The Impact of Social Media on Undergraduate's Academic Performance: With Special Reference to Eastern University, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Online Social Network sites have created a new social dimension of people which influence on social awareness by keeping in touch with friends, making new friends, dispensing new data or products and gathering information in everyday life. It also helps individuals especially students become more knowledgeable. FaceBook, Twitter, MySpace, YouTube and LinkedIn have positioned with Millions of users and still growing attracting thousands of new users daily including student community. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between the usage of online social network sites and students' academic performance. To attain these objective 100 questionnaires were distributed to randomly selected students from the six faculties of Eastern University, Sri Lanka to gather initial findings on their use of social networking sites and its influence on their academic performance. The study found that Online Social Net worksites have a significant impact on the student's academic performance. Also the findings of this research suggest that future strategies in enhancing student's awareness in efficient time management and better multitasking can lead to improving study activities and academic performance.

Keywords: Online Social Networks, usage of online social network sites, academic performance, student community

Introduction

Online Social network sites are considered to play an active role in younger generation's daily lives (Lenhart, 2009) as well as it offers a wide variety of resources and services such as messaging, sharing photos, audios and videos, group discussion, and distribution of applications. Youngsters, especially students, are the avid users of these sites Haneefa & Sumitha (2011). Social Networking sites enable students to get in touch with their friends, faculty members, and institutions and allow them to connect with more friends.

YouTube, Face book, twitter, LinkedIn, and my space are some of the most important online social networks which support to academics staffs as well as the students. The students use these sites for the various purposes such as group discussion, refer to notes from online videos, sharing notes, and get more knowledge rather than studies Salvation & Adzharuddin, (2014). Therefore this study attempts to investigate the relationship between usage of online social network sites and students' academic performance of the Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

Problem Statement and Objectives of the Study

Social network site is a web based service which allows people to sign up in a bounded system, articulating group of people within the same system so as to share personal or academic related information (Boyd and Ellison, 2007). With the improvement of technologies an online social network has been considered as a salient system.

Online social networks have been used for educational purposes such as for sharing online tutorials, lectures and education materials. However, there is lack of research and literature related to Sri Lankan student's perception of online social networking and how it is adopted for educational purposes. In view of the increased use of social networks, it has become an important task to validate the impact of online social networks in the higher education institution in Sri Lanka.

This in turn questions whether there is relationship between the usage of online social network sites and students' academic performance of the students of the Eastern University, Sri Lanka. Therefore, the general objective of this study is to investigate whether there is a positive relationship between the usage of online social network sites on students' academic performance of the students from six faculties such as Faculty of Commerce & Management, Faculty of Arts & Culture, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Health-Care sciences, Faculty of Science, and Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetics Studies. The special objectives are:

- To identify the level of use of online social network sites.
- To examine the level of students' academic performance.

Review of Literature

Mark Salvation et al (2014) designed to analyze the impact of social network sites on students' academic performance in Malaysia using a conceptual approach. The study found that more students prefer the use of Face book and Twitter in their academic related discussions in complementing conventional classroom teaching and learning process.

According to Oskovei (2010) who proposed that internet is advantageous to both students and teachers if used as a tool of knowledge creation and dissemination.

Adam at el (2014) found that Malaysian university students to gather initial findings on their use of social network sites and its influence on their academic performance. Also this study found that the majority of respondents agreed that social networking sites have a positive impact on their academic performance.

According to Kirschner in Enriquez (2010) students who multi-task between Social network and homework are likely to have twenty percent (20%) lower grades than a student who does not have a social network in visual range. He believes that even running a social network on the background on a student's Personal Computer while studying or doing homework could lower a student's grade.

Conceptual model

Based on literature the following conceptual framework was developed. This conceptual framework establishes link between the usage of online social network sites and students' academic performance of the students.
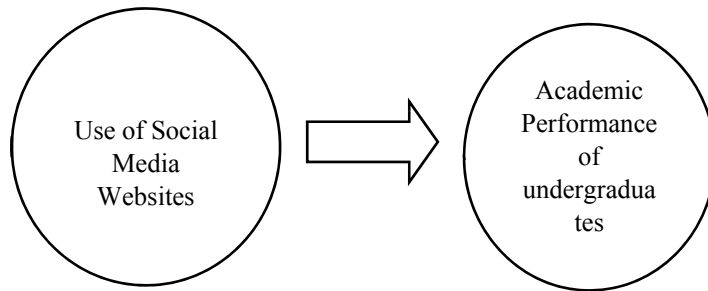
Source: Mahmoud at el (2015) with some modification

H_1: There is a significant relationship between the uses of social media websites on academic performance of the students.

