

Impact of Social Networking Sites on Academic Performance of Students

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ABSTRACT

Today's world is a global village. Everyone is connected to one another in this network generated by the Internet. As said by Marshall Mc Luhan, a philosopher of communication theory, "The new electronic independence re-creates the world in the image of a global village". This electronic independence is inherently dependent upon the Internet. It illuminates the lives of thousands of people by spreading knowledge internationally, thereby making us global citizens. But unfortunately, the students instead of using them for enhancing their knowledge are significantly led by distraction that is brought by the entire social media sites, making them to spend lesser time on studies and more on the use of various social media.

The study intends to find out the impact of social networking sites and assess its adverse effects on their academic performance. It also tries to throw light on the various factors leading to their poor academic performance due to excessive usage of the social media. The study also intends to offer suggestions to manage the current trend of using the social media and cope up with their studies as well as bringing a balance between the effective usage of the social media and their studies

Key Words: Social Networking, Social Media, Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

Social networking websites are currently being used regularly by millions of people. The Internet is more than just a means of seeking information. People discovered that the Internet could be used to connect with other people, whether for business or commercial purpose, make new friends, reawaken old friends and long lost relatives. The use of social networking sites has been widespread that they have not only caught the attention of academic and industry researchers worldwide but also us, in particular. Social networking sites are now being investigated by numerous social science researchers and an increasing number of academic

commentators are becoming more and more interested in studying Face book, Twitter, and other social networking services, because of their probable impact on academic performance. The students of the modern generation are not only well versed with the usage of the social networking but are also succumbing to the peer pressure of becoming members of these sites.

While the social networking sites have the same key aspects, the cultures and responses around them that become apparent are varied. Most sites help strangers connect with others based on shared personal interests, political and economic views, or simply recreational activities. Some sites accommodate distinct viewers, while others attract people based on similarities, such as common languages or shared religious, racial, sexual or nationality-based identities. Nonetheless, social networking sites have only one common goal. It is to encourage new ways to communicate and share information.

Many students always log in to their account on Face book, Twitter, etc. as a part of their everyday routine. Millions of students are logging in to these social networking sites, everyday. That's why many students have been blaming various social networking sites for their steady decrease in grade point averages. This emergent phenomenon aroused us to look into social networking sites and why they affect fellow student's academic performances.

The target population for this research was defined as the students who form the major chunk of users of these social networking sites. This was done to have a better insight into the research as the target population was one of the most avid users of these sites and could provide exceptional responses. Even the understanding of the questionnaire was easy for them as they were familiar with the sites and are quite clear about the reasons they use it for and the various problems that they now face because of the effects of using these social networking sites.

The responses were collected by personal questioning through questionnaire. The responses were taken from the students in Sindhi College.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the influence of social networking sites on the academic performance of students.
2. To analyse the impact factor of these social networking sites on the academic performance.
3. To offer suggestions to mitigate the effects of social networking sites.
4. To ponder upon the potential of social media as a means to build and stay in touch with all known people, without affecting the academic performance.

5. To evaluate the positive and negative effects of social media on academic performance.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to explain the importance of the proper usage of social networking sites. It aims to point out particularly the adverse effects it poses to student's daily lives. These sites evidently have a lot of positive effects, but they also have their share of negative impact. In order to provide much help, this study would like to give enlightenment to the said phenomena. We would like to provide, through this research, information about the impact of these sites to students that would hopefully lead to a realization of their own standing in terms of SNS (Social Networking Sites) addiction. We also would like to give a certain form of guidance to those who are delved in situations aforementioned. Lastly, we would like to provide evidences that would solidify the support on controlling the usage of social networking sites, thus reducing the risk of assimilating such addicting activities.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Transition in behavior has led the youth to explore new patterns of information and perform multitasking. Though, this multitasking has to affect the time utility and distribution in both positive and negative ways. One significant effect of these channels is on the student's academic performance and several empirical studies have reported that the excessive unproductive time spent on social networking sites have affect the students grades. (Facebook and Academic Performance)

SNS do affect one's academic performance adversely. It causes the gradual drop in the grades of the students directly. It affects the student's academic performance if he/she invests his/her time in SNS instead in his/her studies. Wasting time is a major issue in this regard. SNS are highly addictive to those people who cannot control themselves into constantly using these sites, prioritize entertainment over work and gives to much attention to social acceptance and affiliation. The situation is that if a student gives too much time to SNS, there is an ultimately decrease in academic performance. (SNS affects one's academic performance adversely)

FACEBOOK users may feel socially successful in e-world but they are more likely to perform poorly in exams, according to new research into the academic impact of the social networking website. Mostly students spend a lot of time on these sites during exams instead of on preparation for their exams. The research shows that students who used Facebook had a "significantly" lower performance in their studies than those who did not use the site. The majority of students who use Facebook every day are underachieving in their academics as compared with those who shun the site. Researchers have discovered how students who spend their time accumulating friends, gossiping and poking others on the site may devote as little as one hour a week to their

academic work and that Facebook directly causes lower results in academics, merely that there's some relationship between the two factors. Facebook users are just prone to interruption.

