

Effects of Social Media Use on Academic Performance of Universities Students – A Case Study of Two Universities in Morogoro Municipality

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Abstract: This study aimed to assess the effects of social media use on academic performance of universities students' The study was carried out in Morogoro municipality. The study employed quantitative approach. A total 260 students were involved in the study by using random sampling. Data were collected by using questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics. The research findings showed that, the frequent use and addiction of social media by the different students in higher learning institutions poses the effects like distractions, waste of the time and mental illness among students. It also found that, symptoms of anxiety, depression, poor self-esteem, jealous, loneliness, isolation to students are contributed by the serious activeness on social media. As a result, the more usage of social media is affecting the student's mental health. Also, chatting, posting, commenting, downloading and reading irrelevant contents in social media result to time wastage on it. It also realized that, notifications from social media, seeking for satisfaction and impression on social media has led to distractions to students. Recommendations of the study included there is a need for the higher institutions to embrace and teach students the proper usage of social media accounts or sites. The university administration should consider organizing public dialogues that would help to teach students that, the social media sites can be used to improve the performance of their academics.

Keywords: social media, academic performance.

1. Introduction

The arrival of the internet led to major developments in the world of communication hence the introduction of social networking sites (SNSs). The coming into being of these sites revolutionized the world of communication and today we celebrate its improvements ranging from education, business, to entertainment. The evolution of the internet has led to its usage as the best medium of communication. These networking sites are referred to as social media (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). Social media are viable tools that use mobile technology and web-based technology to create highly interactive platforms via the internet, through which an individual or group can share, co-create, discuss and modify users' generated content, (Kietzmann, 2012). Social media introduce changes to

communication between organizations, communities, and individuals. It changes the way individuals and large organizations communicate.

Some of the most popular social media websites are Facebook (and its associated Facebook Messenger), WhatsApp, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Snap chat, Twitter, YouTube, Skype, We Chat, Myspace etc. These social media websites have more than 4.2 billion users worldwide in 2021 and according to recent research, global consumers aged 20 to 29 are the biggest users of social media. (Bispendra, 2022).

In Tanzania according to Datareportal, in January 2022 there were 15.6 million internet users which was equivalent to 25 percent of the total population of 62.39 million, and 6.1 million social media users which was equivalent to 9.8 percent of the total population. According to Nielsen, (2016) Internet users continue to spend more time on social media sites than on any other type of site. Teenagers and young adults have especially embraced these sites as a way to connect with their peers, share information, reinvent their personalities, and show case their social lives.

In the past years, social media websites have become common giving young people a new way to interact with each other and communicate with the world making them using most of their time in social networks.

Enhancement of the education dissemination and improvements of the pedagogical approach in Tanzania is inevitable. This is due to the fact that, there is a big growth of ICT and wider penetration of the internet in the country. Students need the sophisticated and easier means to communicate, create, share and collaborate on their contents, information and studies. Ministry for Education and Vocational Training in Tanzania developed an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) policy for Basic Education in 2007. This policy, together with Tanzania National ICT policy of 2003, has made the guidelines in integration ICT in education in Tanzania. The policy is guided by the overall objective of global education and covers pre-primary, primary, secondary and teacher education. On the other hand, the policy

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is linked to ICT activities in other areas and sectors, especially Vocational Training, Higher Education, Regional Administration and Local Government. (Tanzania Information and Communication Technology Policy for Basic Education, 2007).

With an increase in the use of social media over the last decade, it is important to assess any effects social media might have on mental health, time wastage and distractions. There is as yet is little action implemented by the mental health professionals regarding the implications of social media for mental health. According to national education association (2018), social media’s impact on self-distractions, time wastage and mental health complicates education service delivery on the micro level due to the significant growth of mental health symptoms, and careless of the students’ academic performance. This shows the level at which students are patronizing these sites and this may bring negative effects on students as far as their academic performance is concerned. The effect of the Internet on education is an important issue that has caught both educators’ and practitioners’ attention in recent years. Hence, there is a need to analyze the effect of social media use on students’ academic performance in higher learning.

2. Research Objectives

A. General Objective

Assessment of the effects of social media use on academic performance of universities students.

B. Specific Objectives

- i. To discover if social media use cause distraction on students’ academic performance.
- ii. To examine the level of time-wastage by students on social media use.
- iii. To find out the extent of mental illness imposed by social media use among students.

3. Research Methodology

The study employed quantitative approach. A total of 260 students were involved in the study by using random sampling. Data were collected by using questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics.

4. Research Findings and Discussion

This section focuses on assessing the effects of social media use on academic performance of university students. The findings were discussed based on the respondent’s characteristics which where age, sex, and level of education.

The findings will enhance understanding of the positive use of social media sites among students.

