

The Impact of Social Media on Academic Performance of Sheikh Zayed University's Students

Naqibullah Atish

Researcher

ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 16Aug 2019

Keywords

ICT, Social Media, Learning, Interaction, Sheikh Zayed University.

*Corresponding Author

Email:naqib.atish[at]gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Information Technology plays an important role in all sectors of life including education. Afghan universities use variety of Information and Communication Technologies to get access to different learning resources and this way can improve quality of education in their classrooms.

Social media is an important part of information technology which provides great opportunities for instructors and students to communicate, share, and exchange views on different educational topics.

The aim of this research is to find the advantages and disadvantages of using social media for students during learning process in Sheikh Zayed University (SZU). The study found answers to the following questions: Does the university have necessary facilities such as electricity, ICTs, and the Internet? Does each department and faculty of the university have official pages in different Social Media networks? For what purpose the university students use Social Media?

The research results indicate that Sheikh Zayed University has the basic facilities such as electricity, ICTs and Internet. More departments and faculties of SZU have pages in popular social media networks and they are used for communication and changing information between instructors and students. About 50 percent of SZU students' use social media for learning and interaction with instructors and colleagues while the remaining percentile of students do not use social media due to different reasons such as poor ICT literacy skills and limited or not access to ICT tools.

1. Introduction

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are as important for modern society as electricity and water networks. Modern daily life would be absolutely unthinkable without technology. It reduces costs, improve processes, boost innovation, and increase productivity (Vervaart, 2016).

Social media are online technology platforms that help people to connect to each other. It is used to build relationship among people to communicate, study, read books, listen to music, look at photos, and much more. The most popular websites of social media users are Baidu, Facebook, Tieba, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, Viber, WeChat, What's App, Weibo, Wikia, and the associated messengers such as Facebook Messenger (Pivec, 2019). Actually, social media has simplified our lives and provide great opportunity for individual and institutions to connect and share with each other. Many universities and schools around the world encourage their students to use and interact with each other via social media and solve their assignments and projects, while some other institutions restricts access to social networking within its buildings. They think this way students can better concentrate on their studies (Zaidieh, 2012).

Taking these points in mind, I conducted research on the impact of social media and how it can affects academic performance of Sheikh Zayed University students.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To find which faculties of SZU have pages in Social

Media Networks.

2. To find the percentile of SZU students using Social Media.
3. To find for what purpose SZU students use Social Media.
4. To find how percentile social media is used for learning purpose.

3. Research Setting

Sheik Zayed University is one of the major public universities located in Khost province, southeastern part of Afghanistan. The university has 12 faculties, around 254 faculty members, and over 8000 students.

The study took place in all 12 faculties (Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary, Social Science, Computer Science, Language and Literature, Journalism, Economics, Political Science, Sharia, and Education) of Sheikh Zayed University.

4. Research Methodology

In order to obtain perspectives regarding the Impact of Social Media on Academic Performance of Sheikh Zayed University's Students, 360 paper based questionnaires were distributed to the students. I had the list of students and the participants were selected based on random selection.

5. Literature Review

A lot of researches have been conducted on the role of social media in higher education. Some research indicate that social media plays positive role in students learning while other research suggest that more usage of social media edict students and reduce their study time. Social networks provide platforms to make friends by utilizing inconsequential interactions, communications, or participation in social groups, and enable people to socially support one another (Hardy, 2018). Actually, social media plays vital role in content sharing among universities students and the rest of society (Hossain, 2019).

The study conducted by Teclehaimanot and his colleagues in 2011 suggest, those universities which use social media can better support their students; it helps them to better deal with challenges and succeed in their education careers. Similarly, Stollak and his colleagues conducted a research in 2019 on the effects of social media on learning, and the result suggest, students who uses social media continuously may study 1 to 5

hours a week while those students who do not use social media regularly may study 11 to 15 hours a week.

Another study conducted by Rezwani in 1980 on the impacts of social media on learning suggest, those students who have membership in academic social media networks have greatly advance their learning in comparison to those who do not have membership.

