

The Effect of Social Media on Students' Academic Performance

(A Case Study of Yangon University of Economics)

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ABSTRACT: This study was conducted with the objective of the effect of social media on students' academic performance at Yangon University of Economics. This study used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. It attempts to analyze the effect of social media on students' academic performance by applying uses and gratification theory. Primary data as well as secondary data are used in this study. Primary data was mainly collected from 105 students out of total population 150 master students using structured questionnaire with Five-Point Likert Scale to measure the effect of social media during the study period of September 2019. They are specialized in commerce, accounting, statistics, economics and population studies. Secondary data was acquired from the relevant books, articles, journals and internet websites. This collected primary data was analyzed using description means and regression analysis. As part of the behaviors towards social media usage, most of respondents are female who are in the age of between 23-26. They use 1-2 hour for study and 2-5 hour for spending on social media. Using the regression analysis, three variables (nature of usage of social media, internet addiction and friends and people connection) are significant with academic performance while time appropriateness and perception by students are not significant. This study revealed that social media had a significant positive effect on students' academic performance at Yangon University of Economics. The results provide students, parents, educators and policy makers considerable insight about social media and point out the factors that effect on good academic performance. And it is also suggested for the university that it should provide more academic facilities to be utilized through social media, make students do assignment, case study presentation with applying student's social media usage fully thereby will lead to be brighter future for the university.

Key words: **social media, academic performance, uses and gratification theory.**

I. Introduction

Social media has become a common international trend which has spread across almost every corner of the world. Use of social media is increasing day by day with high rate in all over the world. Social media today consists of thousands of social media platforms all serving the same but slightly different purpose. With the explosion of social media platforms, people connected in seconds, the world becomes a village and friendship grow at global level, and information comes to our pockets at no cost. In the 21st century, the use of the Internet (including the use of social media) has globally become an integral part of humans' daily lives (Sorensen et al., 2014). One of the most common activities among children, adolescents, and emerging adults is the usage of social media nowadays. The aggressive adoption of social media among the younger generation, could be attributed to their up to date knowledge and comfort with the latest technology and the convenient accessibility to these social networking tools (Vorderer, 2016). Social media has both positive and negative effects. Kuppuswamy and Shankar (2010) reviewed that social network websites grab students' attention and then diverts it towards non-educational and inappropriate actions including useless chatting. The social media usage of American adults aged 18-29 years who represent the higher percentage of university students rose from 12 percent in 2005 to 90 percent in 2015 (Perrin, 2018). Also, in Myanmar, social media users are increasing. With the developments of technology, social media has become more and more popular among students and a major concern have arose over how the use of social media sites among university students affect their academic performance.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To identify students' behavior of using social media from Yangon University of Economics and
2. To analyze the effect of social media on students' academic performance.

II. Literature Review

Martin (2008) and Lusk (2010) defined social media as an aspect of the Internet which allows individuals and groups to create and publish online content, share the content, and interact about it through the use of Facebook, Skype, Blogs, MySpace, LinkedIn, Yahoo Messenger, Whatsapps and Twitter. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as "Internet based applications that allow the creation and exchange of content which is user generated". Social media is different from more traditional forms of media because it allows students or users to interact more closely with their peers, teachers, engage and comment on the course material both outside and inside the classroom environment (DeAndrea et al., 2012).

Academic performance means the final grade or result obtained by a student after different standardized course assessments or tests are undertaken in a course. It is denoted by the grade point average (GPA) or cumulative grade point average of a student (CGPA). The use of the objective measure of CGPA was appropriate in the study because it is the most common measure of academic performance/ability used in many higher education institutions around the world (Junco, 2015). At the university under study: the higher the CGPA, the better the academic performance. In this study, uses and gratification theory is applied to analyze the effect of social media on academic performance. Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) is an approach to understanding why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs. It discusses the effects of the media on people and explains how people use the media for their own need and get satisfied when their needs are fulfilled. The theory is closely related to human psychology of needs, motives and influence.