A. Ways of Distraction Caused by Social Media Use

This part presents findings which shows the ways of distraction caused by social media use in terms of notification, fear of missing out, satisfaction, impression and temptation. The output for ordered Logit analysis showed that all factors were significant.

1) Gender of the Respondents

Gender of respondents influences distractions by the social media. Findings to the gender were as follows;

Table 1
Gender of the respondents

Valid		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Male	103	39.6	39.6	39.6
	Female	157	60.4	60.4	100.0
	Total	260	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2023

The total of 260 individual questionnaire responses were received. Out of this 60% (153) were female and 40% (107) were male. To this statistical proof, it was found that female students are more exposed to social media compare to their male counterparts. A woman seems to be active users in social media. I Vermeer (2018) in her study found out that number of women using social media surpass that of men by significant percentages. Women are more distracted by social media compared to male.

2) The Respondents Age

The researcher questioned students from different age groups; the group were divided into four categories as follows;

Table 2
Age of the respondents

Valid		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Below 20years	39	15.0	15.0	15.0
	21-30years	159	61.2	61.2	76.2
	31-40years	52	20.0	20.0	96.2
	Above 40years	10	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	260	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2023

Respondents had an opportunity to select the age group in which they belong and the results were as follows; - 61% (159) were respondents belonging to the age group between 21 to 30 years old, 20% (52) were respondents between 31 to 40 years of age, 15% (39) were respondents in the group of 20 years and below and 4% (10) were respondents at the age of 40 and above.

These findings depict that students of the age between 21 to 30 years old are the more active users of social media currently. This age group are more distracted by social media notifications, seeking for satisfaction, impression and due to fear of missing out. These findings can elaborate, Pew Research (2016), who found out that several students between the ages of 18 to 29 who use social media was above 88%.

3) Education Level of the Respondents

Table 3
Education level of the respondents

Valid		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Bachelor degree	163	62.7	62.7	62.7
	Diploma	48	18.5	18.5	81.2
	Certificate	49	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	260	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data 2023

The education level was divided into five categories, namely;

Ph.D., Masters, Bachelor degree, Diploma and Certificate. Findings to this question are dispensed in table 3.

All 260 respondents answered these questions. Findings of this study as indicated in Table 3, shows that bachelor degree students were majority of the respondents, representing about 63% of all the respondents. Certificate students' respondents followed with 19%. The respondents who were in diploma level were 18% these findings depict that most students responded to this study are students taking bachelor degree in university. And these are assumed to be the more active users of social networks currently and are more affected by social media in terms of distraction which affects their academic performance. These findings collaborate with (Ndaku, 2017) while studying, students keep checking their social media accounts for new updates and notifications. This distracts them and results in loss of concentration in studies which can affect their academic performance negatively.

Generally, on ways of distraction caused by social media the finding shows that, most students are very much distracted by social media notifications in their phones which draws their attention from studying and drive them to check on their social media accounts. This study also revealed that university students are very impressive buy fancy social life of the people mainly celebrates in social media. This cause them to be tempted and lose their self-control on social media.

B. The Level of Time-Wastage by Social Media Use Among Universities Students

The time spend on social media use hinders academic performance of students since the study shows that most of the students are busy with social media at the expense of their study time. Students waste time in chatting, commenting, download videos and music and reading irrelevant contents.

1) Sex of a respondents

The frequency when students were asked to comment, give opinion regarding what they thought of the fact that Time is wasted when they charting while lecture is in the class, commenting, reading irrelevant contents and downloading music when lecture goes on 62% said strongly agree, 37 said agree whereas 3 % emerged for both disagree and strongly

disagree.

In this finding, female data showed that female students were busy with social media use while lectures went on were more likely or had higher odd of increasing time wastage due social media use by 83% than the male student

This indicated that female's perceptions were more prone to careless use of social media us so the possible odds, likelihood of time wastage in social media than male student. This remains to be subject of further research. This was also revealed by (Horzum 2016; Garca-domingo et al. 2017) the study discovered that female students are more likely to use social media to meet preserved needs than male students in a study of examining the relationship to gender and personality on the purpose of Facebook usage of Turkish University students.

2) Education level

The finding shows that, most of first year bachelor degree Students were focusing on irrelevant contents on social media, chatting, posting their marital status and their religious affiliations.

These findings also collaborates with the study conducted by Owusu and Agatha (2015), titled "use of social media and its impacts on academic performance of tertiary students" revealed that majority of students were engrossed in social media sites. It also brought to light that most users utilized these sites for chatting and downloading purposes only which affected their academic performance negatively.

Also, the revelation of Mingle and Musah (2015), that most respondents in their study experienced negative effects such as poor grammar spelling, late submission of assignments, less study time and poor academic performance.

Generally, on time wastage by social media the study found that most students spend a lot of time on social media accounts sending friend requests to their friends, chatting with friends. Also, reading irrelevant contents in social media like celebrates news, downloading videos, music, posting on their religious affiliations, their relationship status and commenting on celebrates accounts and their fellow peers accounts.

