
Social Media and Academic Performance of Undergraduate Students

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ABSTRACT

Sri Lankan National University consists of 15 Universities and 2 institutes. Eastern University of Sri Lanka[EUSL] is one of the Universities in Sri Lanka, it has five faculties of which faculty of Commerce and management is one of the faculties. The faculty of Commerce and management offer Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) and Bachelor of Commerce (B Com) degree programmes. This study focuses the students from BBA programme. The purpose of this research study is to examine the influence of Social Media on Academic Performance of students in 3rd year BBA programme.. Three Research questions and Three Research hypotheses guided the study. To achieve this, the descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population consists of all the full-time undergraduate students. Research findings showed that a great number of faculty of commerce and management 3rd year students in Eastern University, are addicted to social media. To this end, the researcher recommended that social media should be used for educational purposes as well; Social Networking Sites should be expanded and new pages should be created to enhance academic activities and avoid setbacks in the students' academic performance.

KEY WORDS: *Social media, Social networking, Academic performance*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The world is today celebrating the improvements in communication technology which has broadened the scope of communication through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Modern Technology in communication no doubt has turned the entire world into a “Global village”. But as it is, technology like two sides of a coin, bring with it both negative and positive sides. It helps people to be better informed, enlightened, and keeping abreast with world developments. Technology exposes mankind to a better way of doing things. Social networkingsites include: Twitter, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), WhatsApp messenger, 2go messenger Skype, Google talk, Google Messenger, iPhone and Androids. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet friends (Asemah and Edegoh, 2012). The world has been changed rapidly by the evolution of technology; this has resulted into the use of technology as the best medium to explore the wide area of knowledge.

Academic performance or achievement is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, lecturer or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic performance is commonly measured by examinations or

continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important, procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts (Annie, Howard & Mildred, 1996).

Olubiyi (2012) noted that these days' students are so engrossed in the social media that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in classrooms and lecture halls, it has been observed that some students are always busy Facebooking, while lectures are on times that ought be channelled towards learning, academic research and innovating have been crushed by the passion for meeting new friends online, and most times busy discussing trivial issues. Hence most students' academics suffer setback as a result of distraction from the social media. It was observed that the use of these sites also affects students' use of English and grammar (Obi, Bulus, Adamu & Sala'at 2012). The students are used to short forms of writing words in their chat rooms; they forget and use the same in the classrooms.

An important resource for education today, studies however shows that students use social networking sites such as Facebook for fun, to kill time, to meet existing friends or to make new ones (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe 2007). Although it has been put forward that students spend much time on participating in social networking activities, with many students blaming the various social networking sites for their steady decrease in grade point averages (Kimberly, Jeong & Lee, 2009), it also shows that only few students are aware of the academic and professional networking opportunities the sites offered.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The world today is a global market in which the internet is the most important sort of information. Since the advent of social media sites in the 1990s, it is assumed in some quarters that the academic performance of students is facing a lot of neglect and challenges. There is a deviation, distraction and divided attention between social networking activities and their academic work. It is observed that students devote more attention to social media than they do to their studies.

In recent times social media have been a major stay in the minds of students and the world at large thereby causing a lot of drastic measure by students, lecturer and even educational administrators at large. It is therefore of great importance to explore some of the trending issues facing students' academic performance as a result of social media. Students at all levels of learning now have divided attention to studies, as a result of available opportunities promote studies is a question that needs to be answered. Thus, due to the problem, this study investigates the influence of social media networks on the academic performance of the students in 3rd year, faculty of Commerce and Management at the Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised;

1. Does the social media network that the students are more exposed to influence their academic performance?
2. To what extent would student addictiveness to social network influence their academic performance?
3. How has the use of social media influence the academic performance of the students

in 3rd year faculty of commerce and management at Eastern University?

4. Is there gender difference in the student's usage of social media network?

1.4 Research objective

1. To ascertain Student's exposure to social media network has significant influence on students' academic performance.

2. To find out that Students' addictiveness to social network has significant influence on their academic performance.

3. To identify how social media significantly influence on the academic performance of the students in 3rd year faculty of commerce and management?

