

Impact of Social Media on the Academic Performance of Students

L. N. Liyanage

Department of Social Statistics, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

lashi.navi@gmail.com

Abstract - In the 21st century development of the internet has occurred rapidly. The development of internet has highly impact on the performance of the students. Specially social media or the social networking has become very popular among younger generation. Due to the huge usage of such sites problems are arising whether their usage is affected on students' educational performances. So the aim of this study was to find out the relationship between usage of social networking sites and academic performances. The data were obtained from a cross sectional survey conducted through a structured questionnaire. A total sample size of two hundred (200) students was selected from the four faculties: Social Sciences, Humanities, Science and Management at University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka as to the quota sampling method. 50 students from each faculty were selected. Descriptive statistics and Correlation Tests were used to analyse the data using SPSS and Excel. Out of all the participants 98.5% were using at least one of the social networking sites. Majority of the students are following 4 to 5 social network sites. From them most popular sites are Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Majority of the respondents (41.5%) agreed that usage of social networks has increased their grades. And also a majority of 100 (50%) indicated they agree to the fact that they use materials from SNS to review what the lecturer taught in the class. Therefore, it can be concluded that social media have a twofold impact on the academic performance of students, and it is essential to approach youngsters' use of social media with crucial responsibility.

Key words – Social Media, Academic Performance, Graduates, Facebook, Twitter

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, the incredible growth of the internet has a high impact on the performance of the students. As a result of internet, whole world can be brought us together nevertheless of geographical or language barriers. Through internet we can do many things because it consists with facilities such as search engines, internet banking, web pages, e-mails, e-newspapers, multi-media sharing, online news rooms, social networking, e-games etc. due to those factors internet has become an essential thing in our lives. Out

of them social media has become very popular among younger generation. Social media is a group of internet services that support association, community building, contribution, and sharing.

Social network can also define as a place to build new relationships. The most popular social networking sites are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Kakao-talk, Line, Viber, WhatsApp, Imo, Google talk etc. Facebook had a massive 2.32 billion active monthly users and an average of 1.32 billion daily active users in 2018.

According to Choney (2010), social networking helps many people to feels that they belong to the public. He stated that social media as a group of internet services, that support association, community building, contribution, and sharing. Social network can also define as a place to build new relationships. The most popular social networking sites are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Kakao-talk, Line, Viber, WhatsApp, Imo, Google talk etc. These networking sites are used to interact with known or unknown people (Asemah and Edegoh, 2013).

Anton and Christopher (2008), have divided of social media users into two categories as digital natives and digital immigrants. People who were born after 1980 are called digital natives because they were born after the invention of social media or the digital media. Digital immigrants are the people who were born before 1980 and they got to know about the digital media after they born. As Kuppuswamy and Shankar (2010) explained many students use social networks for time killing and for enjoyment. But some students use it for their academic activities. Through social networks one can get online tutorials, and download educational materials. But he revealed that social network takes students attention from studies to non-educational things in the most of the times. So some students have used to watch inappropriate videos and chatting with people for hours.

Due to the massive popularity and the usage of social networks among students some people are questioning whether grades of students have any kind of a relationship with social networks. Lenhart A. (2015) revealed that more than 71% students have personal profiles on multiple social networks. Oye

(2012) also stated that many youngsters use social networking sites for socializing activities, rather than for academic purpose.

A study conducted by Shana (2012), revealed that students use social network for making friends and chatting. It revealed that only 26 % of the students use social media for academic purpose. Not only social media brings barriers to academic performances but these days it becomes a privacy concern as well as an opening for abuse and cyber-bullying (Jacobson, 2011). He also revealed that necessary actions must be taken by the governments to stop those harassments.

Though social media is used for an educational purpose, students incorporate the technology into their lives in a way that may differ from the intentions of the course instructor. Hong et al. (2012), explained that many students used to interact in social networks through mobile phones. And they further revealed that use of mobile phones is correlated with academic performances among a sample of university students. Not only school children, undergraduates also negatively affected because of social networking and they loss the amount of time students spend preparing for class (Annetta et al., 2009). Hurt et al., (2012) and Patera et al., (2008) revealed that students get distracted due to the fascilities provide by the social network sites.

