

STUDENT'S MOTIVES FOR UTILIZING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the student motives for utilizing SNSs in Dar Salaam Tanzania. The Research design used in this study was cross-sectional Descriptive research design. The target population was 7337 students and a sample of 356 was selected through Proportionate Random sampling. The Quantitative data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, tables, frequency, percentages and standard deviation. Connecting to classmates, Sending messages, opinions and updates, socializing, chatting and updating profile were some of most students' motives for using SNSs. Student should use SNSs with motives which can raise their academic achievement. Despite of using SNSs, students can still manage to be efficient enough in maintaining class achievement by meeting studies' targets and covering syllabus with little time devoted to studies. University students are recommended to make use of education based SNSs to enhance their academic achievement therefore they should restrict themselves from non-academic purposes, since it might have adverse impact in their academic achievement.

Keywords: Students, Motives, Social Networking Sites, Private Universities, Dar es Salaam Tanzania

INTRODUCTION

Social Networking is one of the topics being talked about by the University students in East Africa Countries. Awodele, Idowu, Anjorin, Adedire and Akpore (2009) undertook research in Nigeria in which they found that wikis, blogs, Really Simple Syndication feeds and social bookmarking were successfully being used to facilitate social networked learning. Students can use social media with motives of enhancing their education through, finding scientific research papers, tweeting famous conversations, attending lectures remotely, and Learning personal responsibility (Staffwriters, 2010). Researchers have fast realized the need to incorporate SNSs into the educational faculties as a resource to support the educational communications between students and faculties, even though institutions of higher learning have tried preventing students from accessing technologies which is of less importance to their academic achievements.

Adam and Nor (2010) in Malaysia argued that Majority of the respondents clearly indicated that SNSs was used to discuss assignments with a mean of (3.40), group discussions with a mean (3.70) and also to improve interaction between lecturers and classmates (3.30), and there were no significant differences in the students grades, before and after their involvement with SNSs whereby they believed that SNSs are not only for personal use but also suitable for education achievements. SNSs can be used for communicating with the faculty and university authority, communicating with lecturers and supervisors, making academic discussions with classmates and chatting with friends in respect to topics of educational interest. Sending and reading e-mails, reading news and posting research queries have become less important activities for Africans (Essoungou, 2010).

SNSs can permit the publication and sharing of information, self-learning, communication, access to other sources of information that support or even facilitate constructivist learning and collaborative learning, and contact with experts. Experts on Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Africa have challenged African universities and other learning institutions to adopt Web 2.0 technologies and use social media for teaching (Kasumuni, 2011). Kevin, Lori and Bethany (2010) argue that non-commercial, education-based SNSs, such as Ning in Education, have been recently shown to build communities of practice and facilitate social presence for students enrolled in distance education courses

RELATED LITERATURE

Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and other SNSs have potential to support social learning through community networking services such as wall posting, chatting, content sharing and tagging (Alexander, 2008). Wheeler and Yeomans (2008) argue that SNSs afford students unprecedented opportunities to share their ideas, celebrate their creativity and receive immediate feedback from fellow students. SNSs provide a forum for students and faculty to communicate informally about both educational and personal issues (Cao et al., 2012). Cao, Pauleen and Bathurst (2012) during study of Chinese international students in New Zealand opines student motives to SNSs range from socializing with existing friends or making new ones, exchanging information and opinions, and joining communities.

Croft (2009) states that students motives to SNSs includes: Connecting with Students in their zone, Post online lectures, create interest groups, access online libraries, post class notes, make announcements, schedule events, brainstorm, share Files, tag Books and also homework help. Yohannis and Sastramihardja (2009) assert that on SNSs, users do so many deviant behaviours, like surfing pornography, racial activities, predator to some users, and creating fake profiles. Students are increasingly utilizing these social networks for friends' news feeds, personal updates, events and activities, notes, and messages (Tham and Ahmed, 2011).

Aghazamani (2010) found that friendship was the most favorite motive among male users (p -value=0.8883) and also among undergraduate students comparing it to graduate students (p -value=0.2045).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design used in this study was cross-sectional Descriptive research design to show students motives for utilizing SNSs in private universities.