4. To identify significant difference between male and female student usage of social media network.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of social media

Social media is that means that employs mobile and web based technology to create highly interactive platforms via which individuals and community share, co-create, discuss and modifies user-generated content (Kietzmann, 2012). Social media is a phrase being tossed around a lot. It is a website that does not just give you information but interact with you while giving you information. It is a group of internet based application that allows the creation and exchange of users generated content. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified social media into six different classes as follows:

1. Collaborative Project (Wikipedia)

2. Blogs and Micro blogs (Twitter)

3. Content Communities (Youtube)

4. Social Networking Site (Facebook; 2go; BB chat)

5. Virtual Game World (World of war craft)

6. Virtual Second World (Second life)

2.2 Mobile Social Media

When social media is used in combination with mobile devices, it is called mobile social media. Social media is a group of mobile marketing application that allows the creation and exchange of users generated content. Due to the fact that mobile social media runs on mobile devices, it differs from traditional social media as it incorporates new factors such as the current location of the user, time delay between sending and receiving. According to Kaplan (2002), social media can be divided into four types:

- Space-timers (location and time sensitive): exchange of message with relevance for specific location and time (Face book, 2go, BB chat)
- Quick-time (time sensitive): transfer of traditional social media application to mobile services to increase immediacy (posting twitter messages, status update [2go], and updating display picture [dp] [bbm]).
- Space-locators (location sensitive): exchange message with relevance for one specific location which are tagged to certain place (yelp, skype).
- Slow-timers (neither location nor time sensitive): transfer traditional social media application to mobile devices (reading a wikipedia entry).

2.3 Social Networking Sites

It is used to describe any website that enables users to create public profiles within that website and form relationship with other users of the same website who access their profile. It is used to describe community base website, online discussion forum, chat rooms and other social space online. Commonly, the phrase “social networking sites” is used as an umbrella term for all social media and computer-mediated communication, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Myspace, as well as the inaugural social networking sites of Cyworld, Bebo and Friendster.

Ellison and Boyd (2007) define social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to construct profiles, display user connections, and search and traverse within that list of connections. A social media is an online service or platforms that focus on facilitating the building of social network among people who share interest, activities and background on real life connections. It is a website that allows users to share information within a selected group. It is a great way to stay connected and a convenient way to share photos from trips (Awake,2012)

2.4 Student’s addictiveness to social media

On the internet, students engage in a variety of activities some of which may be potentially addictive. (kuss& Griffiths, 2011). The mass appeal of social media on the internet could be a cause for concern, particularly when attending to the gradually increasing amount of time students spend online. Undergraduates spend more time on Facebook, Twitter and other social media through smartphones that are now in abundance among these youths.

Many students cannot go for two-three hours without checking and updating their profiles on these social networks even at the detriment of other activities such as educational and career pursuit. (Morahan- Marti &Schumacher, 2000) explain social media addiction as the excessive use of the internet and the failure to control this usage which seriously harms a person’s life.

2.5 Students Exposure to Social Media

It has been observed in recent times that students have unlimited access to the internet as well as the social media. Students connect with computer to send and receive information anywhere in the globe. The manufacturing and distribution of equally sophisticated cellular phones has complicated the situation, as students no longer need to visit a cybercafé before they send and receive messages. Some universities are so equipped that there is internet connection made available within the university premises as well as in the library. Online Wikipedia and blogs are the main resource centres for students as attention have been shifted from making research in the library to overall dependence on these social platforms. It is a common thing to see a student reading in the library and putting the books aside on hearing the sound of a ping on the phone. Teenagers now use the internet for the majority of their daily activities and information gathering, as opposed to older generation who used resources like the television or newspapers (Lewis,2008). A recent survey showed that approximately ninety percent of teens in United States have internet access, and about seventy –five percent of teens use the internet more than once per day (Kist, 2008)