To sum up, the result of above researches suggests that usage of social media has great effects on learning. However, those students who use social media just for fun and entertainment may negatively affect their learning.

The Participants

In this research 360 students from 12 faculties of Sheikh Zayed University have participated. Majority of the participants were students of fourth year (seniors). It is important to mention that majority of participants were male. There are a small number of female students in the university of which a few participated in the study.

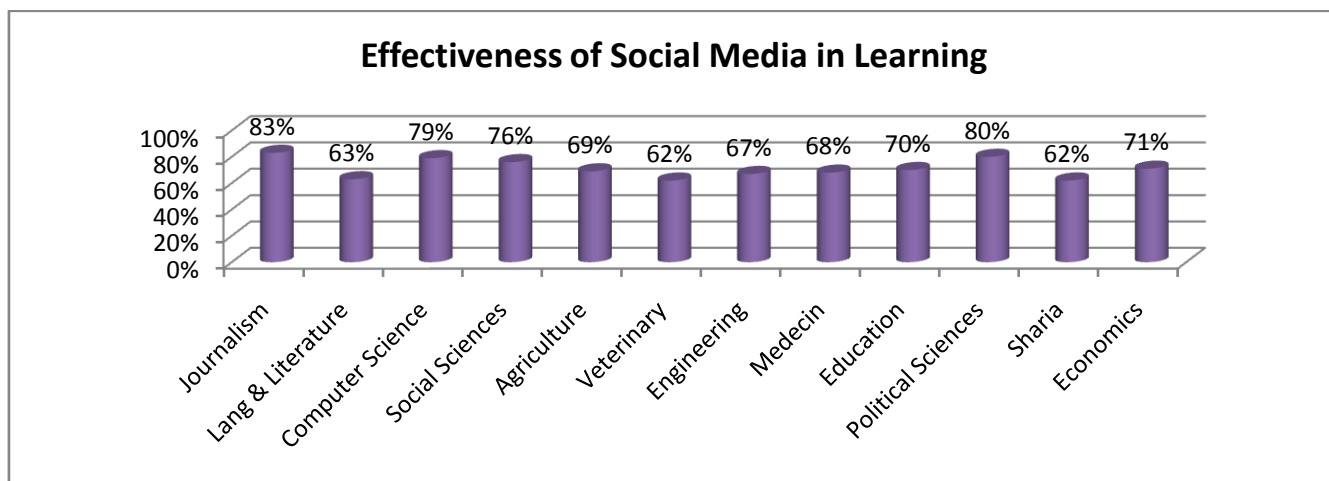
Questionnaire Participants (Sheikh Zayed University)						
No	Faculty	Number of Participants	Male	Female	3rd Year Students (Juniors)	4th Year Students (Seniors)
1	Medicine	30	27	3	10	20
2	Engineering	30	30	0	5	25
3	Agriculture	30	28	2	7	23
4	Veterinary	30	30	0	3	27
5	Social Science	30	28	2	8	22
6	Computer Science	30	30	0	12	18
7	Literature	30	30	0	14	16
8	Journalism	30	30	0	13	17
9	Economics	30	30	0	7	23
10	Political Science	30	30	0	11	19
11	Sharia	30	30	0	12	18
12	Education	30	30	0	10	20

Table 1:describes some characteristics of questionnaire participants (Sheikh Zayed University)

6. Discussion

Computer and information technology play crucial role in all aspect of human life including education and communication.

