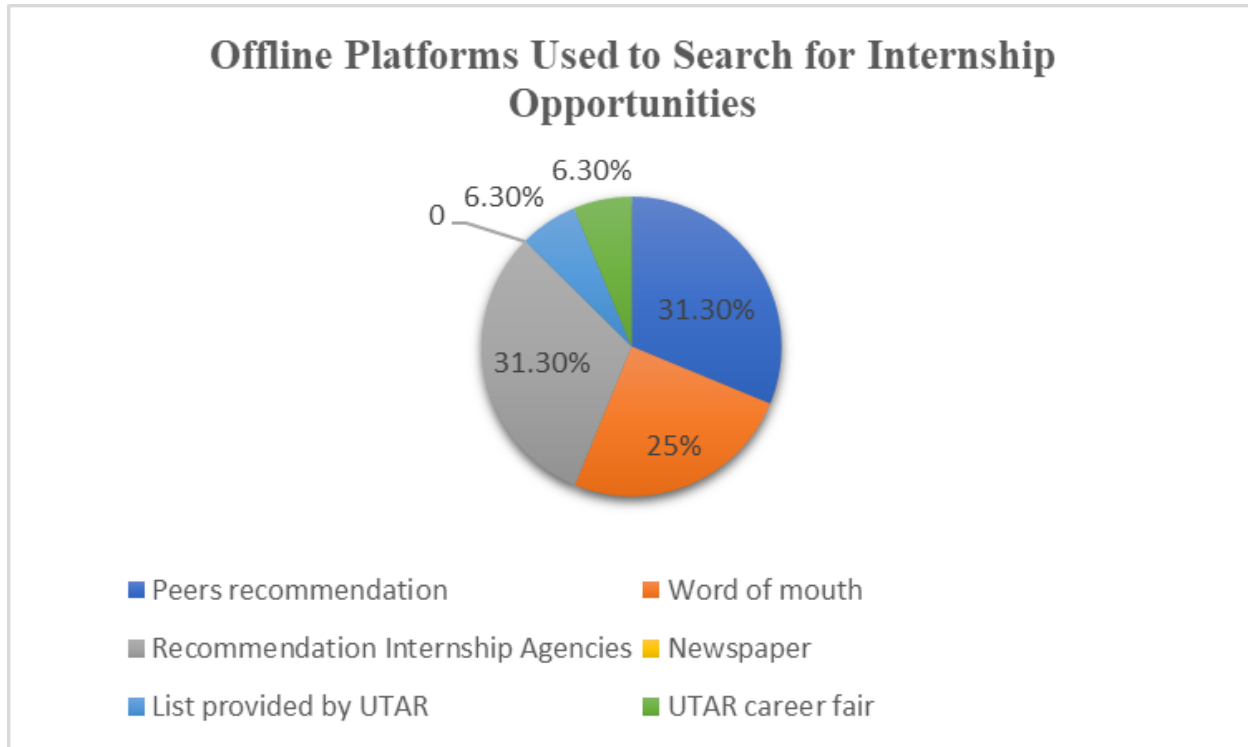
Figure 4.11: Offline Platforms Used to Search for Internship Opportunities

