

INNOVATIONS

Use of social media and its impacts on academic performance of female students in Ethiopian Higher Educations: the case of Jimma University

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to assess the impact of social media on the academic achievement of female students at Jimma University. To achieve this objective, the researchers employ descriptive research design that consider survey methods and partly exploratory research design. 493 female students were randomly selected based on their Grade point Average by categorizing (1.75-2.00, 2.00-3.00 and 3.00-4.00). A questionnaire was distributed among 493 female students at colleges and institutes of the university in order to explore the influence of social media on their academic performance. Grade point averages of these students were also reviewed from the registrar to identify the impact of social media on their academic performance. The Collected data was analyzed and presented in terms of frequency, percentage, and mean score of statements by using SPSS version 20.0 software. Correlation was also done to show the relationship between Social Media Network usage rate and the variables of Grade Point Average. The results of the study indicated that students who often accessed social media sites for not academic purpose had lower grade point averages than students who sometimes and rarely visited social media sites. On the basis of the findings, the researchers recommended that the university instructors should encourage female students on using social media sites for academic purpose through online discussion, online assignment submission, online examination and evaluation. This is important to shift the idea of students from using social media for non-academic purpose to academic issue.

Keywords: 1. social media usage 2. Impacts 3. Academic performance 4. Female students of the university 5. social media network

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Man is a social animal. He needs to interact and live in society. Personality of human being is directly or indirectly reflected from his/her society. For becoming an active member of this larger unit, one needs to have efficient communication skills from all points and edges.

Communication has developed since ages as civilization and development goes hand in hand. In 21st century the communication is faster, better and efficient. Internet has profoundly changed the human experience. Socialization is an important aspect of this technology. All internet users say one of their primary purposes for going online is for communication (Lenhart, A. & Madden, M. (2007). Socialization via the internet has become an increasingly important part of young adult life. The primary tools that enable socialization on internet are Social Networking Site and instant message. Social Networking Sites are the example of techno-oriented communication. Facebook, Friendster, Twitter, Tumblr, Yahoo Messenger, and Skype are examples of the new phenomenon of online social networking (Banquil, K. & Chua, N. A. (2009). It is through these sites that

people come in contact of their society members to seek mates, sharing knowledge, skills, culture, search for entertainment and participate in political spheres (Paul, J. A., Baker, H. M. & Cochran, J. D. (2012).

Social Network Service is also known as SNS. A SNS is an online service platform, or site that focuses on facilitating the building of social networks or social relations among people who, for example, share interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections (Paul, J. A., Baker, H. M. & Cochran, J. D. (2012). SNSs such as Facebook, Twitter works like this. Adolescents who become members of these SNSs communities, they will firstly get a personal profile which will show their personal information including the name, job, photo, relationship status, religion, hobbies and so on. Then networks of friends are made and other users can then click on their profiles and traverse ever broadening social networks (Madge, C., Meek, J., Wellens, J. & Hooley, T. (2009).

These facilities are used by people of all age groups, but the predominant Social networking site users are youth; three quarters of adult internet users under age 25 have a profile on these sites (University of New Hampshire (2009, December 29). The popularity of these sites is attracting more and more youth users. In 2005 only 8% of adult internet users had an online profile, today that number has quadrupled to 35%” (University of New Hampshire (2009, December 29). The excessive use of these sites not only have long lasting effect on psyche of students but also affects the physical, mental and social aspect of life. Sometimes these sites also affect the academic achievement of the student because they don't want to leave that particular aura and thus their concentration stands divided (Kennedy, G., Dalgarno, B., Bennet, S., Gray, K., Waycott, J., Judd, T., et al. (2009).

Besides the above mentioned view there is yet an arena of knowledge that holds the view that every student is unique in their own way; some are able to express themselves openly are termed as extroverts while others are shy in nature are called introverts. Social networking facilitates open communication, leading to enhanced information discovery and delivery (Hemmi, A., Bayne, S., & Land, R. (2009). In addition, it does not require one to voice out their opinions and ideas. Individuals are able to choose the preferred option and that is to communicate through social networks.