Influence of Social Media on Academic Performance

University educators propose that social media can have a positive influence on interaction, engagement, knowledge building, and sense of community (Rovai, 2001). Reynol Junco, Associate Professor at Lock haven University in Pennsylvania, in his study reported that there is correlation between the time spend on facebook and educational grades, more time spend leads to low academic grades and vice-verse. The use of social media negatively effects on students' academic performance. (Choney 2010). Furthermore, a study conducted by Karpinski and Duberstein (2009), of Ohio Dominican university on college students who use social network have significantly lower grade point average (GPAs) than those who do not. There is negative relationship between the use of various media, including mobile phones, and self-reported GPA among first year university students in the United States (Jocabsen and Forste, 2011). According to Karpinski (2009), social media users usually devote lesser time to their studies than nonusers and subsequently has lower GPAs. The American Educational Research Association conducted a research and declared at its annual conference in San Diego California (2009), that social media users study less and generate lower grades (Abaleta et al., 2014). According to Pasek, More and Hargittai (2009), the use of Facebook has a positive relationship with academic performance. This means that the students with higher grades tend to spend more of their time on Facebook.

III. Method of the Study

This study applied qualitative and quantitative research method. The sample for this study is drawn from the population of students in Yangon University of Economics. One hundred and five respondents are randomly selected which included students across different level of studies and

departments by using sample random sampling method. The data is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is collected from Yangon University of Economics through questionnaires and secondary data is acquired from the relevant books, articles, journals and internet websites. This study uses SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) to analyze the collected data for the findings of study by running of reliability test, correlation, regression that ascertain whether the respondents agree to social media factors have an effect on students' academic performance or not. Variance inflation factor (VIF) was calculated to find out whether multicollinearity among the dependent variables exist or not.

IV. Analysis and Results

This study selected academic master students of Yangon University of Economics because they are conferred bachelor degree by Yangon University of Economics and other master students are graduated from various universities. Moreover, this study just emphasizes the effect of social media on academic performance of Yangon University of Economics' students. Then, the reason of choosing students from Yangon University of Economics among students from higher education is that wireless internet system (wi-fi) can be accessed freely and conveniently in this university, students have academic discussion groups on social media to make presentation, do assignments and discuss about real business cases as business students than others. For the quantitative component of this study, and in order to get a representative sample covering population (150 students), 105 students (70%) are collected as sample through survey questionnaires by using sample random sampling method.

Table 2. shows the result of reliability test and it was found that all variables except perception by students have alpha value above 0.65. which shows good reliability. The Cronbach's Alpha for perception by students was a little bit low (0.604). But, Field (2005) said that psychological variable can be accepted even if they are above 0.5. Therefore, all of the variables are consistent and reliable in this study.

Table 2. Reliability Test for Construct Variables

Construct Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's alpha
Time Appropriateness	7	0.654
Nature of Usage	7	0.656
Internet Addiction	6	0.724
Friends and People Connection	7	0.792
Perception by Students	7	0.604

Source: Survey Data (2019)

In this study, the adjusted R square, F-value and t-value from SPSS output have been used to interpret the results of multiple regression analysis. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Effect of Social Media on Students' Academic Performance

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient		t	Sig	VIF
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	0.446	0.244	1.828	0.070	-
Time Appropriateness	-0.068	0.041	-1.651	0.102	1.470
Nature of Usage	0.713***	0.049	14.568	0.000	1.399
Internet Addiction	0.040*	0.022	1.824	0.071	1.205
Friends and people connection	0.236***	0.050	4.722	0.000	1.637
Perception by students	-0.018	0.018	-0.983	0.328	1.102
R ²	0.815				
Adjusted R ²	0.805				
F-value	86.943***				
Sig.	0.000				