Materials and Method

Data and Sampling

This study tries to exam the relationship between social networks sites on academic performance of the students of Eastern University, Sri Lanka. The population of this study comprises of final year students from Faculty of Commerce and Management Ffaculty of Arts & Culture, faculty of Agriculture, F**aculty of Health Care Sciences**, faculty of Science as well as Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetics Studies. Random sampling technique was employed to select the sample of 100 students for this study which comprising male and female students from the total population of 1040. The Five point Likert's scale structured questionnaires were administrated as a survey instrument to collect the data for this study.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to describe the characteristics of sample population. The collected data was evaluated using Univariate and bivariate analysis and also SPSS package was used for this purpose. Five point Likert's scale questionnaire was used for data collection and formulated three decisions criteria. Correlation coefficients analysis was used to determine the relationship between both dependent and independent variables. Based on the value indicated in the questionnaire mean value is lying in the range between "1 and 5".
The mean value of respondents of this research is categorized as follows.

Table-01 Evaluation criteria for mean values

Range	Degree
$1.0 \leq X \leq 2.5$	Low level
$2.5 < X \leq 3.5$	Moderate level
$3.5 < X \leq 5.0$	High level

Results and Discussion

Demographic information
The research information obtained through 100 structured questionnaires. First section of the questionnaire shows the demographic information of respondents such as gender, age.

Table 02 - Respondent's demographic profile

Variables		Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	55
	Female	45
Age	20-24	63
	>25	37
	Faculty of Commerce & Management	17
	Faculty of Arts & Culture	16
	Faculty of Agriculture	17
Faculty Institution	Faculty of Health-Care Sciences	16
	Faculty of Science	17
	Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetics studies	17
N= 100		

Gender
According the above table - 02   55 percentage students are male.

Age
The above table shows among the total population 63 percentage lay under the ages between 20 to 24 years, and student's performance regarding the online social network is highly used by the age group of 20 to 24 than other age category. However, 37 percentages of students fall under the age group of more than of age 25 years.

Faculty institution
Among the 100 respondents, 17 percentages of the respondents were found in Faculty of Commerce & Management, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of science, and Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetics Studies, rest of the faculties represent 16 percentage.
Behaviour and preferences with regard to Online Social Network information

Information related to OSN mostly engage, how often they use, where they access, the purpose of using are as follows:

Table 03 - Respondent's Behaviour and preferences with regard to Online Social Network sites information based on the researchers' analysis

Variables		Percentage (%)
Types of OSNS engage	YouTube	77
	Face book	98
	Twitter	36
	LinkedIn	12
	Other online social networks	08
Where do you accesses	From home (PC)	81
	At internet cafes	9
	On cell phone	89
Time spent on online social network sites	Less than 2 hours	14
	2-4 hours	16
	4-6 hours	40
	More than 6 hours	30

Types of OSNS engage
When investigating the engagement with Online Social Networks sites, results showed that higher level of using OSN sites are face book and YouTube. Those who did visit these sites 98% and 77% whereas 2% and 23 % of the respondents did not visit at YouTube and face book. Engagement of other Online Social Network is at very low level (8%) and most of the students have no knowledge about other Online Social Network for example, whats app, and Skype.

Sources to access the Online Social Networks Sites
The respondents engaged in OSN more often from cell phones, indicating that these visits were most likely done during office hours; or from home, Internet cafes or via their mobile phones. The results showed that 81% of the respondents visited OSN sites from home, the other options proved to be the less popular, with 89% of respondents who indicated that they visited OSN sites via their mobile phones and of 9% respondents who accessed these sites from Internet cafe.