Online Social networks have gained a tremendous popularity among people all around the world, especially university students. As social media site is a vital part in today's university students, it has also a negative impact. Therefore; Social networking sites have brought both good and bad to the present generation. Social networking site has helped many students to acquire knowledge from one another over internet without necessarily have to meet physically (Jones, M. C., & Twidale, M. B. (2005). On the other hand, social networking sites have caused many problems (10). For instance many students have lost their interest in their studies as they spend most of the time on these sites (Jones, M. C., & Twidale, M. B. (2005) & Hamidet lop. (2011).

The time spent on online social networks was found to be heavily influenced by the attention span of the students. Specifically, we determined that the higher the attention span, the lower is the time spent on online social networks (Jones, M. C., &Twidale, M. B. (2005). Further, attention span was found to be highly correlated with characteristics that predict or influence student behavior, such as their perceptions about society's view of social networking, their likes and dislikes of online social networks, ease of use of Online social networks, etc. (Jones, M. C., &Twidale, M. B. (2005).

1.2. Statement of the problem

There are many researches highlighting that the use of social networking sites does not affect academic achievement adversely. Often students use social networking websites to discuss their academics issues formally and informally and also to interact with their instructor, teachers and professors (McLoughlin, C., & Lee, J. W. L. (2008). The University of New Hampshire agrees, and believes that current college students grew up in the technology era and social networking is now just a part of a student's daily routine. Their research show that 63% of heavy users received high grades, compared to 65% of light users' (University of New Hampshire (2009, December 29). The University of New Hampshire said that a majority of students use social networking for social connections and entertainment, but are also using it for education and professional reasons.

Although few researchers have examined the impact of social media on academic performance of students, they have failed to target on female students in higher learning institute in Ethiopia. As a country, improving the academic achievement of female students are the major issues and all the efforts and resources are engaged in to it. Government, non-government organizations and international partners all are giving their utmost effort to improve the academic achievement of female students and to assure quality of education. But, the effect of using social media on the academic achievement of university students, especially female students is on the bottom of their priority list. That's why there is no information and studies on the effect of using social media on academic achievement of university students in this country.

Studies have not been conducted so far on the impact of social media on the academic achievement of female students in higher education in Ethiopia. Hence, findings from this study will provide a starting point for university authorities and all concerned groups to identify the effect of social media on academic achievement of female students in higher education's and take appropriate measures. Moreover, this study would serve as baseline information for future intervention program on effect of social media on student academic achievement. Last but not least it will be helpful for higher education program planners to consider effect of social media on students' academic achievement in their priority education issues. Therefore, this study will be conducted to identify the effect of social media on academic achievement of female students at Jimma University.

1.2. Research Questions

- What type of social networking sites do the female students of Jimma University have access to?
- How often do the female students of Jimma University go online?
- How does the use of social media affect the academic performance of the female students of Jimma University?
- For what purpose do the female students of Jimma University used social media network?
- What impact does age, gender, education and social influence have on female students' on use of social media

1.3. General Objectives

The general objective of this study was to assess the impact of social media on the academic achievement of female students at Jimma University.

1.3.1. Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this study were:

- To identify the social networking websites accessed by female students' of Jimma University.
- To find out how often the female students of Jimma University go online.
- To identify and describe for what purpose female students use social media
- To determine correlation between the numbers of minutes that female students spent on SMN and their academic performance represented by (GPA)?
- To identify correlation between the time spent on SMN and the student's their age?
- To examining the relationship between the use of SMNs and students' academic performance related with interaction different variables

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Description of the Study Area

Jimma University (JU) is a public university located in Jimma, Ethiopia. It was established in December 1999 following the amalgamation of the Jimma College of Agriculture (founded in 1952) and the Jimma Institute of Health Sciences (founded in 1983). The university campus is located in the city of Jimma, situated around 352 kilometers southwest of Addis Ababa.

JU is Ethiopia's first innovative community-oriented education institution of higher learning with teaching centers for various programs and courses of study. The University consists of seven Colleges, one Institute and School of Graduate studies: namely; College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, College of Business & Economics, College of Natural Sciences, College of Health Sciences, College of Social Sciences & Humanities, College of Education and Behavioral Science, College of Law and Governance, Institute of Technology and School of Graduate Studies. It is recognized as the leading national university, as ranked first by the Federal Ministry of Education for five successive years (2000 - 2014). (www.ju.edu.et).