2.6 Influence of Social Media Network on Student Academic Performance

Though there have been many social, economic, and environmental factors that have added to the pressure of university students in the past ten years, the drop-out rate for students is still a major national problem (Bowen, 2008). It is estimated that even those students who do graduate, one out of three does not have possess the knowledge and skills that would lead him or her to the next level in the academic ladder (Bowen, 2008). The top academic areas that many university professionals are concerned about are English and advanced literacy (Williams, 2008). The current generations of teens live in a fast-paced technological world with many different types of communication happening all at the same time. For example, he or she may be on the computer on a SNS, while also talking on the phone, sending instant messages to a friend, and emailing someone else all at the same time (Williams, 2008). While there may be some advantages to this, such as the teen learning how to type faster and multi-task many things at once, there may also be a breakdown in much of that communication (Williams, 2008). Literacy has also taken a dive in the past decade, which has caused many educators to question what can be done to help students improve their reading, writing, speaking, and thinking- all of the most basic skills for a successful future (Wise, 2009).

2.7 Usage of Social Media and Students' Academic Performance

The social media engages students and have to be examined as entrepreneurs of understanding. The medium of internet is marketing with increase in its programs. The interactive character of online conditions has

extended with social networking. Hooking up through social networking began as being a niche activity, though time it's a phenomenon. The web sites are employed in many ways like developing metropolitan areas, speaking, blogging etc. Additionally different institutions even nowadays are developing groups on several Websites. (Saba, 2013).

According to Khan (2009), social media users often experience poor performance academically. Similarly, Englander, et al,(2010) state that social media is negatively associated with academic performance of student and is a lot more momentous than its advantages. Internet addiction consequently gave rise in internet usage within the last couple of decades. Nalwa&Anand (2003) recommended that addicted users prefer using internet setting back their personal and professional responsibilities which ultimately leads to poor academic performance. In the same vein, Karpinski (2009) pointed out that social media users devoted lesser time to their studies in comparison to nonusers did and subsequently had lower GPAs. Karpinski&Duberstein. (2009) also mentioned that among various unique distractions of every single generation, Social media remains a major distraction of current generation.

2.8 Gender Usage Of social Media

When reviewing the literature related to gender and adolescents, results are mixed as to which group spends more time on the Internet as well as on social media networks (Lin &Subrahmanyam, 2007). Studies have shown that boys have been online more than girls in previous decades because of earlier forms of technology such as video or computer games (Lin &Subrahmanyam, 2007). Girls have reported that they use social media for things

like chatting and downloading music (Giles & Price, 2008). Because of this, one may hypothesize that girls will be more likely to be attracted to social media networks and other online social groups (Giles & Price, 2008).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the method and procedure that was applied in this study. It was organized under the following sub-headings: Research Design, Population of the Study, Sample and Sampling Technique, Method of Data Collection, and Method of Data Analysis

3.2 Research Design

The research design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey. This design is considered apt because it enables the researcher to generate data through the standardized collection procedures based on highly structured research instrument(s) and well defined study concepts and related variables.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population in this research are all full time undergraduate students in 3rd year, faculty of commerce and management at the Eastern University, Sri Lanka in 2017.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

A total sample size of 50 students were randomly selected using confidence interval of 5 and confidence level of 95% (0.05) from the total population of full-time students in 3rd year faculty of commerce and management at the Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

The researcher collected the needed data through the use of questionnaire and its administration in the selected faculty. The Administration of the questionnaire was carried out by the researcher. A total of 50 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to elicit responses from the students and retrieved on the spot by the researcher.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

Responses from the questionnaire were analysed using the descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage, and inferential statistics of Chi-square(x²). Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages were used in analysing demographic variables and research questions while the inferential statistics of Chi-square(x²) was also used to test the stated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results and discussions from this study in three sections under the following subheadings: Presentation of Demographic Data, Analysis of Data and Testing of Hypotheses and Discussion of Findings

4.1 Presentation of Demographic Data

4.1.1 Distribution of respondents according to Department of study.

The figure 4.1 shows the distribution of students from the selected departments as follows: 40 representing Management 80(%), and 10 representing commerce 20(%)