Table 4
Education level

Time wastage by students in social media use	Education level of the respondents			
	Bachelor degree	Diploma	Certificate	Total
SA	30	9	9	48
A	112	26	27	165
SD	7	0	7	14
D	13	12	6	31
UD	1	1	0	2
Total	163	48	49	260

Pearson $\chi^2(8) = 22.5829$, Pr = 0.004, Source: Field data 2023

Table 5
Education level

Social media causes mental illness	Education level of the respondents			
	Bachelor degree	Diploma	Certificate	Total
SA	46	16	18	80
A	108	30	30	168
SD	7	1	0	8
D	2	1	1	4
Total	163	48	49	260

Pearson $\chi^2(6) = 3.9246$, Pr = 0.687, Source: Field data 2023

C. The Influence of Mental Illness Imposed by Social Media Use Among Universities Students

1) Sex of the respondents

Among sex groups, female students were 60.4% whereas 39.6% were males. The higher category falling on agree and strongly agree part was a preliminary indication of association between sex and perception on mental illness that might impair academic performance due to social media use. In case of sex of the respondents' female students are more affected by the depression, jealousy, anxiety, loneliness and isolation compared to male students. And as the results in their academic performance due to this data female students tends to be affected more mentally than male students which lately results to poor academic performance of the university students.

2) Education level

Level of education influenced how student perceived social media use at a confidence of 95% keeping other perceived factors at a steady state. Results shows that the model converged well (at minimum value) and this is why Chi-square statistic was significant ($p < 0.05$).

Generally, on mental illness the study revealed that over 90% respondents agreed on the argument that Image and contents posted by peers in social media give rise to jealousy. Also, pressure while posting on social media leads to insecurity regardless the level of education. These pressure makes students concentrating on what to post on social media than on their studying hence it results to poor academic performance of students. Students with bachelor degree were most affected by poor self-esteem, depression and anxiety due to the things which are posted on social media. Due to these it affected their mental wellbeing and resulted to mental illness which contributed to poor academic performance. Study revealed that university students are very much affected mentally by social media were by most of the students was subjected to depression, anxiety, jealous when other people post fancy life, they wish they were them.

Also due to the study it shows that, due to them being busy on social media it turns them to be very lonely and lack social life i.e., physical socialization hence resulted to isolation and loneliness. These findings collaborate with (Ilakkuvan et al 2019) that, being socially connected to others can ease stress, anxiety, and depression, boost self-worth, provide comfort and joy, prevent loneliness, and even add years to your life. On the flip side, lacking strong social connections can pose a serious risk to your mental and emotional health. Furthermore, social media has resulted to students' poor self-esteem and lack of sleep because they use social media until late night which they get very low time for sleeping

5. Summary of Findings

The research findings show that many females than males students counterparts participated in the study. The findings show s 157 which is equal to 60.4% of the total number of respondents was females while only 103 which is equal to 39.6% of the respondents were males. Research findings also showed that most of the respondents who participated in the

study were at the age of between 21-30 years who were about 159 students which is equal to 61.2% out of sample size of 260. Also, the findings show that many participants of this research were students who study bachelor degrees who were about 163 which is equal to 62.7% of the total sample size

The study also revealed that most students use social media sites with the highest used on daily basis being Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, snapchat followed by twitter, and WhatsApp. Also, the study has depicted that most students are very much distracted by social media notifications in their phones which draws their attention from studying and drive them to check on their social media accounts. the research findings have revealed that university students are very much affect mentally by social media were by most of the students are affected by depression, anxiety, jealous when other people post fancy life, they wish they were them. Also due to the study students revealed that due to them being busy on social media it turns them to be very lonely and lack social life i.e., physical socialization hence resulted to isolation and loneliness

6. Recommendations

Taking into consideration all the data collected and analyzed, as well as the results comes out of discussing those data, researcher come up with list of recommendations and measures to be considered by students when using social media. These recommendations aim at usage of social media in the most right and appropriate way possible. The positive use of social networks by students can develop their academic performance, career development, and their skills.

There is need for the higher institutions to embrace and teach students the proper usage of social media accounts or sites. The university administration should consider organizing public dialogues that would help to teach students that, the social media sites can be used to improve the performance of their academics. Also there should be surveillance software on the server to drive out students who use these social media sites or these sites could be permanently blocked or students should have a specific time when in college for the use of social networking sites

University should employ a rule where by a students should turn off their phone when they're in lecture room or collect them in a special place so that they can help them concentrate on their lecture rather than on their phones. Also, students they should disable social media notifications. It's hard to resist the constant buzzing, beeping, and dinging their phone alerting to new messages. Turning off notifications can help them regain control of their time and focus.

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