2.2. Research Design

Its University based study utilizes descriptive research design that consider survey methods and partly exploratory research design. By using this method the researchers are going to describe the existing impact of social media on female academic achievements at Jimma University from December, 2015- March 2016. The population of this study comprises of all female students from seven colleges & one institute registered at the university in academic calendar of

2014/2015. Fresh female students were excluded from this study since they have no CGPA during the study period. The sample in this study refers to 493 female students of Jimma University.

2.3. Participants of the study

It is important to have those members of the community who can provide the best information. The researchers have identified female students of the university as the participants of this study. Therefore; all 2nd and above year of study students were selected as a primary source of data for this study.

2.4. Sampling Technique/ Sample Size

The researchers used random sampling methods. Accordingly, 493 female students were taken randomly from all colleges & institute. In addition to this, the researchers were reviewed CGPA of randomly selected students by categorizing (1:75-2:00, 2:00-3:00 and 3:00-4:00). This is important to see the impacts that social media usage has on their CGPA.

2.5. Nature and Instruments of Data collection

To achieve the objective of this research, the researchers were used survey questionnaire measures academic performance, time spent online using Facebook. The questions are formed by Likert scale, interval options and yes or no questions. The research instrument was developed based on the Literature, existing survey and previous studies.

2.6. Data Analysis Procedure

Obtained data were checked for error and then data entry was completed and final data were analyzed by using SPSS Version 20.0 software. Tables, Mean, frequency percentages, & figures, were used in the presentation and analysis of the data generated for the study. Correlation was done to show the relation between SMN usage rate and the variables of CGPA and relation between SMN usage rate and the variables of age. Correlation coefficient at 99% confidence level was done to show relation between SMN Variables &SAP

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Relationship between Social Network Variables and Students Academic Performance

To study the relationship between use of social networks and students’ academic performance, we selected variables that can identify uses and gratification that the students draw from social networks. These variables show effects of social networks on students’ academic performance and the futuristic online and offline paradigms that can enhance teaching methodology.

Table 1: Descriptive Profile of the Respondents.

Variables	N (%)
Age	
20-23	325(65.9)
≥24	168(34.1)
College	
JUCAVM	60(12.2)
CHS	75(15.2)
JIT	67(13.6)
Low & Governance	45(9.1)
Natural Science	56(11.4)
Social science	70(14.2)

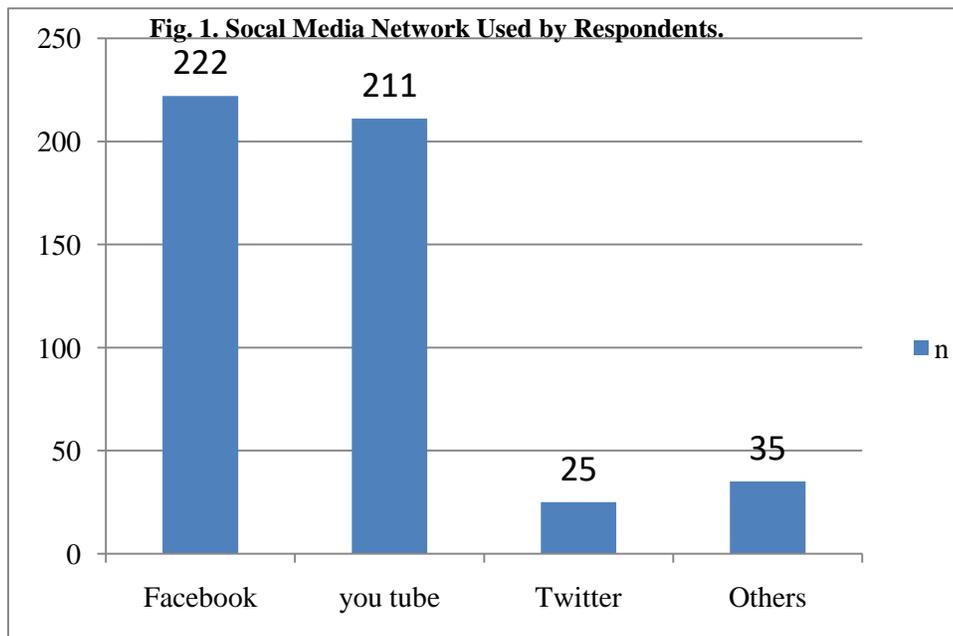
BECO	75(15.2)
Education & Behavioral Science	45(9.1)
Religion	
Muslim	117(23.8)
Orthodox	189(38.4)
Protestant	156(31.6)
*Others	31(6.2)
Year of Study	
2-4	373(75.7)
≥5	120(24.3)
Grade average point (GPA)	
1.75-2.0	39(7.8)
2.0-3.0	410(83.2)
3.0-4.0	44(9.0)

