



## **The Effects of Social Media on Pharmacy Students' Academic Performances**

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### **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author NJA designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors ASA and FZA managed the analyses of the study. Author NJA managed the literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** The use of social media by students helps to have access to basic information as quick as possible but numerous universities and schools around the world restrict the access to social networks within its buildings to help students to concentrate on their studies.

**Aim:** The aim of this article is to assess the impact of social media on academic performance of pharmacy students.

**Methodology:** The present study includes gathering data from students through a survey research design to determine the effect of social media usage on their academic performance. The survey was adapted from a previous study and after that it is converted to online Google Form.

**Results:** Most of the participants in the present study said that their academic achievement is excellent (41.67%) or very good (41.67%). The majority of the students agree that the use of social media is useful in educational institutions, social media can be used to arrange group discussions with the experts and that it can be used to fix an appointment with other subject experts. The majority of the students also agree that they can receive announcements from lecturers and faculty using social media.

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**Conclusion:** The majority of the students feel that social media affect their academic performance positively and about half of them feel that social media affect their performance negatively. It is important to increase their awareness about the importance of regulating social media usage.

*Keywords: Academic performances; effects; negative; positive; social media.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Internet use has had an unbelievable effect on social interaction among people. Internet discovery has empowered social media to gain wider appropriateness and usability and is also becoming the most important tool for communication among students, particularly at the higher level of education [1]. Modern technology is helping people to be better informed by accessing information about anything at anytime and anywhere [2]. People have revealed that the Internet can be used to connect with other people for business or commercial purposes, to bring back old friends and long lost relatives or to make new friends.

The latest example of new communication technology that is commonly used by students is social media, also known as Social Networking Sites [3]. Anybody can use social media to interact with other persons online such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Blog. Hence, using social media enable us to create online presence very easily as signing up for Twitter and Facebook account, consequently create our own content on the web within several minutes [4].

Moreover, social media also promote communication among stakeholders within the educational environment and also support internet learning [5]. Furthermore, social media is an effective tool in sharing personal academic interests, conducting research, creating groups meant for academic purposes and in improving e-textbook functions [6].

Bamigboye and Olusesan reported that social media use in universities has many advantages include improving motivation, enhancing relationship, developing collaboration abilities and offering personalized course material [7]. Although the use of social media by students helps to have access to basic information as quick as possible [8], numerous universities and schools around the world restrict the access to social networks within its buildings to help students to concentrate on their studies [9]. The aim of this article is to assess the impact of social

media on academic performance of pharmacy students.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The present study includes gathering data from students through a survey research design to determine the effect of social media usage on their academic performance. The survey was adapted from a previous study [3].

The survey questionnaire contains clear and simple questions that enable the respondents to provide accurate information. The survey was translated to Arabic language and after that it was validated and converted to online Google Form and then the link was sent to the students.

Pharmacy students were included in the study. The exclusion criteria include students in other colleges and students who refuse to participate. Moreover, all of the incomplete surveys were excluded.

The data were collected and analyzed by excel software and the data were represented by numbers and percentages.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey was completed by 60 students, most of them were females (71.67%). Only 15% of them aged 25 or more. Table 1 shows the personal data of the students.

Most of the participants in the present study said that their academic achievement is excellent (41.67%) or very good (41.67%). The majority of the students agree that the use of social media is useful in educational institutions, social media can be used to arrange group discussions with the experts, it can be used to fix an appointment with other subject experts. The majority of them also agree that students can receive announcements from lecturers and faculty using social media. Moreover, most of the students said that students can discuss their assignments with friends using social media, using social media improves the interaction with classmates, lecturers and other subject experts and that

social media facilitate the academic activities and coordinate with others. Generally, most of the students reported a positive effect of social media in their academic performance. Positive effect of social media on the academic performances of students is shown in Table 2.

Similar to the result of our study, Sobaih and Moustafa claimed that social media has an unlimited possibility to be exploited as an idea and information platform for academic-related purposes since students already use these networks [10]. Moreover, Lambic asserted that the frequency of use of Facebook for educational purposes have positive effect on students' academic performance [11].

Ahmed and Qazi reported that social network sites promotes communications between students and teachers [12]. Fishman et al. [13] indicated that through various social media tools, college students create marvelous volume of writings [13]. This was consistent with the findings of Boahene et al. [1], who revealed that social media usage for educational purposes positively related to academic performance. It also demonstrated that the use of social media can negatively affect academic performance [1]. Lahiry et al. [14] stated that nearly two-thirds of the students said that social networking has a positive (improved) impact on academic performance [14]. Furthermore, numerous previous studies suggested that Facebook usage for educational purposes have a positive effect on academic performance [15-18]. Badri et al. [19] informed that there are some benefits from using social media networks such as sharing information and ideas and improving reading skills but its misuse could affect the academic life of the students and their academic performance [19].

About 52% of the students in the present study reported that social media influence the

academic performance of students negatively, because they distract from the students' studies. Nearly 39% of them said that using social media require spending money and are wastage of time. Approximately 75% of them said that addiction to social media is problematic issue that affects the students' academic life. Moreover, more than 53% of the students have a problem in concentrating on study knowing that student can play online games and visit these sites just by logging into them but only 30% of them reported a drop in their academic performance after using social media. Only 16.67% of them said that social network sites can't be used for education. The negative effect of social media on the academic performances of students is shown in Table 3.

