

Relationship between Facebook Practice and Academic Performance of University Students

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Abstract

Higher education institutions have great fear that student academic performance might affect adversely because students are paying more attention towards social networking sites. This study examined the relationship between facebook practice on academic performance of students. A cross- sectional survey was conducted from March 2012 to March 2013 in Jimma University and 490 postgraduate students were participated in this research. The data were collected using a pre-tested structured self administrated questionnaire. The result was analyzed in terms of descriptive statistics followed by inferential statistics. The results indicated that there is no significant relation between usage time and frequency of login facebook with student GPA. Even if there is not significant relation between their personal Laptop, Office Computers and Library Computers used to visit facebook and academic performance of students, there is negative, moderate and significant relation between using mobile phone to visit facebook and students academic performance.

Keywords: Facebook practice; University students; Academic performance

I.Introduction

Social media are a collection of internet websites, service and practices that help collaboration, community building, participation and sharing information (Junco,Heiberger and Loken, 2010). A major category of social media activity is called social networking (Junco,Heiberger and Loken, 2010; Junco and Mastrodicasa,2007). The use of social networking sites has been widespread through the world (Banquil et. al, 2009).

Currently, there are dozens of social networking websites available online, each with its own special something to offer its members (Hudson Horizons,2011), but Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and LinkedIn have become the most visited social networking sites in the world (Haridakis and Hanson,2009). Among these face book is the most popular social networking site. In 2009, it has more than 350 million users (Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010).

In Ethiopia, among social networking sites, facebook has been the prime among highly visited social networking sites (Jibat,2012). Based on Internet World Status (Internet world status,2012) in Ethiopia , in December 2012 among 960,331 total internet users, 902,440 have facebook account and most user age between 25-34(Staffer,2012).

Social networking sites have become and integrals part of higher education students (Junco,2011). Mastrodicasa and Kepic (2005) study also showed that 85% of students who are learning in large research Universities in USA have facebook account. In recent years, higher educational institutions have great fear that students academic performance might affect adversely because students are paying more attention towards

social networking sites. In developed countries this area grasps researchers' attention but in developing countries like Ethiopia, it is unexplored area.

II. Objective

1. To examine the relationship between times spend on facebook and academic performance of students.
2. To examine the relationship between the devices used to login facebook and academic performance of students.

III. Method

A cross-sectional survey was conducted from March 2012 to March 2013 in Jimma University. The target population of this study was all postgraduate students who were attending their education in Jimma University during the study time. The reason why only post graduate students included in the study that most facebook users in Ethiopia are within age range between 24-34 (Staffer, 2011). Based on information obtained from University Registrar office most post graduate students are in this range rather undergraduate student. A list of 675 students obtained from the Registrar office of Jimma University. The sample size of the study was determined by a single population proportion formula assuming, 5% marginal error and confidence interval of 95%. The fifty percent proportion has been preferred due to lack of similar studies in Ethiopia and accordingly the sample size was calculated to be 384. The final sample size was calculated by using finite population number correction formula, a design effect of 2 was considered to have adequate and representative sample size and 10% was added for non-response rate. Thus, the final sample size calculated was 539. In order to select representative respondents, stratified random sampling technique was employed. First, 5 Colleges and 2 Institutes in the university namely: Jimma Institute of Technology, College of Social Sciences and Law, College of Public Health and Medical Sciences, College of Natural Sciences, College of Business and Economics, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine and Institute of Education and Professional Development Studies considered as strata. After determining the total sample size of the study, by using Proportionate allocation strategy the number of samples from each collage was determined. Finally, respondents were selected randomly by using lottery method. The data were collected using a pre-tested structured self administrated questionnaire. Most ingredients of questionnaire were adapted and taken from the research report of Kirschner and Karpinski (2010), Junco (2011) Moon (2012) and Ahmed and Qazi (2011). Validity evidence for the instrument was provided by review the questioners on: clarity in wording, relevance of the items clarity of instruction, absence of biased words and phrases, use of Standard English and formatting (Flower, 2002). The questionnaire was reviewed by two Ph.D candidates in Information Technology and Psychology fields. To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was pre-tested on 25, graduate students who attended their education in College of Business and Economics before the start of actual data collection and the cronbach alpha of the questionnaire was 0.75. The student who were participated in pilot study were excluded from the main study to avoid bias because of repeating the same questionnaire. Appropriate modification of the questionnaire was done based on the experience of the pretest. The cronbach alpha of the post-test administration was 0.83. Values of 0.70 or greater are considered adequate for a scale that will be used to analyze associations (Garson, 2006).

This study used SPSS version 16.0 to perform the statistical analysis. Aside from basic descriptive analytic technique, the main analytic technique implemented was Person Product Moment Correlation to examine the relationship between Facebook practice with academic performance. The significance level used for the inferential statistics was 0.05.