Same as mentioned above, Social networking site like Facebook becomes an issue as people relates this with academic performance. Many researchers are working to explore the correlation between social networking sites and academic performance. Those students, who use Facebook and twitter, have shorter span of attention in classrooms. Such sites create many problems for teachers because abbreviations commonly used on sites such as Twitter and Facebook are also making it into coursework, essays and experiment write-ups. .

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

A theoretical framework is the foundation of Hypothetic-Deductive research, as it is the basis of the hypothesis that you will develop. A theoretical framework represents your beliefs on how certain phenomena, variables or concepts are related to each other i.e. a model and an explanation of why you believe that these variables are associated with each other i.e. a theory.

The process of building a theoretical framework includes three basic features:

- Introducing definitions of concepts or variables in your model.
- Developing a conceptual model that provides a descriptive representation of your theory.
- Coming up with a theory that provides an explanation for relationships between the variables in your model.

A conceptual model helps you to structure your discussion of the literature. A conceptual model describes how the concepts in your model are related to each other. A good model is based on a sound theory. A theory or a clear explanation for the relationships in your model is the last component of the theoretical framework. A theory attempts to explain the relationships between the variables in your model.

SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

Following is the schematic diagram of independent and dependent variables which we found after the review of the literature:



In the above diagram, social networking sites is independent variable and student academic performance is dependent variable. Now, we define our independent and dependent variables:

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES:

“Social networking sites are social network services that focus on building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others.”

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

“Academic performance refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers.”

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **TYPE OF STUDY:** A considerable amount of work has been done in this field and several articles are available on the internet and magazines about the social networking sites. So first we carried out a literature survey of the available data for collection of secondary information. We followed it by a descriptive research design in order to understand the problem and carry out the research in a lucid manner.
- **TARGET POPULATION:** The target population for this research was defined as the students who form the major chunk of users of these social networking sites. This was done to have a better insight into the research as the target population was one of the most avid users of these sites and could provide exceptional responses. Even the understanding of the questionnaire was easy for them as they were familiar with the sites and are quite clear about the reasons they use it for and the various problems that they now face because of the effects of using these social networking sites. The extent of the survey was limited to Sindhi College.
- **SAMPLING FRAME:** It can be defined as all the users of social networking sites in the vicinity. Once the sampling frame was decided, simple random sampling method was used to select the respondents. In the person assisted survey, almost everyone in the sampling frame had an equal chance of being selected and we got the responses filled through those people who were readily and willingly accepting to fill it. The sample size consists of 30 students of Sindhi College.
- **DATA COLLECTION METHOD:** After secondary data collection through data collection over the internet, a primary research was carried out through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was well structured and the responses were sought from the respondents. The nature of the questions was such that it avoided ambiguous responses from the respondents and it also helped in quick analysis of the data collected.
- **SURVEY:** The responses were collected by personal questioning. The responses were taken from the students in the Institute area from departments' like COMMERCE, MANAGEMENT and, COMPUTER

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT. The responses are gathered in a standardized way, so questionnaires are more objective, certainly more so than interviews.

DATA ANALYSIS:

Table:1 : Gender

| Gender | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------|-------------------|------------|
| Male | 20 | 66.7 |
| Female | 10 | 33.3 |
| Total | 30 | 100 |

The questionnaire was filled from 30 respondents. All were the students of Sindhi College. Out of these 30 random respondents 20 were male and 10 were female.

Table 2 : Discipline

| Discipline | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------|-------------------|------------|
| BBA | 2 | 6.67 |
| B.COM | 10 | 33.33 |
| BCA | 4 | 13.33 |
| B.Sc | 1 | 3.33 |
| M.COM | 6 | 20.0 |
| MFA | 5 | 16.67 |
| PUC | 2 | 6.67 |
| Total | 30 | 100 |

The questionnaire was randomly asked from respondents of different departments.

Table 3: Semester/Year

| Semester | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------|-------------------|------------|
| I Sem | 5 | 16.67 |
| III Sem | 10 | 33.33 |
| V Sem | 13 | 43.33 |
| II year PUC | 2 | 6.67 |
| Total | 30 | 100 |

Respondents were of different disciplines and of different semester. This allowed us to have a wide grip on our research topic.

Table 4: Social Networking Sites Accounts

| Social Networking Sites Accounts | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| YES | 100 | 100 |
| NO | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

All of the respondents had social networking sites accounts. Respondents, having no social networking sites accounts were discarded because they were not eligible to answer our questions.

Table 5: No. of actively used sites

| No. of actively used sites | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 4 and above | 12 | 40.0 |
| 3 | 4 | 13.3 |
| 2 | 9 | 30.0 |
| 1 | 5 | 16.7 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Majority of respondents had more than 4 SNS accounts. After that, many had 2 accounts and least number of respondents had 3 actively used Social Networking Sites accounts.