*others-Catholic, Jehovah & Tradition

The data above shows that the demographic information of students in this study.

3.2. Uses of SMN.

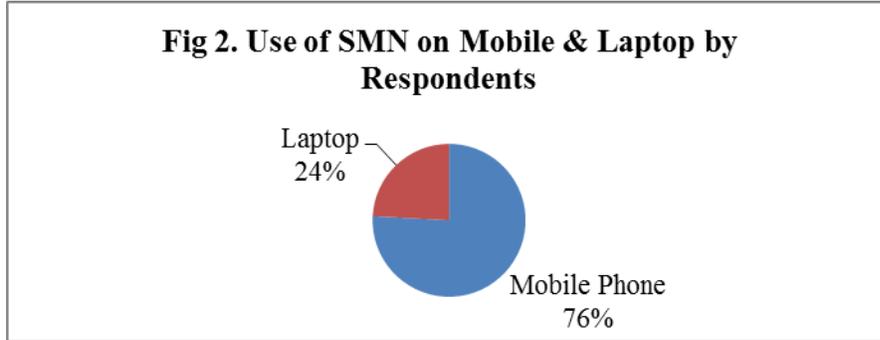
From a sample of 493 female students, we found that all the students used one or the other social networking site. The social networking sites that students used for academic purposes included YouTube, twitter and Facebook. Face book was the highest SMN used of all & twitter was the least used of all the websites.



Others include; messenger, Viber, Skype & what's APP

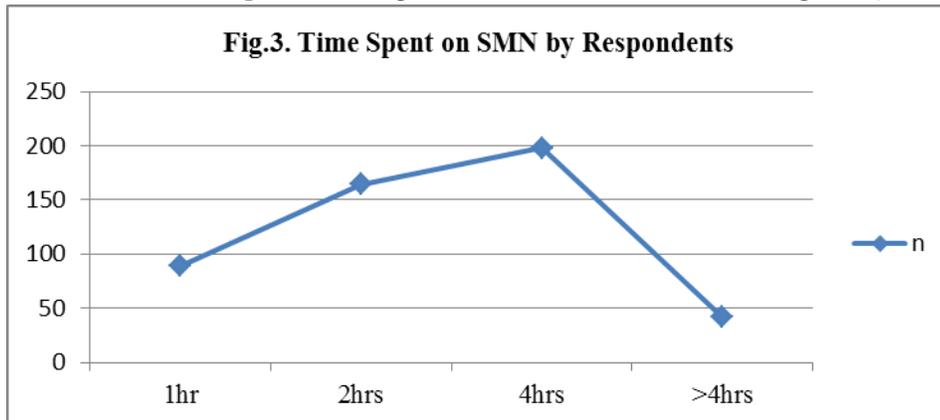
3.3. Use of SMN on Mobile Phones:

Seventy-six percent of the respondents reported that they used a social media networking site on phone. This increased the approachability and flexibility of being in touch. Smart features available on social media networks like reading RSS feeds, location tagging and status updates were popular uses of social network on mobile phone. These were not directly related to education (Fig 2).



3.4. Time Spent on SMN:

The respondents reported the number of hours they spent on social networks per day. 89(18.1%) of the respondents spent one hour, 164(33.3%) spent two hours per day and 198(40.2%) spent four hours. They were no respondents who spent zero hours on the social media networks. The consumption levels greater than four hours are the highest (see Fig 3).