There are a total of 16 respondents that chose an offline method to search for internship opportunities had answered this question. The most used online platforms are peer recommendation and recommendation from internship agencies which both have each 5 respondents equal 31.3%. It was followed by word of mouth which was used by 4 respondents equal to 25%. UTAR career fair and list provided by UTAR both have 1 respondent which equals to 6.3%. Last, the newspaper was not used by any of the respondents.
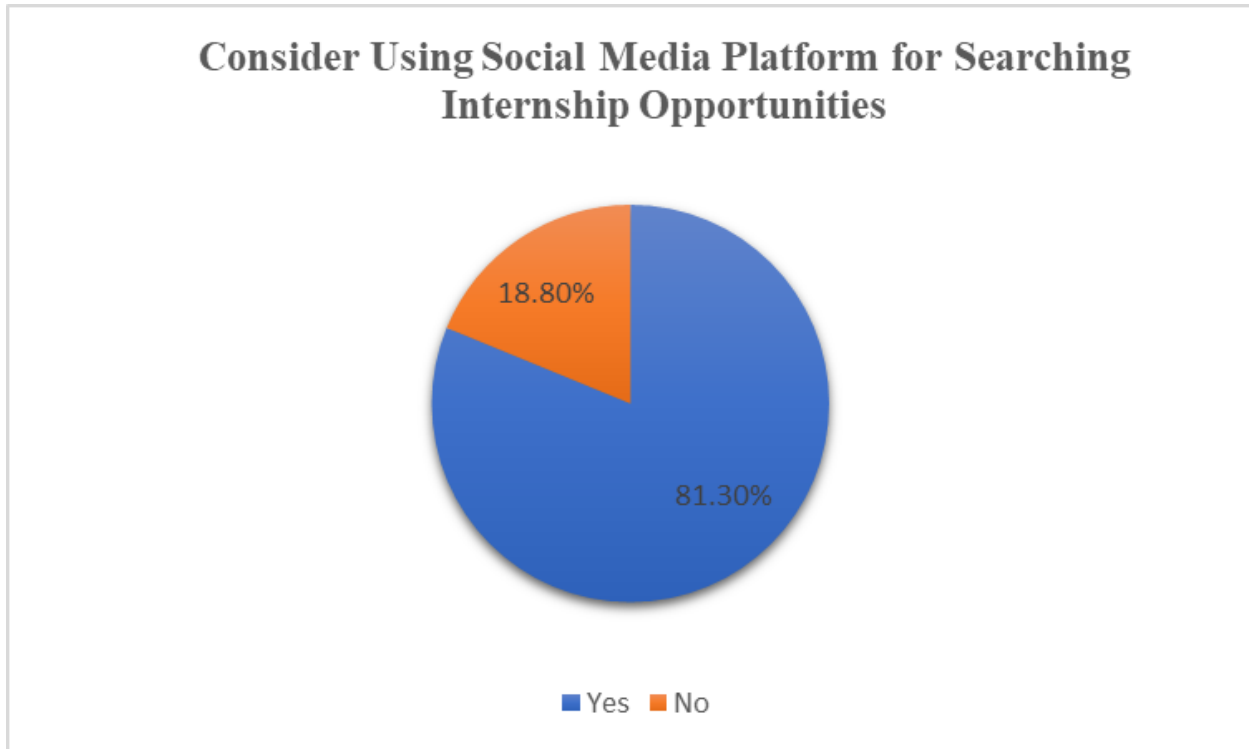
Figure 4.12: Consider Using Social Media Platform for Searching Internship Opportunities

Based on the statement of "Consider Using Social Media Platform for Searching Internship Opportunities" have been shown on figure 4.12 above. In response to this question, 81.3% of respondents, which is 13 out of 16 chose 'Yes' while 18.8% of respondents equal to 3 respondents chose 'No'.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

In this technological era, social media has integrated into our daily lives. The research question asks how UTAR Sungai Long campus undergraduates utilise social media platforms to search for internship opportunities. The results have shown that most of the respondents are social media users. Out of the 100 respondents, 53 of them expressed that they use social media for entertainment purposes, followed by social interaction and information seeking. University students are more likely to pursue entertainment and maintain their existing relationships on social media platforms (Kircaburun et al., 2020). Most of the respondents preferred using social media to seek for internships, only 16 of the 100 respondents preferred using offline methods such as word of mouth, peers recommendation and recommendation by agencies. The most popular platform among the respondents that chose social media platforms is JobStreet, followed by LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram. The platforms allow them to have a wider access of opportunities. For example, users may connect with the organisations that they are interested in (Jayashree & Geetha, 2019). This has also matched with most used functions used by the respondents while searching for internships via social media which is browsing companies profiles. Besides, the results have given us the idea that most of the UTAR Sungai Long's undergraduates think social media platforms are effective in the search for internship opportunities.

In general, the results that have been obtained from the research are due to several reasons. With the advancement of technology, the undergraduate students have changed the way of securing an internship. Social media is a part of their daily lives, and it provides different purposes for the users such as entertainment, information seeking, passing time and socialising.

Therefore, searching for internships through social media will be an effective way for the students.

Other than that, Uses and Gratifications theory plays an important role in understanding the utilisation of social media when undergraduate students are exploring for internships. This is because it could help the social media platforms understand and fulfil the needs of users. Besides, it will be easier to recognise the functions used by the students while searching for internship through social media. If there is no Uses and Gratifications Theory, it will be difficult to differentiate the types of social media utilisation and determine the effectiveness of this method.