Banquil et al. [20] established a decrease in the academic performance and grades of students, because of their participation in social media network so there is no enough time for their studies [20]. Kirschner and Karpinski recognized that Facebook users averagely spend fewer hours per week studying than non-users of Facebook and this caused lower grade point averages [21]. Additionally, a study by Junco established that time spent on Facebook had a strong and significant adverse correlation with overall grade point average [22]. Jacobson and Forste [23]; Yeboah and Ewur [24] perceived that social media such as WhatsApp usage has a negative effect on academic performance.

Findings from Tayo et al. [25] study indicated that the undergraduate students surveyed spend an average of 2 to 3 hours daily on social media platforms; which may have an impact of distraction and addiction to social media platforms [25]. Moreover, Oberiri postulated that students who spend more time on social media are likely to perform poorly in their academic activities than those who do not [26].

**Table 1. Students' personal data**

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	17	28.33%
	Female	43	71.67%
Ages of respondents	18- 20	29	48.33%
	21-25	22	36.67%
	25-above	9	15.00%
Academic Achievement of Students	Excellent	25	41.67%
	Very good	25	41.67%
	Good	3	5.00%
	Medium	7	11.67%

**Table 2. Positive effect of social media on the academic performances of students**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
The usage of social media is useful in educational institutions, because they are an effective communication application	Strongly agree	24	40.00%
	Agree	26	43.33%
	Neutral	6	10.00%
	Disagree	3	5.00%
	Strongly disagree	1	1.67%
Group discussions can be arranged with the experts using social media.	Strongly agree	15	25.00%
	Agree	33	55%
	Neutral	10	16.67%
	Disagree	1	1.67%
	Strongly disagree	1	1.67%
An appointment can be fixed with other subject experts through social media.	Strongly agree	17	28.33%
	Agree	30	50.00%
	Neutral	10	16.67%
	Disagree	2	3.33%
	Strongly disagree	1	1.67%
Social media site are helpful for the students' studies because students can receive announcements from lecturers and faculty	Strongly agree	22	36.67%
	Agree	20	33.33%
	Neutral	10	16.67%
	Disagree	4	6.67%
	Strongly disagree	4	6.67%
The social media help in the students' studies because the students can discuss their assignments with friends	Strongly agree	29	48.33%
	Agree	22	36.67%
	Neutral	5	8.33%
	Disagree	1	1.67%
	Strongly disagree	3	5.00%
Using social media improves the interaction with classmates, lecturers and other subject experts	Strongly agree	25	41.67%
	Agree	22	36.67%
	Neutral	8	13.33%
	Disagree	4	6.67%
	Strongly disagree	1	1.67%
Social media facilitate the academic activities and coordinate with others.	Strongly agree	27	45.00%
	Agree	19	31.67%
	Neutral	8	13.33%
	Disagree	4	6.67%
	Strongly disagree	2	3.33%

**Table 3. Negative effect of social media on the academic performances of students**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
These social media influence the academic performance of students negatively, because they distract from the students studies.	Strongly agree	13	21.67%
	Agree	18	30.00%
	Neutral	22	36.67%
	Disagree	6	10.00%
	Strongly disagree	1	1.67%
Using social media require spending money and are wastage of time and by this way it will affect the students' academic life.	Strongly agree	10	16.67%
	Agree	13	21.67%
	Neutral	14	23.33%
	Disagree	19	31.67%
	Strongly disagree	4	6.67%
Addiction to social media is problematic issue that affects the students' academic life.	Strongly agree	22	36.67%
	Agree	23	38.33%
	Neutral	11	18.33%
	Disagree	3	5.00%
	Strongly disagree	1	1.67%
I find it hard concentrating on study knowing that student can play online games and visit these sites just by logging into them.	Strongly agree	14	23.33%
	Agree	18	30.00%
	Neutral	14	23.33%
	Disagree	11	18.33%
	Strongly disagree	3	5.00%
I compare the students' grades before the students become engaged into these social media and after the student became involved. I see a drop in my academic performance.	Strongly agree	4	6.67%
	Agree	14	23.33%
	Neutral	15	25.00%
	Disagree	20	33.33%
	Strongly disagree	7	11.67%
Social Network Sites are personal/ social-can't be used for education.	Strongly agree	7	11.67%
	Agree	3	5.00%
	Neutral	11	18.33%
	Disagree	24	40.00%
	Strongly disagree	15	25.00%

Fumme et al. [27] found out that students' access to social media has a negative effect on their academic performance [27]. Kitsantas et al. [28] and Tang et al. [29] stated that the Negative effect of Social media may be because social networks can take students' attention away from educational purpose to other contents [28,29]. In order to increase the productivity of the students, it is important to minimize the time they spend engaging on social media activities as reported by Celestine and Nonyelum [30]. It is important also to enact strict rules and regulation to curtail the usage of social media 27 lectures and library sessions by the authorities in tertiary institutions as reported by Fumme et al. [28].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the majority of the students feel that social media affect their academic performance positively and about half of them feel that social media affect their performance negatively. It is important to increase the students' awareness about the importance of regulating social media usage. Moreover, educational interventions are required to promote practical education in technology usage and to help the students to keep under control their use of technology.

#### CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

#### ETHICAL APPROVAL

It is not applicable.

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#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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