The table below (table-2) shows that those students who are their CGPA range from 1.75:2:00 were often access social media than those who's their CGPA range 2:00-3:00 and 3:00-4:00 respectively. On the other hand, 46.14% of the total students who's their CGPA were 1:75-2:00 were often used while 1.81%, 2.63 and 0% was sometimes, rarely and never used social media site respectively.

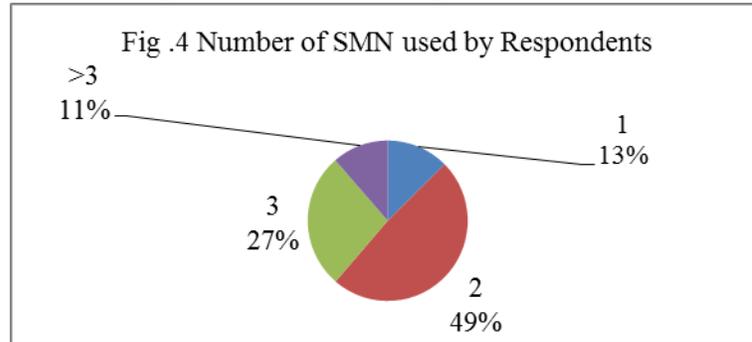
Table-2: frequency rate of social media access

How often do you access social media sites?						
What is your current CGPA range	CGPA range	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
	1:75-2:00		30(46.14)	5 (1.81)	4(2.63)	0

2:00-3:00	20 (30.76)	250 (90.58)	140 (92.11)	0	410
3:00-4:00	15 (23.10)	21 (7.61)	8(5.26)	0	44
Total	65 (100)	276(100)	152	0	493

3.5. Number of Social media Networking Sites Used:

The number of social media networks used by the students also varied.13% used only one social network, 49% used two, 27% used three, and 11% used more than social networks. The popularity of SMN cannot be ignored with 49 % using at least two social networks (Fig 4).



3.6. Purposes for which the students used social media network sites:

The next variable in this assessment was the purposes for which the students used social media network sites. The students were able to point out the different purposes for which they used the SMN. In Table- 3 we see that the highest score of 65% is for chatting& followed by 54% for downloading music /video. Only 32% is used for searching assignment/quizzes. Uploading music \ video, Blogging, Posting photos & Communication with teachers/class fellows was the least purpose used by the students (4%, 5%, 16%&18%) respectively.

Downloading music and videos were not only educational but consisted of several genres. The highest score revealed that the students used it for chatting. Downloading music/videos, posting photos and chatting can be categorized as entertainment use.

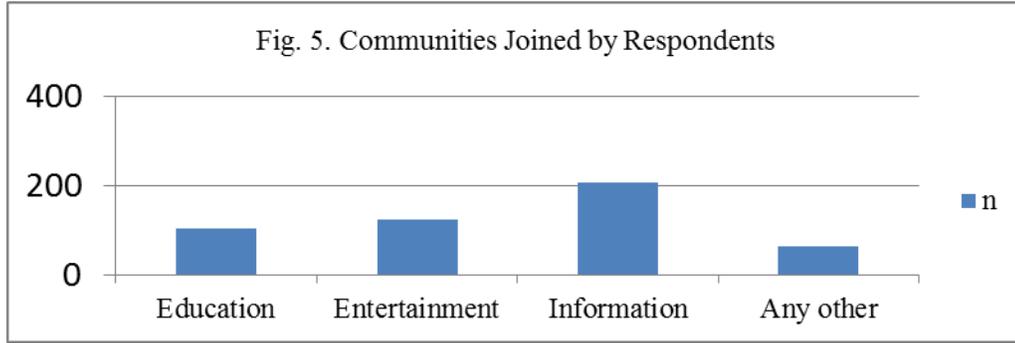
Table-3 purposes for which social network used

Purpose	Percentage (%)
Downloading music video	54%
Uploading music video	4%
Posting photos	16%
Chatting	65%
Blogging	5%
Communication with teachers/ class fellows	18%
Searching for new friends	20%
Searching for assignment/quizzes	32%
Any Others	12%