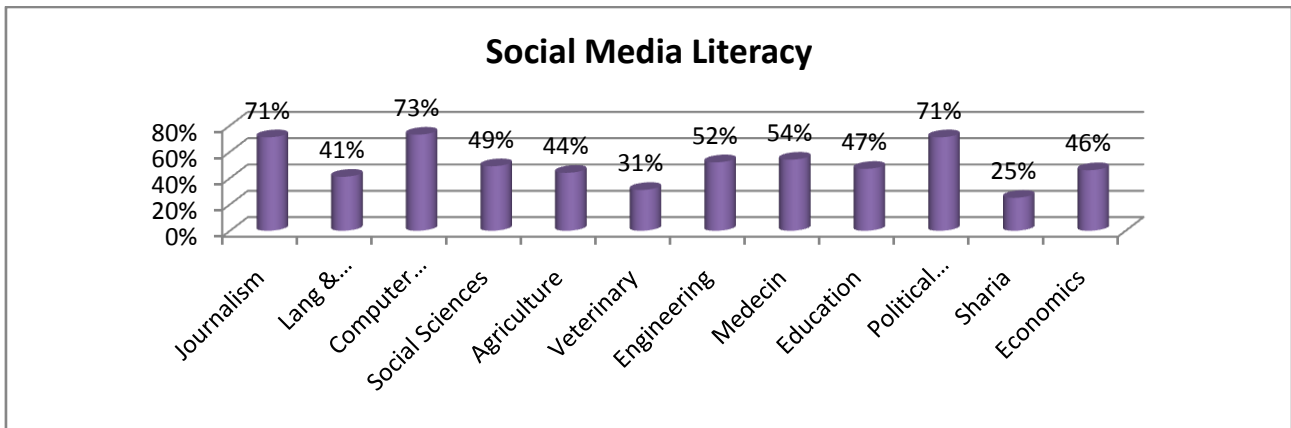
The first point found in this research is, all students of Sheikh Zayed University believe that social media plays effective role in their learning.



Graph 1: Students View about the Effectiveness of Social Media

The second point found in this research is that about 50 percent students use social media and they have decent literacy of using social media while the remaining percentile

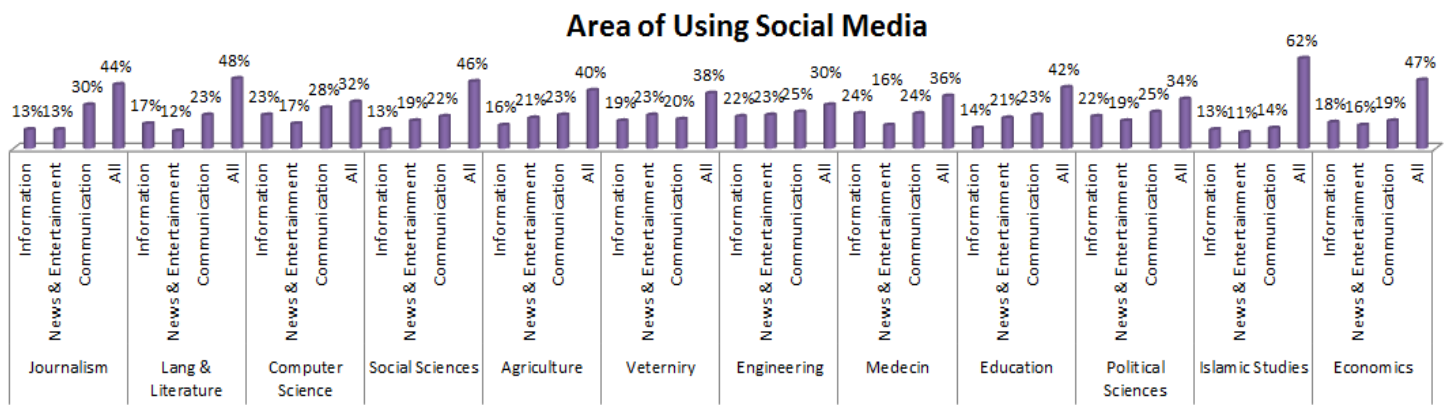
have poor social media literacy which caused them to not properly use social media during learning.