However, studies done by Ahmed and Qazi (2011), Hargittai and Hsieh (2010), Pasek and Hanqittai (2009), revealed that there's no correlation between social media and students' academic performance. Egedegbe (2013), also revealed that impact of social media on the academic performance of students is null; there's no any kind of a correlation between them.

As we can see there are both positive and negative impacts of social networks on students. But as many students neglect their duties and used to live in an imaginary world because of social networks, it is becoming a huge problem. The day by day, manufacturing and distribution of mobile phones become huge and youngsters willingly or not, used to interact with invisible friends, while important ventures like study and writing are affected in the process. So it's important to research whether the impact of social network affect negatively or positively on Sri Lankan students too.

So this research was carried out to find out the influence of SNS on students' academic performance. And two more sub objectives were derived as to

determine the highest using social network sites among undergraduates and to determine the frequency of exposure to social media.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study was a Descriptive Cross-sectional study. The primary data for this study was collected through a questionnaire. Those collected data lead this research to explore the impact of social media on student's education performance. Secondary data were collected through published articles and reports. A total sample size of two hundred (200) students was selected from the four faculties (Social Sciences, Humanities, Science and Management) at University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. 50 students from each faculty were selected as to the quota sampling method. The students were between 21 and 26 years of age.

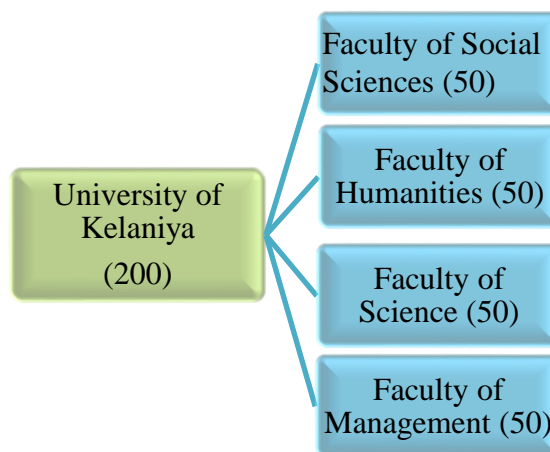


Figure 1: sample Structure
Source: Author Generated

A questionnaire was designed for the research. The questionnaire consists of 10 major questions and it covers about demographic information, social networking sites, number of hours they use social media, purpose of social network sites, number of hours they study etc. The students were given necessary instructions to fill out the questionnaire.

The research had a comparison between the student's frequencies of using social networking sites: Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Kakao-talk, Google, and Instagram. The collected data were analyzed by IBM-SPSS Statistics 21. The frequency distributions, means and standard deviations of female and male students' values were calculated and chi square test was conducted.

III. RESULTS

The following chart shows the gender and the faculty distribution among the students who were chosen to the sample. Majority of the participants were females (56%).

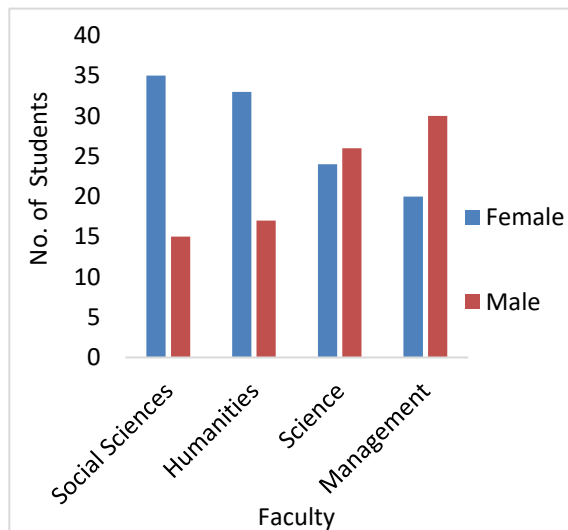


Figure 2: Gender Distribution of the Sample
Source: Author Generated

The result of the analysis shows that majority of the respondents are exposed to the social media to a very excessive amount. Out of all the participants 98.5% were using at least one of the social networking sites. Majority of the students are following 4 to 5 social network sites. From them most popular sites are YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Google+, Viber etc.