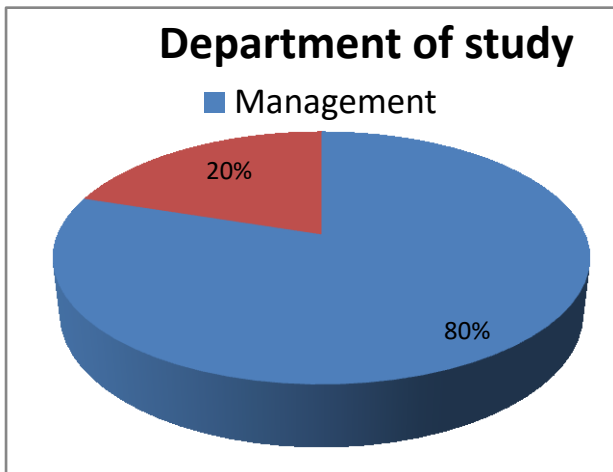


Figure 4.1 Department of Study

4.1.2 Distribution of respondents according to Gender

Figure 4.2 shows the demographic data of the participants: 28 representing (56%) of the

respondents were Male and 22 representing (44%) were Female.

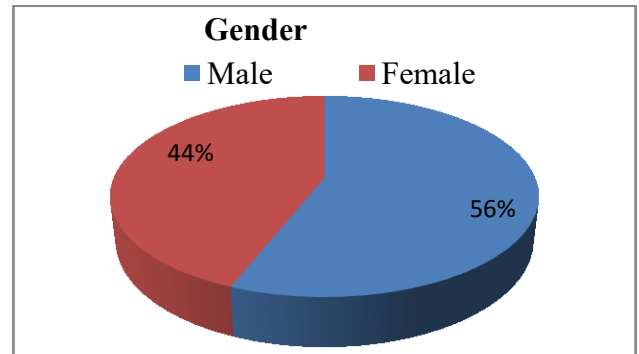


Figure 4.2 Gender

4.2 Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question 1: Does the social media network that the students are more exposed to influence their academic performance?

Table 1: Exposure of Students to Social Media Network and Their Academic Performance.

Statement number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1.	I usually have unlimited access to Facebook	6 (12%)	35 (70%)	2 (4%)	5 (10%)	2 (4%)	
2.	I engage in academic discussions on twitter and this has improved my academic performance.	3 (6%)	18 (36%)	-	20 (40%)	9 (18%)	
3.	I make use of whatsapp to disseminate knowledge to my class mate.	7 (14%)	2 (4%)	-	29 (58%)	12 (24%)	
4.	I Solely rely on information gotten from Wikipedia to do my assignments without consulting other sources.	9 (18%)	23 (46%)	-	18 (36%)	-	
	Total	25	78	2	72	23	200
	Percentage	12.5%	39%	1%	36%	11.5%	100%

Table 1 shows that 78 (39%) of the participants' response agree that Student's exposure to social

media network has significant influence on students' academic performance, 25(12.5%)

Strongly Agree, 72 (36%) disagree, while 23 (11.5%) Strongly Disagree.

Research Question 2: To what extent would student addictiveness to social network influence their academic performance?

Table 2; student addictiveness to social network influence their academic performance

Statement number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1.	Addiction to online social networks is a problematic issue that affects my academic life	3 (6%)	31 (62%)	1 (2%)	12 (24%)	3 (6%)	
2.	Online social networks distract me from my studies.	2 (4%)	25 (50%)	-	20 (40%)	3 (6%)	
3.	Hours spent online can never be compared to the number of hours I spend reading.	3 (6%)	22 (44%)	-	23 (46%)	2 (4%)	
4.	There is no improvement in my grades since I became engaged into these social networking sites.	2 (4%)	17 (34%)	-	27 (54%)	4 (8%)	
	Total	10	95	1	82	12	200
	Percentage	5%	47.5%	1%	41%	6%	100%

Table 2 shows that 95(47.5%) of the participants' response Agree that Students' addictiveness to social network has a significant influence on their academic performance, 10 (5%) strongly disagree, 82 (41%) Disagree, while (1%) Strongly Disagree.

Research Question 3: How has the use of social media influence the academic performance of 3rd year students, Faculty of Commerce and Management?

