

Influence of New Media on the Academic Performance of Students

Ugwu Jovita Nnenna

Department of Publications and Extension, Kampala International University
Uganda.

ABSTRACT

Academic excellence or achievement plays an important role in an individual's placement, be it in the academic institutions or job placement. Due to this, many people are concerned with the ways they can enhance their academic achievement. The emphasis on academic excellence which is also prevalent worldwide has encouraged many studies about the conditions promoting it. The role of academic achievement as one of the predictors of one's life success and also in the aspect of academic placement in schools as well as the level of employability in one's career is inevitable. A direct relationship exists between new media usage and the academic performance of students in universities. However the darker side within technological evolution has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback of real values of life, especially among students who form the majority of users interacting through the use of social networking sites. Online social networking sites focus on building and reflecting social associations among people who share interests and or activities. With so many social networking sites displayed on the internet, students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends. Many students are now addicted to the online rave of the moment, with Facebook, Twitter, blogs, among others. Consequently, this paper reviews the influence of the new media on the academic performance of students.

Keywords: social media, students, internet, academic performance

INTRODUCTION

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 [1,2,3,4,5]. The evolution of internet technology has led to its use as the best medium for communication [6,7,8]. Whereby, two-third of the world's internet population visits social networking or blogging sites; thus, serving as a communication and connection tool [9,10,11]. Social networking sites (SNSs) are online communities of internet users who want to communicate with other users about areas of mutual interest, whether from a personal, business or academic perspective [1,12,13,14]. The millions of social networking sites have transformed the thought of global village into a reality whereby billions of people communicate through social networking sites [15,16,17,18,19]. Numerous benefits have been obtained through distant communication through the use of social networking sites [20,21]. Academic

excellence or achievement plays an important role in an individual placement, be it in the academic institutions or job placement [22,23,24,25]. Due to this, many people are concerned with the ways they can enhance their academic achievement. The emphasis on academic excellence which is also prevalent worldwide has encouraged many studies about the conditions promoting it [26,27,28]. The role of academic achievement as one of the predictors of one's life success and also in the aspect of academic placement in schools as well as the level of employability in one's career is inevitable [29].

A direct relationship exists between new media usage and the academic performance of students in universities. However the darker side within technological evolution has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback of real values of life, especially among students who form the majority of users interacting through the use of social

networking sites [30,31]. Online social networking sites focus on building and reflecting social associations among people who share interests and or activities. With so many social networking sites displayed on the internet, students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends. Many students are now addicted to the online rave of the moment, with Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc. Today most youths and students possess Facebook accounts. The reason most of them perform badly in school might not be far-fetched from their addiction to new media. While many minds might be quick to blame the poor quality of teachers, they might have to think even harder, if they have not heard of the Facebook frenzy [3]. Olubiyi [4] notes that these days' students are so engrossed in the new media that they are almost 24 hours online. Social networking sites, although has been recognised as 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 [5]. Although, it has been put forward that students spends 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. It also shows that only few students are aware of the academic and professional networking opportunities the sites offered.

The advanced and improved usage of social media platforms such as Facebook has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite some time. Though, it all started as being a hobby for several computer literates, new media has changed to become a social norm and existence-style for students around the world [6]. According to [6], students and teenagers have recognised these social media platforms to be able to contact their peers, share information, reinvent their identities and showcase their social lives. Facebook users often experience poor

academic performance. Also, [7] states that social media has a negative association with students' academic performance which is much greater than the advantages derived through the use of social media platforms. People around the globe have been addicted to the internet which has given rise to more students using social media more often than before. Nalwa and Anand [8] opined that those who are addicted users love to use the internet to set back their personal and professional responsibilities in which the final outcome is poor academic performance. It was highlighted in the finding of [7] that social media platforms (Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.) users usually devote less time to their studies compared to nonusers did and subsequently has lower CGPAs. It was also mentioned by [7] that among the major distraction of current generation that social media platform (Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.) remains a major distractions. According to [9], there is a correlation between academic performance and the dependency on social media platforms. Researchers have conducted different studies to find out the influence of social platforms on users, for instance a study on "impact of Facebook on undergraduates academic performance," stated that social platforms have negative impact on students.

New media are very common with people especially journalists. This is because of the massive and undeniable contributions which have been received. The contributions have influenced the way people understand and give meaning to new media. New media consist of social media and new hard ware technological development. When social media is used interchangeably with new media, it is for deeper understanding of the concept. The link between them is the place of internet. It is therefore important to recognise internet revolution as the major contributor to the new media. This is because from the internet all other new media platforms take it base.

Social information processing theory is an interpersonal communication theory

which suggests that online interpersonal relationship development might require more time to develop than face-to-face relationships, but when developed, it has the same influence as face-to-face

communication. This means, the more students use social media, the more they influence their ways of studies, given the fact that friends from social media will begin to exert influence on each other.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To shed light on the positive and negative sides of using new media in general, as well as discover its effects on students' academic performance, existing studies were reviewed. Amin and Mansoor [10] found that academic outcome of students who spent most of their time interacting using new media are positive because they were able to share and generate ideas and concepts related to their studies. They also use these sites for having fun as these social media sites are helpful in their academic work.