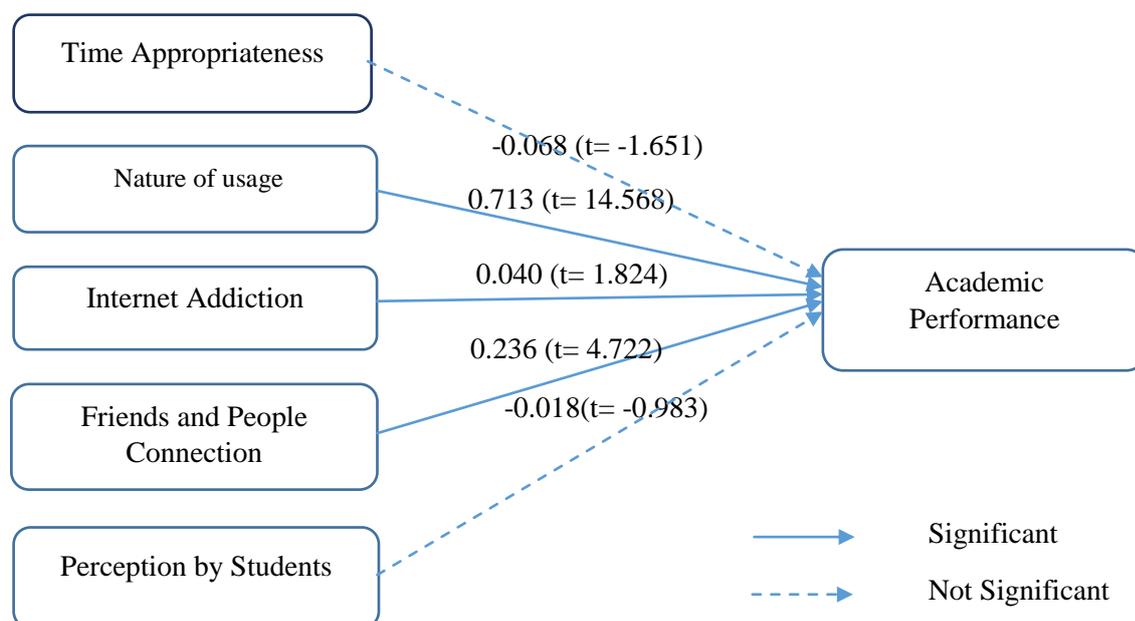
Source: Survey Data (2019)

Note: *** indicates that significant at 1 % level, ** indicates that significant at 5 % level and * indicates that significant at 10% level.

In this study, the dependent variable of the model is students' academic performance and the independent variable (predictors) are time appropriateness, nature of usage, internet addiction, friends and people connection and perception by students. As indicated by R square, the predictors explain 81.5% of variation in students' academic performance. The value of F test, overall significance of the model, is highly significant at 1percent level. This specified model can be said valid. The results of regression analysis indicate that the amount of academic performance is 0.446 when students have not used the social media. Practice of one additional unit of nature of usage can increase 0.713 times in academic performance. This finding is supported by Anne (2011) states that social media provides an

avenue for students to join to interesting groups that allow them to learn new skills in area of their choice. Increase in 0.04 times in academic performance can occur in one additional unit of internet addition. Practice of one additional unit of friends and people connection can cause increasing 0.236 times in academic performance. According to the results, it can be seen that three social media factors (nature of usage, internet addiction, friends and people connection) are essential for academic performance. The final results are described in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Results on Multiple Regression Analysis



Source: Survey Data (2019)

According to the results, there is a positive and significant influence of nature of usage with students' academic performance at 1 percent level which indicates that the increase of using social media to engage in activities regarding their academic life lead to the effect of good academic performance. Friends and people connections has a positive and significant influence on students' academic performance at 1 percent level because students can form study groups which facilitates better means through their studies. Also, lecturers can connect with students to provide and ready study material can be helpful and useful to students. There is also positive and significant relationship between internet addiction and students' academic performance at 10 percent level. This is because social media has become a part of their daily routine and there is nothing to drop their grades since engaged in social media. And also, addiction is not a challenge for their academic performance.

V. Conclusion

This study was carried out to analyze the effects of social media on the academic performance of the master students from Yangon University of Economics. In the previous studies, most researchers conducted the study about the effect of social media on undergraduate students' academic performance. The findings were that social media effect negatively on academic performance. It is found out that the differences between previous studies and current study. In the current study, social media effect positively on academic performance. Facebook, well-known social media in Myanmar, is widely used by majority of respondents. Majority of respondents have been using social media more than 5 years. Then, it is found that they spend more hours for social media than study and most of the respondents use social media for academic related purposes. Also, having friends and people connection can help most of respondents to discuss not only with their friends but lecturers as well and coordinate with group members from anywhere in the world. Based on the findings of this study, social media becomes an integral part of the student's full life with advancement in technology and increase in social media usage. This suggests that the more students use social media, the more their academic performance (GPA) is affected.

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