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**THE IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON FEMALE STUDENT'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE****S.H. Nisansala Madushani Silva***MSW, National Institute of Social Development, PG Dip in Development Studies, University of Colombo, BSW, Alva's Collage**Research Assistant, Social Development, Policy Research and Publications Division, National Institute of Social Development*

**Abstract:** Social networking has become most used communication method to exchange information and to interact with each other. Facebook, Twitter, imo, viber, whatsapp are some most popular social network sites providing the electronic communication within society. The impact of social media can either be good or bad on school children and in their academic activities. This study investigated the effects of social media usage as a classroom management tool on students' achievement and their behavior in class. The study was conducted random sampling method in the K/Bandaranayaka Vidyalaya, Payagala Grama Niladhari Wasama, Kaluthara District. The sample size of 67 secondary school students was involved in the study through

questionnaire data gathering technique. Questionnaire was used for collecting data.

The study recommends among others that, students with mobile phones having internet facility should be encouraged to use it to supplement their research in the library rather than the usual chatting with friends all the time. Since the use of social media sites had affected the academic work of students negatively there is the urgent need for the introduction of students to the availability of novels and other information resources or materials that can help them academically.

**Key words:** Social Media, Female student's, Academic performance, Social Networking, Communication

## INTRODUCTION

Social media is the fastest growing web application in the 21st century. Over the years, there has been a drastic improvement in technology. Social media which is mainly for conveying information has essential among students. The growing trend in World Wide Web has increased knowledge acquisition, sharing and transfer of information has become easier than before. People from all walks of life can now easily share information, pictures and post both motivational thoughts on the social media and advert jobs. Social media simply refers to online tools created for the purpose of interaction and content sharing among people in the community. In its broader context, social media includes; web based technologies like YouTube (social video sharing service), text messaging such as Twitter, social networking services (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, WhatsApp).

Internet usage within educational settings is increasing around the world across different educational levels. Technology integration varies from simple usage of email communications between the students and the instructor to providing full courses in an online environment utilizing various forms of software.

The usage of social media by student has become a way of life and personal activities are made public. Many studies has been carried out on students usage of social media, its impact on their social behaviour, education, academic performance as well as the positive and negative impact, the factors that influence the usage, ethical usage and many more (Al-Sharq, Hashim&Kutbi, 2015; Wolf,Mingle & Adams, 2015). Khan (2012) conducted a research which focused on social media websites impact on students. Social media is becoming part of our society, changing social norms and culture (Al-Sharq, Hashim&Kutbi, 2015). Information and contents sharing is now a social desire (Wolf et al., 2015). It has changed how many people including students especially females students interact, communicate and socialize in the learning institutions. The new media as mostly called provides robust connectivity, communication and content sharing among students and rest of the society. Students can now participate on social discussions, posting comments, pictures, images, share ideas and many more. At this point, one can say that social media influences youth daily life path and particularly the students (Rajeev, 2015).

### **Social media impact on social life style**

The information age brought by Internet change has formed social or new media world. Social media has created alterative new world of information, communication, and interconnectivity order which cannot be activated using face-to-face method among the students (Al-Sharq et al., 2015; Chukwuere & Onyebukwa, 2017). The new world order has being. With Social media, pressing issues in the societies are discussed and given attention (Shabir et al., 2014). However, few years ago, high education institution students has engaged on excessive usage of social media which has coined a debate on whether the usage of social media has impacted on their social lifestyle, wellbeing and behavior (Al-Sharq et al., 2015). According to Al-Sharq et al.2015), the level of changes brought by social media has motivated tutors, students, education institutions and other stakeholders to improve their interactions and teaching and learning delivery technique. The adoption of social media into education and in life at large is attributed to it user-oriented features, cheap and easy to use and others (Chukwuere & Onyebukwa, 2017).

## OBJECTIVES

The general objective of the study was to find out the impact of social media on academic performance among students. The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

- To examine the impact of social media on academic performance among the students.
- To identify the benefits obtained from using the social media

## METHODOLOGY

This study deployed both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source was collected through questionnaire while the secondary data was also built using literature study. The study involved random sampling method in the K/Bandaranayaka Vidyalaya, Payagala Grama Niladhari Wasama, Kaluthara District. The sample size of 67 secondary school students was involved in the study through questionnaire data gathering technique. The descriptive research method was used in understanding and exploring the effects of social media on social lifestyle of female students.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research presents new empirical findings regarding social media usage, and it aimed to examine the effects of social media on students' learning behavior and social change.

