

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES ON UNDER GRADUATE STUDENTS PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Social networks are becoming an integral part of people's lives. Students are spending much time on social media and are considered the largest category that uses such application. This study tries to explore the influence of social media use, and especially Facebook, on undergraduate students' performance. The study used the GPA of students in their semester and their responses regarding the use of social media. Statistical analysis is used to infer this relationship and its implications. Results indicated a support of this study aim and the relationship between the different dimensions of Facebook influence on students with respect to the time spent on the Internet and Facebook specifically. Conclusions and future work are stated at the end.

KEY WORDS

Social Networks, Social Media, Facebook, Undergraduate Students Performance

INTRODUCTION

Social Networking Sites lures everybody without any restriction on age. People of all ages and from all lifestyles use social networking sites. The users include high school students, college scholars, researchers, industrialist, celebrities, and professionals. The usage of social networking sites is characterized by the necessity. Easy connectivity with friends and sharing of information in a jiff contributes to the popularity of these sites.

Even though it has become a daily routine for many to spend time on social networking sites, its criticism is towards the deviant behaviour it causes. Social networking sites may be defined as:

- ❖ **A webpage**, which has the personal information on the profile, which helps an individual to keep in touch with their friends.
- ❖ **A website** with closed activity allowing users to communicate with the list of friends and make new friends.

The perception of social networking sites differs among people. There is still ambiguity whether to use the term Social Networking Site or Social Network Site. A social network site is where an individual can create personal profile page and connect with friends. This allows the user to create a chain of friends. Apart from known friends in real world, it aids in making friends with strangers. This act of making friends with strangers is deviant from the crux aim of and therefore it is called as Social Networking Site.

ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking sites are widely used, because human beings like to connect with other people of similar interest and interested in relationship building (Coyle & Vaughn, 2008). The concept of online social networking dates back to the 1960s with the University of Illinois Plato computer based education tool (Leonard, 2004), but the rapid and growth and wide spread usage was possible only with advancement of internet technology. In fact, since the dawn of internet, users were always curious to explore the virtual world and have always showed interest in making social online interactions to have a digital identity for long term.

One of the striking features of social networking sites is that it paves way for meeting strangers. It encourages individuals to be more open by making their profile visible to all other users, not restricted just only to their known friends. This helps to connect with people who are complete strangers who have never met before. This type of connection is called offline connection, which is not the aim of the social networking sites.

People are interested to meet others with similar interest, curious in interacting with them, and like to extend their network by possible communication. Some stick to use the term Social Network Site. However, extensive research, comprehensive studies, interviews and analysis related to the behaviour and usage of pattern of these sites reveal that it is only suitable to use the term Social Networking Sites.

FEATURES OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Social networking sites have powerful distinct features. The major idea behind these sites is the website with profile pages of individuals. These profile pages are linked with list of friends who are also users of the same web page with similar profile page of their choice. These profile pages of an individual is where the users can enter their personal information that they like to display in public for other users. To create a profile page the user need to join the website. This is done by authenticating the user through valid email Id and creating a password. After successful signup and creating account, the user will be able to log in / sign in. On the first log in, user will be asked to fill certain basic information like age, sex, location, interests.

Sometimes there could be a set of questions to know the interests of the user. Most of the websites ask the users to upload a photo of the user, though it is not mandatory. Some sites allow their users to use themes as background pictures or multimedia content in the profile page to make it more attractive. This feature is very common in a social networking site called MySpace. Similarly, Facebook allows its users to incorporate applications designed by them. However, LinkedIn, a site aimed to build professional networking doesn't have such a feature. Even the accessibility of the profile pages of users is different for different social networking sites. When started, the Friendster site, provided access to everyone who searched for the person in the search engine. Privacy as an option to keep the profile pages confidential was not available to the users. This is because users were not aware of the possible fraudulent activity that can take place and were not concerned about privacy. But these days users are aware of the misuse of personal information and hence value their privacy. Therefore, websites, which were designed later like Facebook, MySpace etc. gave importance to the privacy of the users. For instance, in Facebook the users can make their profile page visible to all or can restrict that visibility only to their friends or people from particular group of friends.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCES

Foster Culture An environment that fosters engagement, collaboration, mentorship, and social networking is known as a participative community. An excellent tool for informal education, it is a platform where users may utilize the social network tools provided by teachers to study the subject matter and concepts via online participation and interaction. Motivate your

pupils to hone their skills in a less formal, more practical, and often more entertaining setting, all within a predetermined framework. Students have the chance to communicate and discuss in real-time via social networking sites such as Facebook. Blogging is becoming more popular among both professional and amateur bloggers who value user-generated content, personalized features, and informal evaluations. Users are able to share and discuss issues such as critical awareness, the threatened environment, and personal experiences on social networking sites.