Population, Sample Size, Sampling Procedure

Private university students which focused on both undergraduate and post graduate students from private universities within Dar es Salaam Tanzania, was the research population of this study of which the target population was 7337 students.

According to Morgan et al., (1970) model, the sample size of this study was 364 as shown in the Table no 1. This was due to availability and distribution of respondents.

Proportionate Random sampling was used to get the sample from population meaning that if population is more, also sample should be more.

Table 1. Sample Size of the Study

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Sample</i>
Tumaini University Dar es Salaam College (TUDARCO)	3177	158
Kampala International University Dar es Salaam College KIU Students	2566	127
International Medical and Technological University Students	988	49
Hubert Kairuki Memorial University Students	492	24
Agha Khan University Students	114	6
Total	7337	364

Source: Field Data (2012)

Instruments

The research instrument which was used in this study was self designed questionnaire. The researcher used this instrument because it was cheap to use because of many respondents, and didn't require as much effort from the researcher as verbal or telephone surveys, and often had standardized answers that made it simple to compile data therefore giving a convenient way of gathering information from respondents. It was divided to four major parts which included section for personal information and sections to cater objective one, two and three. Questions used in questionnaires were both structured questions whereby the format of five-level Likert scale was used.

Validity of the Instrument

To ensure face content, my supervisor and other experts in the School of Post Graduate Studies scrutinized the research instrument and their suggestions were used to make the final copy of the questionnaire. Therefore the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represented the phenomena studied.

Reliability of the Instrument

Table 2. Reliability Case Processing Summary

Cases	<i>N</i>	%
	356	100.0
Valid	0	0
Excluded	356	100.0
Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's alpha)	0.68	
No of Items	50	

To test for reliability, as shown on Table 2, cronbach's alpha was used and a coefficient of 0.680 was used which is above 0.600 acceptance level. It was used to measure the internal consistency and it shows how closely related a variables were in this study.

Data Analysis

After the data was collected, researcher ensured his expectation regarding data characteristics and quality was met by evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of the data provided was done. The quantitative data collected basing on objective was analyzed using descriptive statistics like frequency, mean, tables, standard deviation and also percentages which was enabled by use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 17.0) software which assisted in data analysis. Resultant information was compiled into report which involved the examination, categorization, tabulation and presentation of results

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

From this study, 364 questionnaires were distributed and only 356 were used since 5 of them were not returned and 3 were not fully completed. The return rate of questionnaire was 97.80% which is greater than 95%.

Table 3. Multimedia used in Communication

<i>Multimedia</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Computer and Mobile Phone	107	30.0
Mobile Phone	164	46.0
Computer	85	23.9
Total	356	100.0

Source: Field data (2012)

The findings from Table 3 showed that majority of respondents (46%) who uses SNSs their main multimedia is mobile phones. Due to advance of Information Technology, internet enabled phones were available and many respondents could buy since they are cheaper compared to computers. Only (23.9%) of the respondents used computer only, but (30%) of respondents involved in the study researcher found they use both mobile phones and computers.

Table 4. SNS Accounts mostly used by Students

<i>Account Name</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Facebook	217	46.1
Twitter	73	15.5
Friendster	13	2.8
Badoo	46	9.7
Linekdin	11	2.3
MySpace	31	6.5
Sky Blog	41	8.7
Google+	38	8.0
Total	470	100

Source: Field data (2012)

From Table 4, the finding of the study indicated that Facebook was the most SNSs used. Majority of the respondents (46.1%) were found to prefer using Facebook over any other SNSs. This proved the tremendous growth and popularity of Facebook among private university students in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. This finding can strengthen the claim that Facebook is the most liked and most rapidly growing social networking site among private university students' users. Facebook has a number of attributes, beyond its incredible adoption and usage rates, that make it amenable to academic pursuits compared to other SNSs. Facebook does allow some degree of anonymity as it eliminates face-to-face, verbal interaction, providing students an outlet to communicate with their instructor or peers in a non-verbal sphere.