A similar study revealed that new media had improved the communication between the faculty member and students which facilitate the communication of the correct information and improve understanding and the development of the ideas and the courses. Based on the information collected, it is noticeable to say that the use of the social media during the lecture time is not recommended [11]. Mensah and Nizam [12] concluded in their study that new media platforms have a significant impact on students' academic performance in Malaysia tertiary institutions. Nevertheless, among the six variables used in their study, time appropriateness and health addiction has a stronger significant influence on students' academic performance. This is because time management plays an essential role in determining the success and failure of an individual. Thus students who lack time management can easily fall prey to the negative impact of new media.

Likewise, health and addiction, students who are engrossed with new media platforms ends up skipping meals which has health impact. According to the study of [13], the use of new media had affected the academic performance of their respondents negatively and further confirmed that there was a strong positive relationship between the use of

new media and academic performance. Their study further revealed that most of their respondents use social media sites to chat rather than for academic purpose. Based on the study of [14], it was found that new media usage on weekly basis displayed a positive skew where most students do not use social media excessively. Respondents in their study felt that time management and football were factors that contributed towards negative academic performance besides excessive social media use. Asemah and Okpanachi [15] found that the exposure of students to new media have effect on their academic performance. Evidence showed that social media have negative influence on the academic performance of students. Students who spend more time on social media are likely to perform poorly in their academics this is because instead of reading books, they spend time chatting and making friends via social media and this will definitely have negative effect on their academic performance. Students are not only affected by new media, employees and employers too. A U.K. firm released a study showing that people who use Facebook, Twitter and other social networks while at work extracts a heavy cost on their employers [15]. According to [16], the nature of social media as a useful servant but a dangerous master and a two-edge sword has been revealed in the findings of the study. Despite the benefits that students can harness from social media networks such as sharing of information, building relationship, partaking in group discussion, there is to some extent addiction and distraction of attention caused by the use of social media which could have serious consequences on the academic life of students. One of the negative effects of social media is piracy. The primary motivator for Australians of all ages illegally downloading movies and

TV shows is that it is free [16]. The advanced and improved usage of social media platforms such as Facebook has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite some time. Though it all started has been a hobby for several computer literates individual has changed to become a social norm and existence-style for students around the world [6]. According to [6], students and teenagers have especially recognised these social media platforms to be able to contact their peers, share information, reinvent their personas and showcase their social live. Facebook users often experience poor academic performance. Also, [7] states that social media have negative association with students' academic performance which is much greater than the advantages derived through the use of social media platforms. People around the globe have been addicted to the internet which has given rise to more students using social media more often than before. Nalwa and Anand [8] advised and recommended that those who are addicted users love to use the internet to set back their personal and professional responsibilities in which the final outcome is poor academic performance. It was highlighted in the finding of [7] that social media platforms (Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.) users usually devote lesser time to their studies has to compared to nonusers did and subsequently has lower GPAs. It was also mentioned by [7], that among the major distraction of current generation that social media platform (such Facebook, WhatssApp, etc.) remains a major distractions. According to [9], there is a correlation between academic performance and the dependency on social media platforms.

Theoretical Framework

Time Displacement Theory

The theory was first discussed by [17]. Robert Putnam said social capital is the most pivotal thing for social bonding and maintaining social relationships in society. He further elaborated that the social capital gets erode when the users of media allocate too much time to the media activities and displace their time

which was previously allocated to more important things like social events, interpersonal communication, social movements, and interaction with people, education and helping each other in social and personal matters.

The theory explains how the new kind of the activities may displace older activities causing the great decline in the older activities like social relations, exercise and feeling of loneliness, etc. Robert Putnam [17] studied that in America, social capital was found eroded and diminished due to heavy television watching, which eventual resulted that people were found living in isolation with feeling of loneliness as they were away from movie theatres, physical activities, bowling leagues, clubs, social gatherings and the interpersonal communication. Time Displacement theory was developed by the leading mass media scholar, Maxwell McCombs. The basic tenet of the theory is that people have limited amount of time to do a particular thing. Increased amount of time on a particular activity will displace other activities [18]. According to [19], when people increase the time they spend online engaging in new media, time sacrifices will have to be made in other areas, such as time spent on studying and doing homework.

In terms of students' use of internet, [20] opines that time displacement may happen because the internet which entertains young people with stimulating images as well as visual and auditory effects is more attractive and immediately gratifying than school-related activities. Consequently, using the internet will result in the displacement of academic activities and will eventually decrease the students' academic achievements. Researchers have further reported that problematic internet and social media use among adolescents bring negative outcomes in academic achievement as well as social skills [21]. This theory is applicable to this study because it is anticipated that students' use of the new media for educational purposes may affect their academic achievement positively while the non-educational use

of the new media especially the recreational use, might negatively affect students' academic achievement. This is because time management plays an essential role in determining the success

and failure of an individual. Thus students who lack time management can easily fall prey to the negative impact of new media [22].

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

It is without doubt that social media are and will remain important tools in human life as far as communication is concerned. Today, mankind is harvesting tremendously from its existence not only in mere communication, but also in most scholarly activities. Different forms of education, including distance education has been widely patronised and facilitated to some degree through social media networks. Acquiring information both locally and internationally from friends, lectures or experts is no longer a struggle as

compared to the olden days, and the internet is the ultimate master behind this success. Social media are a useful servant, but dangerous master" and can also be "described as a two edge sword" and as such, users, especially students must be at alert about the dangers and be prudent in their utilisation. Thus, this paper recommends that students should be educated on the influence of new media on their academic performance and students should be monitored by lecturers and parents on how they use these social media platforms.

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