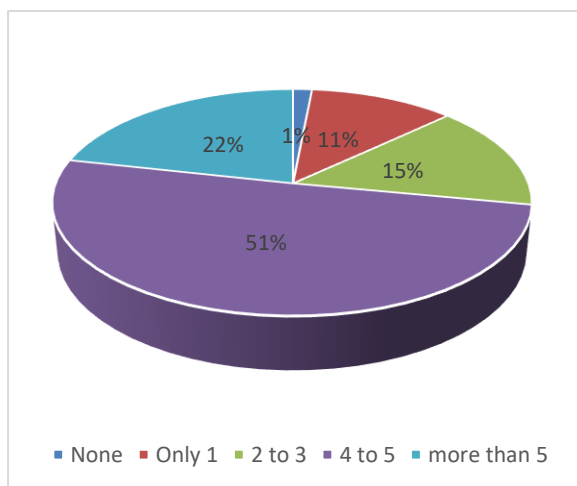


Figure 3: Frequency of Register on Social Networks
Source: Author Generated

The respondents were asked to mention their recent Grade Point Average (GPA) at university. Majority of

44% of respondents were between the 3.0 to 3.3 GPA range, 32.5% were of the 3.3 to 3.7 GPA range and 13% were of the 3.7 to 4.0 GPA range, leaving 2.0 to 3.0 GPA range having only 10.5% respondents.

Out of those who use social network sites, 73% of the respondents stated that they use internet to study. They stated clearly, that they use social network sites to do their assignments. They use social networks for positive things. The rest 27% stated that they use social networks only to interact with new people or already known people or to watch movies. And out of that 73% respondents there were students who use social networks for non-academic activities too (69%).

These responses indicated that majority of the respondents (41.5%) agreed that usage of social networks has increased their grades. Only a few (6%) has disagreed to it. And again a majority of 100 (50%) indicated they agree to the fact that they use materials from SNS to review what the lecturer taught in the class. Only a 10% of the respondents were strongly disagree to that fact. 40% of the respondents said that engaging in academic forums in social media has increased their academic knowledge while a 7.5% of the respondents stated the otherwise. Majority (46.5%) of the students stated that participating to the group discussions on SNS yield good results while 11.5% strongly disagree to that fact.

The respondents were also asked to mention the number of hours they spend daily on social media and studying (they were instructed to write the number hours they study outside the university). 44.5% of the respondents spend 1-2 hours studying a day, while 24% spends less than 1 hour a day, 19% spend 2 to 3 hours a day to studies and only 12.5% of the respondents spend more than 3 hours a day for their studies.

And when we asked about the time spent on social networking, majority of the students explained that they cannot tell a specific time period as they always using at least one type of social network sites. Specially those who live in university hostels stated that due to free Wi-Fi system, they rarely log out from the social networking sites.

Table 1: Positive impact of social networking on academic performances

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
The materials from SNS have helped improve grades/ GPA.	43 (21.5%)	12 (6%)	83 (41.5%)	62 (31%)	200
Use materials obtained from SNS to review lessons.	20 (10%)	23 (11.5%)	57 (28.5%)	100 (50%)	200
Engaging in academic forums on social media increases knowledge.	15 (7.5%)	27 (13.5%)	80 (40%)	78 (39%)	200
Group discussions on social media yield good results.	23 (11.5%)	29 (14.5%)	93 (46.5%)	55 (27.5%)	200

Source: Author Generated

IV. DISCUSSION

The study was carried out in order to fulfill few objectives. It revealed that majority of the respondents use social networking sites through mobile phones as modern mobile phones are with internet, As a result they visit their SNS profiles many times a day.

This study shows that the undergraduates at University of Kelaniya have access to SNS and that the magnitude is high. This is obvious as the majority of the respondents are engaging at least one social networking site (98.5%). This is mainly because they use social media for various purposes.