Table 6: Preferred Site

| Preferred Site | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------|-------------------|------------|
| Face book | 18 | 60.0 |
| Twitter | 1 | 3.3 |
| Youtube | 7 | 23.3 |
| Others | 4 | 13.3 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Face book was the most commonly used Social Networking Site. After that, YouTube was the most commonly used site for the purpose of communication, entertainment, information and education.

Table 7: Hours spent per week

| Hours spent per week | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 15 and Above | 9 | 30.0 |
| 10-14 | 5 | 16.7 |
| 6-9 | 6 | 20.0 |
| 3-5 | 10 | 33.3 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Time spent on a Social Networking Site by our respondents was majorly 3 – 5 hours. Many of the respondents spend 15 or above hours per week on these sites.

Table 8: Purpose of usage of SNS

| Purpose of usage of SNS | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| To communicate with friends | 19 | 63.3 |
| For group Discussion | 3 | 10.0 |
| For study Purpose | 3 | 10.0 |
| To make new Friends | 4 | 13.3 |
| To find old Friends | 1 | 3.3 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Purpose of usage was our major point. Maximum number of respondents used these sites to communicate with friends and very few of used just to find their old friends.

Table 9: Usage enhance learning skills

| Usage enhance learning skills | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Yes | 23 | 76.7 |
| No | 3 | 10.0 |
| Neutral | 4 | 13.3 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

When the respondents were inquired that do the use of social networking sites enhance their learning skills or not then maximum number of respondents answered that yes, the usage of these sites improved their learning skills because they get up to date information from these sites.

Table 10: Contribution in academic activities

| Contribution in academic activities | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------|
| High | 2 | 6.7 |
| Moderate | 23 | 76.7 |
| Low | 5 | 16.7 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Majority of the respondents were of the view that the networking sites do not substantially contribute towards their academic activities. While some other said that these sites have very low contribution towards their academic performance.

Table 11: Effect on results

| Effect on results | No.of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Increase | 8 | 26.67 |
| Decrease | 20 | 66.67 |
| No effect | 2 | 6.67 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

With the increase in the use of social networking sites, many respondents were of the view that their academic performance decreased.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

1. The sample was selected from the students of Sindhi College. Out of these 30 random respondents 20 were male and 10 were female.
2. The questionnaire was randomly administered to respondents of different departments.
3. Respondents were of different disciplines and of different semesters. This allowed us to have a wide grip on our research topic.
4. All of the respondents had social networking sites accounts. Respondents, having no social networking sites accounts were discarded because they were not eligible to answer our questions.

5. Further, respondents were asked to tell that how many accounts they actively use. Majority of respondents had more than 4 SNS accounts. After that, many had 2 accounts and least number of respondents had 3 actively used Social Networking Sites accounts.
6. Face book was the most commonly used Social Networking Site. After that, YouTube was the most commonly used site for the purpose of communication, entertainment, information and education.
7. Time spent on a Social Networking Site by our respondents was majorly 3 – 5 hours. Many of the respondents spend 15 or above hours per week on these sites.
8. Purpose of usage was our major point. Maximum number of respondents used these sites to communicate with friends and very few of used just to find their old friends.
9. When the respondents were inquired that do the use of social networking sites enhance their learning skills or not? Then maximum number of respondents answered that yes, the usage of these sites improved their learning skills because they get up to date information from these sites.
10. Majority of the respondents were of the view that the networking sites do not substantially contribute towards their academic activities. While some other said that these sites have very low contribution towards their academic performance.
11. Majority of the respondents were of the view that their academic performance decreased due to the increase in the use of social networking sites.

SUGGESTIONS

- Our research revealed that the majority of the students had 3 or more SNS sites so we suggest them to reduce the number to at least 2 SNS sites to reduce their time spent on the SNS sites and productively use it for their studies.
- Instead of using Facebook and Youtube for entertainment alone we suggest to divert their attention and their time productively using some of the informative websites and blogs like LinkedIn, Wikipedia etc.
- We also suggest the students to limit their time spent on SNS and plan in such a way that they spend not more than an hour a day.
- On a regular basis we suggest the students to use any of the SNS productively for preparation of their college projects and assignments.
- We suggested that the students can involve more on group based activities to communicate and develop their interpersonal skills rather than relying on SNS as a medium of communication.

- Apart from the SNS we suggest the students to make use of various books, periodicals and journals rather than depending on the SNS alone for updated information.
- Since majority of the respondents felt that SNS is not contributing to their studies much it can be interpreted that SNS is surely a distraction to their studies which can be avoided during their exams and important academic related activities.
- We also suggest that the Government should insist on strong cyber governance to have a check on SNS misuse.
- Even the parents have an equal responsibility of curbing the use of SNS by their wards.
- Awareness programmes can be conducted by various institutions regarding misuse of SNS.
- In the interest of the wellbeing of the students, we suggest them to involve in various other creative activities like Yoga, Meditation, Art, Music etc. which prevents them from getting addicted to SNS.
- Lastly, we suggest the students to pursue any hobby of their choice to keep themselves away from SNS.

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