When responses were analyzed, It was found that Twitter usage was (15.5%) while linkedin (2.3%), this might be due to the fact that LinkedIn is not so much known by students in private universities around Dar es salaam, Tanzania. Respondents who use Badoo was 9.7%, (2.8%) of respondents use Friendster, (6.5%) use MySpace, (8.7%) use SkyBlog and (8%) of respondents use Google+. The researcher found that some of the respondents used more than one SNSs accounts and this increased total frequency. In the future, the recently released social network, Google+, may eventually overtake Facebook in popularity and usability. For now, however, Facebook remains the preferred social network of private university students.

Awodele et al. (2009) who undertook research in Nigeria they found that wikis, blogs, RSS feeds and social bookmarking which are examples of SNSs being utilized to facilitate social networked learning which are related to above SNSs used in this study.

Table 5. Student Motives of Utilizing SNSs

<i>To find scientific papers</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	42	11.8
Agree	109	30.6
Neutral	121	34.4
Disagree	59	16.6
Strongly Disagree	25	7.0
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>For tweeting famous conversation and communications</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	56	15.7
Agree	140	39.3
Neutral	101	28.4
Disagree	46	12.9
Strongly Disagree	13	3.7
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>To attend lectures remotely</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	52	14.3
Agree	91	25.6
Neutral	99	27.8
Disagree	73	20.5
Strongly Disagree	42	11.8
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>To learn personal responsibility</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	65	18.3
Agree	155	43.5

Neutral	89	25.0
Disagree	33	9.3
Strongly Disagree	14	3.9
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>To connect to my classmates</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	113	31.7
Agree	177	49.7
Neutral	46	12.9
Disagree	16	4.5
Strongly Disagree	4	1.1
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>To Send SMS, Opinions & Updates to my friends</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	160	44.9
Agree	159	44.7
Neutral	31	8.7
Disagree	3	0.8
Strongly Disagree	3	0.8
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>For friendship Gaining</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	131	36.8
Agree	151	42.4
Neutral	59	16.6
Disagree	10	2.8
Strongly Disagree	5	1.4
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>To socialize with friends</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	145	40.7
Agree	174	48.9
Neutral	28	7.9
Disagree	4	1.1
Strongly Disagree	5	1.4
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>To Chat and update my profile</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	123	34.6
Agree	146	41.0
Neutral	62	17.4
Disagree	16	4.5
Strongly Disagree	9	2.5
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>I use SNSs to kill time</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	34	9.6
Agree	73	20.5
Neutral	87	24.4
Disagree	86	24.2
Strongly Disagree	76	21.3
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0

<i>For Entertainment</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	106	29.8
Agree	146	41.0
Neutral	71	19.9
Disagree	23	6.5
Strongly Disagree	10	2.8
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>I use SNSs For Dating</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	31	8.7
Agree	43	12.1
Neutral	83	23.3
Disagree	100	28.1
Strongly Disagree	99	27.8
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0
<i>I use SNSs to express myself</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
Strongly Agree	72	20.2
Agree	128	36.0
Neutral	103	28.9
Disagree	26	7.3
Strongly Disagree	27	7.6
<i>Total</i>	356	100.0

Source: Field data (2012)

Table 5 above represents Student motives for utilizing SNSs on academic achievement. SNSs Motives is a major determinant of the reasons why students visits SNSs in their academic achievement as seen from the study. According to the findings of present research, it was found that majority who were the highest 89.9% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they use SNS to send SMS, opinions and updates and only 1.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed. Finding from this study also revealed that 89.6% of student users agreed and strongly agreed they used SNSs to socialize with friends and only 2.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed.

This concurred with Cao et al.,(2012) in study of Chinese international students in New Zealand who opined student motives to SNSs range from socializing with existing friends or making new ones, exchanging information and opinions, and joining communities. Most of respondents 81.4% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed they use SNS to connect to classmates but only 5.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed. In response to another query, researcher found that majority of students' users 70.8% agreed and strongly agreed to use SNSs for entertainment whereas 9.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed. Chatting and updating profile was another major finding in this study whereby 73.6% of student users agreed and strongly agreed with this query and only 7% disagreed and strongly disagreed.