According to this study, Facebook and YouTube are the most used SNSs by the undergraduates at University of Kelaniya. Asemah and Edegoh (2013) also stated that facebook is the most used new media by youngsters. Findings also show that social media have not negative influence on the academic performance of the undergraduate. Because students still find time to do their academic activities in the day. So their GPA is not highly affected by the usage of SNS.

V. CONCLUSION

After conducting the research, it is clear that social networking does not impact on undergraduates' academic performance because even though they spend hours on social networking sites, they still achieve time to study, and obtain good grades.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Students should enlighten more about the possible consequences of social networking sites on their academic performance.
- Students should make sure that they use SNS without being a barrier to their studies.
- The university authority should also restrict access to certain unnecessary social media sites that drag students' attention away from academic activities.
- The government should reflect the possibility of developing a policy on teenagers' exposure to social media.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, I. & Qazi, T. (2011). A look out for academic impacts of social networking sites (SNSs): A student based perspective. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(12), pp. 5022-5031.
- Annetta, L. A., Minogue, J., Holmes, S. Y., & Cheng, M. T. (2009). Investigating the impact of video games on high school students' engagement and learning about genetics. *Computers & Education*, 53, 74-85.
- Anton, M., & Christopher, W. (2008). *Corporate Social Media Facilitating Better and Faster Change Management*. Goteborgs Universitet Handelshogskolan.

- Asemah, E.S and Edegoh, L.O.N. (2013). Influence of new media sexual contents on the sexual behaviour of Kogi State University Students. *Journal of Research and Contemporary Issues*. Vol. 7 (1& 2).
- Choney, S. (2010) Facebook Use Can Lower Grades by 20 Percent, Study Says. http://www.msnbc.com/id/39038581/ns.technology_and_science-tech_and_gadgets/
- Egedegbe, N. (2013). The Effect of Social Networking Sites on Students' Academic Performance in Girne American University, North Cyprus.
- Hargittai, E. & Hsieh, Y. P. (2010). Predictors and Consequences of Differentiated Practices on Social Network Sites. *Information, Communication & Society*, 13(4), pp. 515-536.
- Hong, F. Y., S. I. & Hong, D. H. (2012), A Model of the Relationship Between Psychological Characteristics, Mobile Phone Addiction and use of Mobile Phones by Taiwanese University Female Students, *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 28, (6), pp. 2152-2159.
- Hurt, N. E., Moss, G. S., Bradley, C. L., Larson, L. R., Lovelace, M. D., Prevost, L. B., ... Camus, M. S. (2012). The 'Facebook' effect: College students' perceptions of online discussions in the age of social networking. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 6(2), 1-24.
- Jacobsen, W. C., & Forste, R. (2011). The Wired Generation: Academic and Social Outcomes of Electronic Media Use Among University Students. *Cyber Psychology Behaviour & Social Networking* 18, (5) pp.6, 275-285.
- Kuppuswamy, S., & Narayan, P. (2010). The Impact of Social Networking Websites on the Education of Youth. *International Journal of Virtual Communities and Social Networking (IJVCSN)*, 2(1), 67-79.
- Lenhart, A. (2015). *Teens, Social Media and Technology Overview*
- Oye, N. (2012). Students' perception of social networking sites' influence on academic performance. *International Journal of Social Networking and Virtual Communication* Vol.1. (1).
- Pasek, J. & Hargittai, E. (2009, May). Facebook and academic performance: Reconciling a media sensation with data. *First Monday*, 14 (4-5). pp 1- 25
- Patera, M., Draper, S., & Naef, M. (2008). Exploring Magic Cottage: A virtual reality environment for stimulating children's imaginative writing. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 16, 245-263. doi:10.1080/10494820802114093
- Rather, A.A. (2013). Overuse of Facebook and Academic grades: An Inverse Correlation. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS.)* Volume 12, (6). PP 68-72.
- Shana, L.B. (2012). The influence of social networking sites on students' academic performance in Malaysia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The encouragement, commitment, guidance and constructive comments of Senior Lecturer Mr. Namal Balasooriya, University of Kelaniya, is duly acknowledged. And I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who participated in my survey by taking time to answer my questionnaire.