Figure 3: Use of Social Media and Students' Academic Performance

Statement number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1.	The usage of Wikipedia for research has helped improve my grades.	13 (26%)	35 (70%)	-	2 (4%)	-	
2.	Engaging in academic forums on yahoo reduces my rate of understanding.	3 (6%)	17 (34%)	-	28 (56%)	2 (4%)	
3.	I use materials gotten from blogging Sites	8	23	-	18	1	

	to complement what I have been Taught in class.	(16%)	(46%)		(36%)	(2%) (24%)	
4.	I will not perform well in my academics even if I stop using social media.	5 (10%)	8 (16%)	-	32 (64%)	5 (10%)	
	Total	29	83	-	80	8	200
	Percentage	14.5%	41.5%		40%	4%	100%

Table 3 shows that 83 (41.5%) of the participants' response Agree that Use of social media has significantly influence on the academic performance of the students, 29(14.5%) Strongly Agree, 80(40%) Disagree, while 8(4%) Strongly Disagree.

Table4: Gender Usage of Social Media.

Statement number	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1.	Male and female students use social media networks differently in different frequencies.	12 (24%)	23 (46%)	1 (2%)	9 (18%)	5 (10%)	
2.	Female students use social networking sites more to explicitly foster social connections.	10 (20%)	19 (38%)	3 (6%)	15 (30%)	3 (6%)	
3.	Gender determines the level of social media network usage.	10 (20%)	16 (32%)	-	18 (36%)	6 (12%)	
4.	Males are more effective at using social networking sites for nonacademic purposes.	17 (34%)	16 (32%)	1 (2%)	12 (24%)	4 (8%)	
	Total	49	74	5	54	18	200
	Percentage	24.5%	37%	2.5%	27%	9%	100%

Table 4 shows that 74 (37%) of the participants' response Agree that Use of social media has significantly influence on the academic performance of the students, 49(24.5%)

Strongly Agree, 18(9%) Disagree, while 18(9%) Strongly Disagree.

4. 3Analysisof Data and Testing of Hypotheses

In testing the hypotheses stated, the researcher used chi-square(χ^2) inferential statistics.

Hypothesis 1: Student’s exposure to social media network has no significant influence on their academic performance.

Table 5 below showed that the calculated chi-square statistics are statistically significant. As P-

value of 0.000 is less than the Critical chi-square value of 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis which states that Students’ exposure to social network has no significant influence on their academic performance is hereby rejected. This implies that Students’ addictiveness to social network has a significant influence on their academic performance.

Table 5: Chi-square Analysis for the influence of Student’s exposure to social media network on students’ academic performance.

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
I usually have unlimited access to Facebook and this has affected my academic performance negatively	79.400 ^a	4	0.000
I engage in academic discussions on twitter and this has improved my academic performance	15.120 ^b	3	0.002
I make use of whatsapp to disseminate knowledge to my class mate	33.040 ^b	3	0.049
I Solely rely on information gotten from Wikipedia to do my assignments without consulting other sources	6.040 ^c	2	0.000

Hypothesis 2: Students’ addictiveness to social network has no significant influence on their academic performance.

Table 6: Chi-square Analysis for the influence of students’ addictiveness to social network on academic performance of student.

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Addiction to online social networks is a problematic issue that affects my academic life	62.400 ^a	4	0.000
Online social networks distract me from my studies.	33.040 ^b	3	0.000
Hours spent online can never be compared to the number of hours I spend reading	32.080 ^b	3	0.000
There is no improvement in my grades since I became engaged into these social networking sites	33.040 ^b	3	0.000

Table 6 above showed that the calculated chi-square statistics are statistically significant. As P-value of 0.000 is less than the Critical chi-

square value of 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis which states that Students’ addictiveness to social network has no significant influence on

their academic performance is hereby rejected. This implies that Students' addictiveness to social network has a significant influence on their academic performance.

Hypothesis 3: Use of social media do no significantly influence on the academic performance of the students in 3rd year faculty of commerce and management, Eastern University.

Table 7 below shows that the chi-square statistics are statistically significant. P-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis which states that Use of social media do no significantly influence on the academic performance of the students in 3rd year, faculty of commerce and management at Eastern University is hereby rejected. This implies that Use of social media has significantly influence on the academic performance of the students in 3rd year, faculty of commerce and management at Eastern University.