The study revealed 34.4% were neutral about finding scientific papers by use of SNSs and 23.6% disagreed and strongly disagreed with the query even though it was opined by Staff writers (2010) that they can use SNS to find scientific papers and tweeting famous conversations. The researcher found that majority 55.9% disagreed and strongly disagreed they use SNSs for dating and only 20.8% of respondents who agreed and also strongly agreed with the query. When respondents were asked if they use SNS to kill time, 45.5% disagreed and strongly disagreed therefore less likely to use it for that purpose while 30.1% agreed and strongly agreed too.

Table 6. Interpretation of Mean

<i>Range</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
4.45 - 5.00	strongly agree
3.45 - 4.44	Agree
2.45 - 3.44	Undecided
1.45 - 2.44	Disagree
0.5 - 1.44	Strongly Disagree

Source: Author (2012)

Table 7. Student Motives, mean, interpretation and Standard deviation

<i>Parameters</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
To find scientific papers	3.2360	Undecided	1.08275
For tweeting famous conversation	3.5056	Agreed	1.02227
To attend lectures Remotely	3.1011	Undecided	1.22458
To learn personal responsibility	3.6292	Agreed	1.01128
To connect to classmates	4.0646	Agreed	.85170
To Send messages, opinions &updates	4.3202	Agreed	.73828
For friendship gaining	4.1039	Agreed	.87397
To Socialize with friends	4.2640	Agreed	.76762
To Chatting and update my profile	4.0056	Agreed	.96413
Killing time	2.7275	Undecided	1.26999
For entertainment	3.8848	Agreed	.99898
I use SNS For Dating	2.4579	Undecided	1.25414
I use SNS to express myself	3.5393	Agreed	1.12143

Source: Field data (2012)

As shown in Table 7, the researcher found that many students agreed they used SNSs to send messages, opinions and updates in their academic achievement which was the highest with a mean of 4.32 and standard of deviation was 0.73, which concurred with opinion by Cao et al., (2012) that SNSs provide a forum for students and faculty to communicate informally about both educational and personal issues. It was found from this study that Chatting and updating profile was also a major motive with a mean of 4.00 and Std. deviation of 0.96. Also respondents mostly use SNSs for friendship gaining with a mean of (4.10) and Std. Deviation of 0.87 which is in agreement with a study by Aghazamani (2010) where friendship was

named as most favorite motive, this study revealed that respondents also major motive was to Socialize with friends with a mean of 4.26, and standard deviation of 0.77.

Most respondents were undecided to use SNSs for dating during their academic achievement which had a lowest mean of 2.45 and a standard deviation of 1.25. It was found that respondents were undecided that they use SNSs to kill time with a low mean of 2.72 and standard deviation of 1.27.

Therefore dating and killing time seems not to be the major motive in students' academic achievement as it is shown from this study.

CONCLUSION

Dating and killing time seemed not to be the major motive in students' academic achievement as it was found from this study. This might be due to fear of answering this query or they mostly used SNSs for academic than non academic purpose. Connecting to classmates, attending lectures remotely, finding scientific papers was a major motive for using SNS by student users. This could be as a result of advancement on new technologies in these developing countries like Tanzania. The study revealed that students used these sites more for academic activities rather than for non-academic activities. It can be claimed that students were more inclined towards academic activities. Excessive usage of SNSs in non academic motives might be having adverse impacts on academic performance of the student users but actual results did not imply that therefore SNSs' usage did not affect their academic performance adversely and how students interacted with others, and on grades.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Therefore since university students tend to be mainly limited and focused on SNSs for social connections motives, the researcher recommends usage of above mentioned SNSs for connecting to classmates, attending lectures remotely, finding scientific papers, to learn personal responsibility, send messages, opinions and updates and this will enhance their academic achievement. Student might not be well versed with these SNSs since Tanzania is still in the stage of development whereby students have started to adopt these new technologies. For this purpose, mentoring should be done and students should be trained for the positive outcomes of using these sites. This in return would offer greater returns in shaping more learning and improved academic performance.

These findings are of immense importance to academicians, teachers, parents, management, practitioners and direct stakeholders in students' academic achievement to help students' users to attain their goals. To avoid failure, parents and teachers should keep monitoring students while using these sites and they must be provided with proper arrangements and training to attain their best from this technological invention.

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