5.2 Limitations

Throughout this research, there are a number of limitations that should be acknowledged. First and foremost, the study sample is relatively small in size. The results are only taken from 100 UTAR undergraduates that are studying at the Sungai Long campus, so it might affect the accuracy of the data. The second limitation is that the research only focuses on UTAR undergraduates from Sungai Long campus. The data collected could not generalise UTAR students as there is another campus located at Kampar, Perak. Besides, it could not represent the majority of undergraduates as other universities' students might have different utilisation of social media in the internship seeking context.

5.3 Recommendations

According to the limitations mentioned above, there are some suggestions of recommendations for this research. First of all, the researcher could increase the sample size to 200 or increase the occupation range as internships could be applied to working adults as well. The second recommendation that other researchers could widen the geographical location of the study area by retrieving data from respondents who are from different states.

5.4 Conclusion

The research is able to identify the utilisation of social media in seeking internship opportunities among UTAR Sungai Long undergraduates. Based on the Uses and Gratification Theory applied in the study, social media allows them to retrieve more information about companies and get wider access to opportunities that are available to them. As mentioned in Chapter 1, acquiring an internship is important for the undergraduates since it is one of the requirements for them to graduate. Besides, the study has found out that most of the respondents utilise social media by browsing companies profiles and posting resumes online in the internship seeking context. Most of the respondents also think that social media is an effective way to look for internships while some of them prefer using offline methods such as peers recommendation and recommendation by agencies.

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Appendix: Survey Questionnaire

A Study of How UTAR Sungai Long campus undergraduates Utilise Social Media in the Search of Internship Opportunities

Greetings,

I am Lim Yu Wei, a Year 3 student studying the course Bachelor of Corporate Communication at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR). This survey is conducted for Final Year Project purpose.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. The objective of the research is to study how UTAR undergraduates utilise social media in searching for internship opportunities.

The researcher will ensure that the responses and information of the respondents will be kept private and confidential.

Hereby, I would like to express my gratitude for your time and effort for participating in this survey.

* Indicates required question

Section A: Demographic and Psychographic

1. Gender *

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Male

    ◯ Female

2. Which Year and Semester are you currently in? (Eg: Y2S3) *

    _____

APPENDIX - 54

3. Are you an undergraduate from UTAR Sungai Long campus? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

4. Faculty *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ LKC FES

   ◯ FCI

   ◯ FAM

   ◯ MK FMHS

5. Have you completed your internship throughout the course? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

6. Do you use social media in your daily life? *

   Mark only one oval.

   ◯ Yes

   ◯ No

7. Why do you use social media? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Information seeking
- ◯ Entertainment
- ◯ Social interaction
- ◯ Pass time
- ◯ Escapism
- ◯ Other: _____

8. Which method would you use to search for internship opportunities? *

Mark only one oval.

- ◯ Social media   *Skip to question 9*
- ◯ Offline method   *Skip to question 14*

Section B: To identify how social media is utilised to search for internship among the UTAR undergraduates.

9. Which social media platforms have you used for internship seeking purposes? *

You may select more than one option.

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ JobStreet
- ☐ Other: _____

10. Why do you use social media to search for internship? *

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Can get more information of companies

    ◯ Able to communicate with the employer

    ◯ Convenient

    ◯ Wider access to opportunities

    ◯ Other: _____

11. What are the functions that you used while searching for internships? *

    You may select more than one option.

    Check all that apply.

    ☐ Posting resumes online
    ☐ Approaching employers onlines
    ☐ Browsing companies' profiles
    ☐ Searching keywords
    ☐ Creating a career profile

12. Do you think social media is an effective way to obtain an internship? *

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Yes

    ◯ No

13. Would you recommend to your friends? *

    Mark only one oval.

    ◯ Yes

    ◯ No

14. Which platform did you use to search for internship opportunities? *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Peers recommendation

◯ Word of mouth

◯ Recommendation Internship Agencies

◯ Newspaper

◯ Other: _____

15. Would you consider using social media platform for searching internship opportunities?   *

Mark only one oval.

◯ Yes

◯ No