Knowledge workers are able to expand their professional networks, learn from one another, and start their own businesses with the help of social media platforms that promote community engagement in areas of expertise. Provide a testing ground: academics do research and draw on existing literature to develop novel hypotheses. In a socially fertile, exploratory, and informal setting, these are commonly carried out. Researchers and non-community members alike may take use of a shared knowledge network via the social networking mechanism.

SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES: PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

Professors, teachers, and parents are of the opinion that students waste a lot of time on nonacademic activities related to social media, the internet, and popular media such as newspapers, blogs, and scholarly journals (Ingram, 2011; Ojalvo 2011). Most importantly for universities, teachers, and the general public, however, is the effect that social media sites like Facebook have on offline activities and research.

Social networking sites are simple for anybody to use, have few security measures, and are trivial to hack. Cyber and internal communications breaches, identity theft, misappropriation of intellectual property, misconceptions, and phony websites are all problems. As a result, protecting young people is of the utmost importance, as sexual predators are actively seeking out adolescents. Cyberbullying and Twitter trolls are also caused via social media gadgets.

Usage of SNSs is effective for different behaviors which are deemed unlawful in many jurisdictions. Symptoms include cyber stalking, IP stealing, data misuse, abuse of characters, privacy infringement and libel. However, social networking platforms are not protected by laws and guidelines.

Social networking sites impact the achievement of students and the balance between work and life. Students who aren't actively participating in their coursework and who aren't active on social media on a regular basis can cause problems for their fellow students and teachers. Particularly in non-cooperative work environments or cultural contexts that downplay the importance of social interaction, some businesses seek ways to regulate performance in loose network situations.

By considering not just the system's dynamics but also those of current users, social networking platforms are often an exceptionally dynamic platform. The phenomena and many uses of social network technologies are difficult for some university administrators.

POSITIVE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

There are a number of benefits to students' use of SNSs in the context of their studies. If students want to legally share knowledge with one another, they may join online educational groups that focus on their social networking topic of study. They boost one other's self-assurance and motivation for studying by sharing helpful details regarding these classes. Teachers may more easily engage with students and share necessary class lessons and research materials via the chance to join social networking groups. In these types of classrooms, students are able to voice their opinions, ideas, and worries to both their peers and instructors. Students are encouraged to actively participate in these communities, which helps them improve their talents. In these communities, professors often provide students with a means to post assignments and other student work. This frees up a ton of resources for students to use toward their studies.

When students use social networks, they are better able to work collaboratively on group projects. They work in tandem. As a result, they are able to communicate and collaborate on the project more efficiently, which saves time and cuts down on resources. In order to hone their existing abilities and develop new ones, students use social networking sites like YouTube, which has a wealth of educational videos. They may inform their students, coworkers, and colleagues of any informative and entertaining films they come across while doing research.

The majority of pupils do not participate in class discussions or school projects on a regular basis. Sometimes people just don't feel comfortable talking to their classmates in person. Participating in online social networking research conversations is easy and comfortable for

these students. They are able to get more in-depth knowledge by acquiring particular and practical information. Internships relevant to a student's major could be located via professional networking sites like LinkedIn. As a result, they are better able to acquire the practical skills necessary for academic achievement. To further increase their awareness, pupils should read a variety of instructional blogs.

NEGATIVE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Several studies have shown a clear correlation between students' increased use of social networking sites and a decrease in their academic performance in college. Because of this, the student's overuse of SNSs had an impact on his academic performance as a whole. A lot of students use SNSs for nothing more than social networking and to kill time. Students are unable to complete their tasks, activities, or projects on time because they lack energy. Their schooling is affected, which in turn restricts their cumulative grade point average. On their social media accounts, students often provide updates on what they've been up to in class. In tests that might hurt them, it diverts their attention and makes them less focused.

It has been noted that pupils are seen to be heavily engaged in social media even when in class. Classroom instruction is seldom given the attention it deserves. Consequently, students may share important information on college projects, tests, and assignments. Their scores are negatively affected by this. Students' writing skills have been negatively impacted by online networking, resulting in the frequent use of too simplistic words or phrases. "K" instead of "okay" or "coz" is one good example. Including such brief forms in assessments or assignments that might lower their rating might not be essential.

There are many security concerns related to social media addiction. Back pain after using this is one example of such effects. Mood fluctuations, irregular eating habits, eye strain, internal pain, and more, all due to lengthy periods of incorrect or bad posture. Because of the impact on their ability to work, these health issues may result in worse grades. A number of mental health problems, including anxiety, despair, and a lack of connection to reality, may manifest in students who spend too much time on social networking sites.

CONCLUSION

This research delves into how well students understand identity platforms on social media. This study deserves serious attention by educational decision makers, academics, students, and teachers. Policymakers are acknowledged as having a substantial role to play in education. When it is appropriate, policymakers make decisions regarding education. This study enables policymakers to disseminate information about the pros and cons of online educational courses, which can change people's perspectives and perceptions of students. Teachers and students alike may benefit from using social media to network and hone their professional abilities.

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