Time spent on online social network sites (week)
The survey next aimed at establishing respondents time spent on online social networking sites (per week). Most of the students spent 4-6 hours (40%) and 30 % of students spent on More than 6 hours, and of 14 % respondents spend 2-4 hours. The other options proved to be less popular with 14% of respondents who indicated that they are spent on online social networking sites is less than 2 hours per day.

Research Information
The findings of the study show that the use of social networks websites among bachelor students is applied to a great extent of Eastern University, Sri Lanka (mean score is 4.0375). This serves as an indicator on the importance of the use of social networks websites and the essential role that they play in enhancing the students' academic performance. Furthermore,

the study reveals that academic performance itself is applied to a great extent at Eastern University, Sri Lanka in which the mean score is 4.133. This high level of presentation denotes a positive attitude regarding students' academic performance. This strongly advocates that Eastern University, Sri Lanka is currently engaging in information technology and mobile application activities with their students.

Table 04: Mean and standard deviation of the study's variables

Type of Variable	Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Independent	Use of social networks websites	4.03	.55076
Dependent	Academic performance	4.13	.57459

Table 5: Mean and standard deviation for the use of social networks websites

Usage of social networks websites	Mean	Std. Dev
Social networking is useful to me as a student.	3.87	0.965
OSN facilitate to interact and engage with each other through a web presence, rather than meet the people in person. Students reported that OSNs is better for Navigation and search. Students learn more using OSNs	3.45	0.879
I can able to give and receive information through OSNs rapidly.	3.54	0.965
I can access from digital device such as a personal computer, a smart phone, a tablet or a laptop for easiest usage from anywhere at anytime	3.85	0.841
I use online social networking sites for professional activities (searching for job).	3.54	0.922
I know the most important concepts and facts relating to social networks communications have improved.	3.76	0.821
I use social networking sites for updating profile information's.	3.57	0.864

Table 6 : Mean and standard deviation for academic performance

Academic performance of social networks websites	Mean	Std. Dev
The usage of OSNs is useful in higher educational institutions, because they help in various method of learning applications.	3.56	0.943
Finishing my academic group tasks is easier through Online Social networking site.	3.34	1.100

Social networking site is helpful in my studies because I can receive announcements regarding assignment, exams and from my colleagues on time.	3.56	0.965
Using OSNs improves my discussion ability and get more knowledge.	3.89	0.821
I use OSNs to facilitate academic activities and coordinate with friends exchange learning materials.	3.79	0.945
I can develop my reading writing skills and knowledge in the use of social networking sites.	3.83	0.863

Relationship between the use of social networks websites and academic performance

The correlation analysis is initially carried out to explore the linear use of social networks websites and the academic performance of students. Results indicate that there is statistically linear significant and positive relationship ($r = 0.815$, $p <0.01$) between the use of social networks websites and academic performance (Table 8).Thereby, accept the Hypothesis 1 (H1), the use of social networks websites significantly influences on academic performance of the students of Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

Table 9 : Correlation between use of social networks websites and academic performance

Pearson Correlation: r	0.815**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
(Source: Survey Data)

Regression analysis between the use of social networks websites and academic performance of students

Regression analysis indicates that the independent variable, use of social networks websites, (significant level 0.01) explains 81% of the variability of the dependent variable, such as academic performance of student's community.

Table 9: Simple Regression between use of social networks websites and academic performance of students

variables	R^2	Sig
use of social networks websites	0.814	0.001

(Source: Survey Data)

Conclusion

The primary motivation of this research is to exam the relationship between the use of social networks sites and the student's academic performance. The population of this study consists of undergraduates from six faculties such as Faculty of Commerce & Management, Faculty of Arts & Culture, Faculty of Agriculture, Faculty of Health-Care sciences, Faculty of Science, and Swami Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetics Studies Eastern University, Sri Lanka. After analysing the respondent's demographic profile, it is revealed that they are typically males and most of them are laid ages between 20 – 24 years. Results also show that they are using Face book heavily and 98 percent of students are spending 4- 6 hours per day, also most of the students access the online social network through their mobile phones. The main finding of this study is direct and significant impact of the usage of online social networks on the student's academic performance. This findings support to the hypothesis of this study.

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