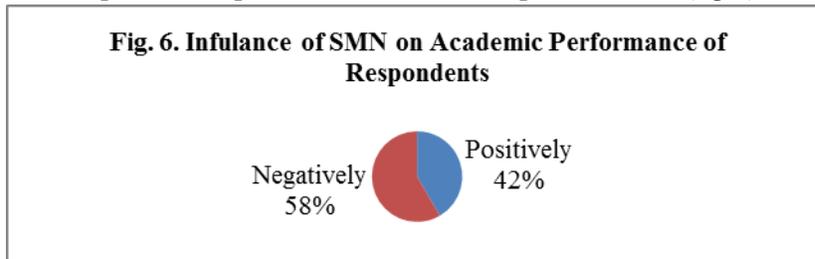
3.7. Community / Groups /Sharing

Nearly all respondents were members of a community or a group on social networks. The kind of communities they joined was for educational, entertainment, information and for any other uses. 102(20.7 %) used SMN for educational purposes, 122(24.7%) for entertainment, 207(41.9%) for Information and 62(12.6%) for any other use.

The maximum groups and communities joined by students were for information. The students chose groups that were related to their discipline and joined educational communities with which they shared common interests (Fig 5)



The students were asked the influence of using SMN on their academic performance. 58% of the respondents outline that using SMN has negative impact on their academic performance 42% outline using SMN has positive impact on their academic performance (fig.6).



3.8. Correlation between SMN usage rate and the variables of GPA

To calculate the magnitude of the relationships or correlations between the various variables the researcher examined the r values. As the value of r increases, the strength of the relationship between the two variables increases and vice versa.

The value of r usually ranges between -1 to 1 and could be either positive or negative. In fact, the sign of positive or negative means only directionality in this relationship and has no numeric value. If the sign of r is positive that means the increase in value of one variable leads to an increase in the value of the other one, whereas, the negative sign means that if the value of the first variable increases that means a decrease in the value of the other.

Besides, if the value of r is 0.8 or higher this means that a strong relationship exists between the two variables. If the value of r is between 0.4-0.7 it is considered a moderate relationship. But, if r is less than 0.4 the relationship is considered weak.

According to Table 4 below the correlation between (the times spent on SMN per week) and (most recent cumulative college GPA of the students) is a positive weak one. Therefore there is no statistically significant effect of time spent on SMN and students' academic performance represented in their GPA. These findings answer the major research question in this study.

Table 4: Correlation between SMN usage rate and the variables of GPA

		Sum Total of week hours Weeks +weekends in week	What is age?
Sum Total of week hours Weeks +weekends in week	Pearson Correlation sig(2-tailed) N	1 164	.082 .626 164
What is age?	Pearson Correlation sig(2-tailed) N	.082 .626 168	1 168

According to Table 5 below the correlation between (the times spent on SMN per week) and (age groups of the students studied) is a negative weak one. Therefore there is no statistically significant effect of students' age and time spent on SMN. These findings answer the research question in this study.

Table 5: Correlation between SMN usage rate and the variables of age

		Sum Total of week hours Weeks +weekends in week	What is most recent GPA
Sum Total of week hours Weeks +weekends in week	Pearson Correlation sig(2-tailed) N	1 164	.031 .762 164
What is most recent GPA	Pearson Correlation sig(2-tailed) N	.031 .762 44	1 44

3.9. Correlation between SMN Variables and SAP

The relationship between the student academic performance (SAP) with interactivity with peers (INT_P), interactivity with the teacher (INT_T), engagement (ENG) and collaborative learning (CL) were analyzed.

Table 6 shows the Pearson correlation coefficient at 99 % confidence level. The best correlation was found between the student academic performances (SAP) with engagement with correlation coefficient of 0.666. The letters INT-P stand for interactivity with peers, letters INT-T stand for interactivity with the teachers, letters ENG stand for engagement, letters CL stand for collaborative learning and letters SAP stand for students' academic performance.