What are the impacts of social media on social lifestyle of female students?

Table 1: Preferred social media application by female students

		Responses	
		No.of student	Percent (%)
Which of the following is your preferred kind of social media application?	WhatsApp	32	47.7
	Facebook	38	56.7
	Instagram	8	11.9
	YouTube	17	25.3
	Twitter	2	2.9
	Skype	3	4.4

(Source: Survey Data, 2017)

In accordance to Table 1, the finding indicates that 38 (56.7%) of the female students preferred using Facebook, 32 (47.7%) uses WhatsApp, while 8(11.9%) prefers Instagram and the list continue. However, according to study by Jha et al. (2016), Facebook is the most used social media application and it is used across different professions to connect friends and colleagues. But this study suggested Facebook to be the preferred social media application.

Table 2 : The social lifestyle constructs that affect social media most

		Response	
		No.of student	Percentage
In which of the following social lifestyle constructs do social media affect the most	Interest	40	59.7
	Culture	23	34.3
	Belief	15	22.38
	Opinion in life	34	50.7
	Behaviour	42	62.6
	Behavioural orientation (group and individual)	22	32.8
	Thought	36	53.7
	Social position	31	46.2

(Source: Survey Data, 2017)

There are different social lifestyle constructs that social media can impact on. Table 2 presents those constructs. According to Al-Sharq et al. (2015), there is an on-going debate on whether social media impacts social lifestyle, well-being and on the users behaviour. Table 2 presents findings which indicates 42 (62.6%) of the participants suggests that social media impacts their Behaviour, Opinion in life 34 (50.7%), Behavioral orientation (group and individual) 22 (32.8%), Interest 40 (59.7%), Social position 31 (46.2%), and many more. The findings shows that the presence of social media impacts female students behaviour which can lead to change in social behaviour, life opinion (opinion in life), social position, interest, thought, belief, culture, behavioural orientation (group and individual), action, association and norms. All these constructs are social lifestyle components of an individual. Then the finding suggests that social media has direct impact on them all.

Table 3 : Time spent on social media site per day

Response	No.of Students	Percentage
30 minutes to 1 hour	42	62.6
2 – 3 hours	14	20.9
4-5 hours	11	16.5
Total	67	100

(Source: Survey Data, 2017)

When respondents were asked how much time they spent on their social media sites, 42 of the respondents representing 62.6 % indicated that they spent thirty minutes to one hour, 14 respondents representing 20.9% spent between two to three hours and the last group of 11 respondents representing 16.5% said they spent between four to five hours a day on the social media sites. The study confirms Choney's (2010), assertion that due to the popularity of social media sites, economists and Professors are questioning whether grades of students would not be affected by how much time they spent on these sites. MehMood&Taswir,(2013), further corroborated this and state that the use of technology such as the internet is one of the most important factors that can influence educational performance of students positively or adversely.

Table 4: Why Students Use Social Media

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Chatting	22	32.8
Downloading music and Video	30	44.7
Academic Work	15	22.5
Total	67	100

(Source: Survey Data, 2017)

From Table 4, 22 respondents representing 32.8% said they use the social media to chat with friends, 30 representing 44.7% use it to download music and video and 22 respondents representing 32.8% use it for academic work. The analysis indicates an overwhelming majority of the respondents do not use the social media sites for academic work.

### **The attitude and perceptions of female students on social media impact on their social lifestyle**

Female students have a good attitude and perception on social media as an aid to teaching and learning (education) in our society today. Their attitude and perception also proves that social media is negatively affecting personal interaction and social lifestyle in the society. The finding also proves that female students believed that social media promotes immoral and unethical posting of videos, pictures and images among students. The posting sometimes leads to a display of personal contents and pictures online for the public to see. The study also found out that social media usage promotes and creates unnecessary information and confusion on the minds of female students. They are sometimes confused in determining between true and fake information and contents on social media sites and applications. The attitude and perception of female students proves that social media can impact positively, however, this impact heavily lays on effective usage.