Table 7: Chi-square Analysis for the use of social media influence on the academic performance of the students.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant influence on male and female student usage of social

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
The usage of Wikipedia for research has helped improve my grades	33.880 ^a	2	0.000
Engaging in academic forums on yahoo reduces my rate of understanding	36.880 ^b	3	0.000
I use materials gotten from blogging sites to complement what I have been taught in class	23.440 ^b	3	0.000
I will not perform well in my academics even if I stop using social media	41.040 ^b	3	0.000

media.

Table 8: Chi-square Analysis for influence on male and female student usage of social media.

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
Male and female students use social media networks differently in different frequencies	28.000 ^a	4	0.000
Female students use social networking sites more to explicitly foster social connections	20.400 ^a	4	0.043
Gender determines the level of social media network usage	7.280 ^b	3	0.000
Males are more effective at using social networking sites for non - academic purposes.	20.600 ^a	4	0.000



Table 8 above shows that the chi-square values are statistically significant. Asp-value less than the 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence on male and female student usage of social media is hereby rejected. This implies that there is a significant influence on male and female student usage of social media.

5. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The hypothesis which states that Student's exposure to social media network has no significant influence on students' academic performance was tested. In testing this hypothesis, table 5 was used. The finding of this study shows that Student's exposure to social media network has significant influence on students' academic performance. This corresponds with the findings of Olubiyi (2012) which states that these days' students are so engrossed in the social media that they are almost 24 hours **online**. **Even in** classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been observed that some students are always busy ping, 2going or Facebooking, while lectures are on. Times that ought to be channeled towards learning, academic research and innovating have been crushed by the passion for meeting new friends online, and most times busy discussing trivial issues. Hence most students' academics suffer setback as a result of distraction from the social media.

The hypothesis that states Students' addictiveness to social network has no significant influence on their academic performance was tested using table 6. The finding of this study shows that Students' addictiveness to social network has a significant influence on their academic performance. Social media have become a major part of the lives of the students of today.

The third hypothesis which states that Use of social media do no significantly influence the academic performance of the students in University of Lagos was tested as well. In testing this hypothesis, table 7 was used. The finding of this study shows that Use of social media has significant influence on the academic performance of the 3rd year students at Eastern University of Sri Lanka. This goes in line with the observations of Nicole Ellison, (2007) which noted that, the improved usage of Websites has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite some time. What began out as being a hobby for several computer literate people has converted to a social norm and existence-style for individuals from around the globe.

Table 8 was used to test the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female student usage of social media network. The finding of this study shows that there is a significant difference between male and female student usage of social media network. This is in line with the findings of Lin &Subrahmanyam, 2007 which noted Studies have shown that boys have been online more than girls in previous decades because of earlier forms of technology such as video or computer games.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The result from the findings of this study showed that, though Social media have negative effects on teenagers such as lack of privacy, distracting students from their academic work, taking most of their productive time, and such like, they also have benefits and can be used appropriately. For instance, students can form online communities in order to plan for a

project, have group discussions about class material, or use the Social networking sites(SNS) as a way to keep in contact when a student who has been absent needs to be updated on current academic information.

The findings of this study and earlier ones showed some noteworthy results. The first independent variable influencing the academic performance of students, that is, social media participation was negatively related with students' outcome, while the other independent variables were positively related with students' outcome. The results of this study suggest that lecturers should come up with a template on how their students can maximize the benefits of Social media, that Faculty management should incorporate rules and regulations on the use of the social media in the lecture rooms and, that the government should put in place adequate operational measures to regulate their use among students and lecturers.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Students should be educated on the influence of Social media on their academic performance.
2. Students should be monitored by teachers and parents on how they use these sites.
3. Teachers should ensure they use the social media as a tool to improve the academic performance of students in schools.
4. Students should better manage their study time in and prevent distractions that can be provided by the social media. There should be a decrease in the number of time spent by students when surfing the net.
5. Social Networking Sites should be expanded and new pages should be created to enhance

academic activities and avoid setbacks in the students' academic performance.

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