Result of Pearson correlation shows that there is statistically significant positive relationship between interactivity with the teachers and interactivity with peers ($r = 0.554, P < 0.01$). Results demonstrate that relationship between these two construct is moderate and interactivity with the teachers and interactivity with peer's combination contributing moderately towards students' academic performance. Engagement correlation results with interactivity with peers ($r = 0.452, P < 0.01$) demonstrate moderate positive relationship, while engagement results with interactivity with the teachers ($r = 0.604, P < 0.01$) demonstrate positive relationship showing that these two construct are contributing moderately towards students' academic performance. Similarly, construct of collaborative learning correlation results with interactivity with peers ($r = .488, P < 0.10$), interactivity with the teachers ($r = .533, P < 0.10$) and engagement ($r = 0.557, P < 0.10$) demonstrate positive and significant relationship. These results highlight that collaborative learning relationship with interactivity with peers, interactivity with the teachers and the engagement, is contributing towards students' academic performance.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficient at 99 % Confidence Level.

	INT-P	INT-T	ENG	CL	SAP
	1				
INT-P	.554**	1			
INT-T	.452**	.604**	1		
ENG	.488**	.533**	.557**	1	
CL	.5622**	.572**	.666**	.632**	1
SAP					

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

While the dependent variable students' academic performance has positive and significant correlation with collaborative learning ($r = 0.632, P < 0.01$) and positive correlation with collaborative learning. Correlation results of students' academic performance with interactivity with peers ($r = 0.622, P < 0.01$); interactivity with the teachers ($r = 0.572, P < 0.01$); engagement ($r = 0.666, P < 0.01$) so the positive and significant correlation with engagement. These results highlight that students' academic performance relationship with interactivity with peers, interactivity with the teachers and the engagement, is contributing to improve students' academic performance.

The table 7 indicate that interactivity with peers positively and significantly with collaborative learning ($\beta_2 = 0.283, p < 0.05$) While support the interaction among the students may improve the students' academic performance through the collaborative learning. Interactivity with teachers positively and significantly with collaborative learning was ($\beta_3 = 0.126, p < 0.05$). The interaction between students and teachers found to be lower than interactivity with peers. The engagement also has positively and significantly with collaborative learning with standardized beta coefficients of 0.283. The standardized beta coefficient between the collaborative learning and students' academic performance found to be a positively and significantly with value of 0.164 at significant level less than 0.05.

In line with the outcome of this study to understand students' academic performance by using social media in higher education, the following have been discovered: To acquire a general satisfaction of social media since it encourages and facilitates student utilization of social media for collaborative learning, and boost the education and experience with a students. In terms of interactivity with peers on social media and acquired a higher percentage when it comes to students' academic performance at University since it influences it to be simple for student to go over questions along with other students through social media It is easy to networking with peers and interact with them because it is the same age, class and education level.

In terms of the students' academic performance with engagement acquired a typical percentage when it comes to academic performance of students at University since it provides coalition and sharing of knowledge in the class and library by using of social media any time. The collaborative learning with social media usage and acquired an average percentage when it comes to academic performance of students at University. Since it helps make the students feel confident enough to presenting the social media by collaborative between peers, teachers and engagement within the class.

Table 7: The standardized beta coefficients

Coefficients ^a			
Framework	Standardized	T	Sig.
	Beta		
CL (β_1)	.164	2.126	.026
INT_P (β_2)	.283	2.146	.041
INT_T (β_3)	.126	2.337	.081
ENG (β_4)	.283	2.754	.005
a. Dependent Variable: student academic performance (SAP)			
b. Predictors: (Constant), collaborative learning (CL)			
c. Predictors: (Constant), collaborative learning (CL), interactivity with peers (INT_P), Interactivity with the teacher (INT_T), engagement (ENG).			

Finally, in terms of the students' academic performance with interactivity with teachers of utilizing social media and acquired a Lowest percentage sometimes not allowed to communicate with teachers or shy students , but are good since it provides those more understanding form teachers, and academic achievement in education.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1. Conclusion

The study was conducted to examine the impact of social media on female students' academic achievement at Jimma University. Therefore; the study discovered that the use of social media had negatively affected academic performance of female students. The finding shows that there is a correlation between the students' academic performance and their usage of social media. Finally it revealed that the students tend to use social networks for social purposes than the academic ones in the university.

4.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers were strongly recommending that university instructors should encourage female students on using social media sites for academic purpose through online discussion on assignment, online examination, online paper submission and online evaluation and so on. This is very crucial to gradually shift the attitude of female from using social media for nonacademic purpose to academic issues.

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