The study revealed that majority of the respondents had mobile phones with internet facility and had knowledge of the existence of social media sites. As a result they visit their social media sites and spend between thirty minutes to three hours every day. In addition, the study revealed that the use of social media had affected academic performance of the respondents negatively and further confirmed that there was a strong positive relationship between the use of social media and academic performance.

This study was designed to evaluate the positive and negative effects of social media on the academic performances of students. The results, most of the students believed that social media are very useful tools in their studies. Accordingly, that can help them to school class related activities. The respondents described social media as educational tools in their studies. So, it is expected that social media positively affect students' academic performances. The results interestingly describe that group discussions can be arranged with the experts using social media, that is to improve their knowledge and information. Social networking sites are helpful for the students' studies because they can discuss their assignments with each other. However, the study described that the positive impacts of social networking sites on their academic performances.

The negative effect on students is that they are spending too much time on social sites, and much lesser time on socializing in person. In fact, there is a lack of body signals besides other nonverbal cues, including tone and inflection in case of social networking sites. Thus they cannot be considered

as an adequate replacement for any face-to-face communication. Not only this, students who are spending a great deal of time on these social networking sites are not able to communicate in person in an effective manner. These social media sites have become so popular in such a short time because the information gets published in a fast way.

Students who are using technology including the social networking sites on a regular basis tend to have more stomach aches, besides sleeping problems, as well as anxiety and depression. Such students also display more of narcissistic tendencies besides many other psychological disorders, including various antisocial behaviours as well as aggressive tendencies. Using social media require spending money and are wastage of time and by this way it will affect the students' academic life. Addiction to social media is problematic issue that affects the students' academic life.

Nowadays social media has become a new set of tools for involving young peoples. Many young people's day to day life is woven by the social media. Students are in conversation and communication with their friends and groups by using different media and devices every day. In past years it was seen that students are in touch with only friends and their groups in schools and colleges. But now a days youth are in contact not only with known friends but also with unknown people through social networking sites, instant messaging etc.

#### **Social media and the student's academic life**

Students do engaged in social media but the consequences differ from person to person. During the interview, majority of the respondents has shared their opinion that after they engaged in social media they lost interest in studies and they preferred to spent their time browsing net or chatting with friends. It also distracted them during their study hour and they lost concentration while studying. They mostly used smart phones to stay online and things become easier for them to stay online anytime and anywhere. It is also analyzed that students has spent so much of their time using the non- educational sites like facebook and it does have a good impact on their academic life. However, some have also mentioned that they used it as a way to relieve their tension and stress especially during exam. They also said that when they are tired of studying they get into those entertainment sites and it helps them to relax for sometimes and they get back to studies again. Though, for some it is having and effects for some it helps them a lot in their studies and they like social media.

#### **Social Work Practice Considerations**

Social workers have core values and principles related to human rights, social justice, integrity, competence, and respect to deploy in online space, but this alone is insufficient. Additionally, social workers must be fully informed of the complexities of online interactions and engage with the latest research in this field. Social workers Should help citizens become digitally and ethically literate, informing them of issues related to privacy, authorship, and so on, while educating them about the possible benefits and dangers of online interaction and promoting the rights of disempowered people in not only face-to-face interactions, but also online ones.

Social media and other online technologies have transformed communication between social workers and service users, with many practitioners engaging and working with clients through social networking sites. While there are numerous ethical issues associated with online practice related to confidentiality, dual relationships, and boundary crossing, there is lack of clarity about how to deal with such issues.

## **CONCLUSION**

As the technology is growing the social media has become the routine for each and every person, peoples are seen addicted with these technology every day. The study revealed that majority of the respondents had mobile phones with internet facility and had knowledge of the existence of social media sites. As a result they visit their social media sites and spend between thirty minutes to three hours every day. In addition, the study revealed that the use of social media had affected academic performance of the respondents negatively and further confirmed that there was a strong positive relationship between the use of social media and academic performance. This makes it necessary for students to be guided on how to use the media appropriately. This study recommends strong guidance and counselling programmes in schools to take the lead in curbing the negative effects of social media among students. Youth are seen in contact with these media daily. Social media has various merits but it also has some demerits which affect people negatively. False information can lead the education system to failure, in an organization wrong advertisement will affect the productivity, social media can abuse the society by invading on people's privacy, some useless blogs can influence youth that can become violent and can take some inappropriate actions. Use of social media is beneficial but should be used in a limited way without getting addicted.

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