Graph2: Social Media Literacy

The third point found in this research is that students are using social media for different purposes. Some students use it for gaining new information, some other use itfor news and

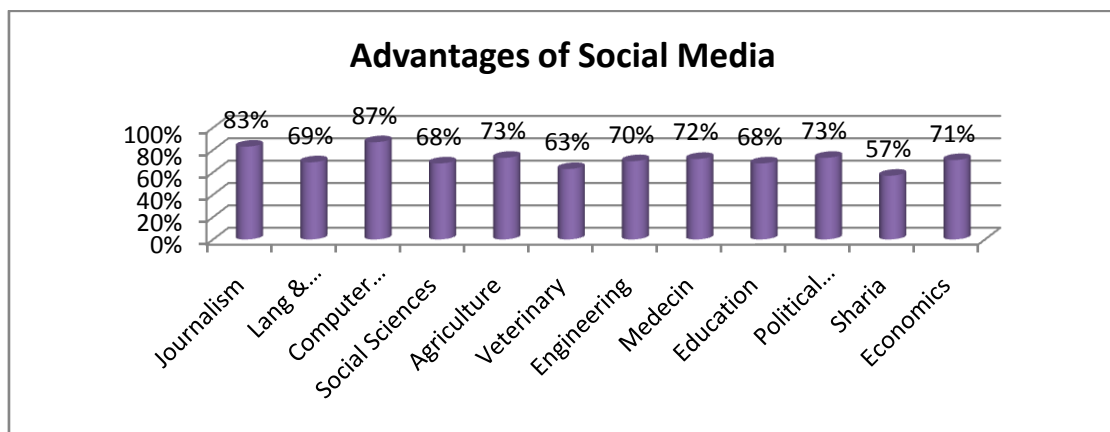
entertainment, and some other students use it for all stated purposes.



Graph 3: Purpose of Using Social Media

The last point found in this research is that students believe the advantages of social media are more than its disadvantages. They believe if social media is properly used, it

helps them to easily solve their educational problems, accelerate learning and gain quality education.



Graph4: Advantages of Social Media from students' perspective

7. Conclusion

The result of the research concluded as:

1. Majority students of Sheikh Zayed University have membership in different social media networks. The finding suggests that most students of Computer Science and Journalism Faculties use social media in comparison to students of other faculties.
2. Overall 50 percent of Sheikh Zayed University students use social media for different purposes such as communicating with their instructors and classmates, gaining new knowledge, news and entertainment.
3. Although students use social media for learning purposes, they struggle to find reliable academic social networks which help them to complete their assignments, projects and ultimately advance their learning. Therefore, students need decent training on this regard.

8. Suggestions

Following suggestions are listed in the consequence of conducted research. If the administrators and authority of Sheikh Zayed University consider these suggestions, chances are that students better and properly use social media which

will help them to advance their learning and pave way to receive quality education.

1. Each department should create comprehensive group pages in proper social media networks for each of its classes in order to improve cooperation and coordination between department and students, instructors and students and ultimately students and students to share views on different topics and help each other. This effort will help students to be in contact with each other, their departments, and instructors inside and outside of university.
2. Each faculty should create a decent page in any academic social network and ask faculty students to have membership of it. This effort will help faculty, departments, instructors and students to share faculty news and updates, help each other when needed and inform students from upcoming events which take place in the faculty.
3. The new comers also called freshmen students of all faculties need decent training on how to properly use social media for learning purpose. Therefore, each faculty administrators need to conduct proper training for them and help them on how to use academic social media networks for learning purposes.

Reference

1. Hardy, B.W. (2018). The moderating role of age in the relationship between social media use and mental well-being: An analysis of the 2016 General Social Survey.
2. Hossain, M.A. (2019). Nexus of Electronic Word-Of-Mouth to Social Networking Sites: A Sustainable Chatter of New Digital Social Media.
3. Pivec, M. (2019). Employment background influence on social media usage in the field of European project management and communication.
4. Rezwani, Ahmad. (1980). Linkage Between Social Media Usage and Students Learning.
5. Stollak, M, Vandenberg; Burklund, A. (2011). The impact of social networking usage on grades among college students. Proceeding of the ASBBS Annual Conference.
6. Teclehaimanot B, Hickman T. (2011). Student-Teacher Interaction on Facebook: What Students Find Appropriate. Tech Trends.
7. Vervaart, Peter. (2016). Role of Social Media and the Internet in Education.
8. Zaidieh, Ashraf. (2012). The Use of Social Networking in Education: Challenges and Opportunities. World of Computer Science and Information Technology Journal.