IV.Results

A total of 490 questionnaires were returned from 539 questionnaires distributed to respondents. The response rate of the questionnaire was 91%. Four hundred seventy two (96%) of the respondents were male, the remain 18(4%) were female. Most of participant 485(99%) were master degree students, the remain 5(1%) were Ph.D students. Three hundred ninety Four (80%) respondents were facebook users while 96(20%) respondents were non - users. The majority of respondents visit facebook by their Mobile Phones 176(45%) and their Personal Laptops 172 (43%). A few students use their Office Computers 14(4%) and Library Computers ' 32(8%) to visit facebook respectively.

Table 1. Respondents' Personal Information and Facebook Usage (N=490)

| Personal Information | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Sex | | |
| Male | 472 | 96 |
| Female | 18 | 4 |
| Admission Classification | | |
| Master | 485 | 99 |
| Ph.D | 5 | 1 |
| College of attending their education | | |
| Public health and Medical | 222 | 45 |
| Jimma Institute of technology | 33 | 7 |
| Agricultural and Veterinary Medicine | 91 | 19 |
| Social Science and Law | 49 | 11 |
| Natural Science | 46 | 9 |
| Business and Economic College | 38 | 8 |
| Institute of Education and professional development studies | 11 | 2 |
| Facebook Usage | | |
| User | 394 | 80 |
| Non-User | 96 | 20 |
| A device used frequently to visit facebook | | |
| Personal Laptop Computers | 172 | 43 |
| Mobile Phones | 176 | 45 |
| Office computers | 32 | 8 |
| Library computers | 14 | 4 |

Table 2 shows that age range of the respondent was 20-49 old with mean age was 25. The mean of the student's GPA was 3.48 (SD=0.61). The mean time of students spend on facebook was 2.31(SD=0.43) hours per day. Furthermore, the mean amount of face book login frequency were 3(SD=0.51) times per day.

Table 2 descriptive statistics age, academic performance and face book activities (N=394)

| Independent Variables | Students' Cumulative GPA |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Time spend on Facebook | 0.25 |
| Frequency of login Facebook | 0.31 |
| Mobile Phone | -0.48** |
| Personal Laptop | 0.41 |
| Office Computers | 0.38 |
| Library computers | 0.52 |

**P<0.05

V. Discussion

The result of the study indicated that most students use their personal Laptops and Mobile phone to visit Facebook. This finding also consistent with previous research done in the United State (Ahmed and Qazi,2011). The result also indicted that the students spent substantial amount of time on facebook (2.31hours per day). Even if the students are not facebook addicted but it is much higher than reported by Golub and Miloloza (2010), Kischner and Karpinski (2010), Pempeket. al (2009) and closer to averages reported by Junco(10). Literatures indicated that that a person who spends more than 171munites per day considered as internet addicted person (ChildInternational, 2006). A possible explanation for the higher average time spend on social networking sites due to most students have visited social networking sites by using their personal Laptops and mobile phones and these create the opportunity to use social networking site for a long hours. The result of the study also indicated that student's login facebook approximately a mean of 3 times per day. Compare to previous research report done by Junco (2010) mean of 6 times per day, the frequency of login in facebook per day were low.

The correlation result indicated that there is no significant relation between time spend on facebook with students' GPA. This finding is also in line with the findings of study conducted in Pakistan. In the study conducted in Pakistan, on 6 universities, on 1000 students. The result indicated that there is no significant relationship between time spend on social networking sites and students GPA (Ahmed and Qazi,2011).

On the other hand using mobile phone to login facebook has a negative, moderate and significant relationship with students GPA. Previous researches also indicated that mobile internet users are vulnerable to multitasking, using facebook in conjunction with studying (Gloub and Miloloza,2010) and multitasking activities are negatively associated with students' GPA (Ellis, Daniels and Jauregui,2010). Previous studies also indicated that Multitasking activities not only affect study times but also it reduce brain's ability to effectively retrieve information (Gloub and Miloloza,2010).

VI. Conclusion

Higher education institutions have blocked facebook because they fear that time spend on facebook might affect academic performance of students but the result of the study clearly show that there is no relationship between time spend on facebook and student academic performance. Based on this finding, blocking facebook is not solution because students can easily access facebook by their mobile phones and using mobile phone to access facebook might have created a problem on their academic performance by fostering students engaged in multitasking activates. The result of the study also indicated that there is a negative moderate and significant relationship between using mobile to visit facebook and student GPA. Therefore, it is highly recommendable that higher education institutes like: Universities, Colleges should foster students to use face book for educational purpose by providing proper arrangements and training rather blocking the site.

Finally, it is very important undertake further research in area of how mobile internet and multi-tasking activities affects students academic performance on large samples of students from different universities.

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