

The Effects of Social Media on The Psychosocial Adjustment of Secondary and Preparatory Private School Adolescents in Hawassa City

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Abstract: The main objective of this study was to examine the effects of social media on the psychosocial and academic adjustment of secondary and preparatory private school adolescents. A randomly selected 337 (male=185 & female=152) students were participated in the study. Quantitative research design was employed to analyze the data. A questionnaire with five points Likert scale was used to collect data on three dimension of social media usage and five dimension of psychosocial adjustments. The finding revealed that facebook, whatsapp, and viber usage have a significant negative relationship with academic performance and with adolescent's self-esteem; these three dimensions of social medias have a significant positive relationship with psychosocial problems such as depression, social anxiety and social connectedness; facebook usage was found as the most contributing variable for adolescent's self-esteem and social connectedness; facebook and viber usage found as a negative contributors for adolescent's academic performance; whatsapp and viber usage were found as contributing factors of adolescents social anxiety; viber, whatsapp and facebook usage were identified as the first, second and third significantly contributors on adolescent's depression. Furthermore, t-test result revealed a statistically significant difference between male and female students in terms of psychosocial adjustment. Based on the findings, it was recommended that responsible bodies, such as school principals, families, teachers, school counselors, should have to give due attention for the proper social media usage that enhance the psychosocial adjustment of adolescent students.

Key words: Social Medias (face book, whatsapp, and viber), Psychosocial Adjustment

Date of Submission: 29-04-2019

Date of acceptance: 13-05-2019

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current society, especially for the young generation, social media has become a part of everyday life. People have access to all types of information across the globe in the palm of hands using social medias. Social medias, such as facebook, twitter, yahoo, telegram, imo, skype, messenger, whatsapp, viber, you tube, etc., has taken the technology world to a new level. The dramatic evolution of technology, especially new social media, has greatly influenced every facet of human society; the way people use time and space, and the perception of medias (Chen, 2012). People are now logging on social medias on mobile devices everywhere, at any time making it a common everyday activity and this can be confirmed which estimates that about 1.925 billion users of smart phones make use of their devices for social media in the world (Star, 2011).

More and more scholars have started recently to examine the influence of social media on human life (Piotrowski, 2012). Over the past decade, social media usage have increased substantially in popularity and become part of social practices (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social medias positively contribute to increased people's capacity for making and sustaining friendships as well as facilitating regular communication (Marshall, Bejanyan, Di Castro, & Lee, 2012). Because of growth in social media usage, on the other hand, adverse effects in different developmental aspects or even in addictive behaviors were observed (Cao, Sun, Wan, Hao & Tao, 2011). Kuss and Griffiths (2011) found that adolescents are at vulnerable period to various social media influences such as, cognitive, emotional, and physical. Currently excessive use of social medias resulted in negative impact on maintaining daily routines, school performance, social and psychological wellbeing (Choi, 2007; Sirgy, 2006 & Rickert, 2001). Furthermore, Kalpidou, Costin and Morris, (2011); Niemz (2005) suggested that frequently using social media was related to lower self-esteem, and were more socially disinherited than non-users. From the perspective of academic performance, a study conducted in Ghana by Johnson (2004) identified the negative impact of whatsapp on the academic performance of adolescent students.

Technology, like two sides of a coin, brings both negative and positive effects. Social media has transformed the way information is received and sent and has greatly bridged the geographical gap that exist

between people. The world has been changed rapidly by the evolution of technology; this has resulted the use of technology as the best medium to explore the wide area of knowledge. The evolution of internet technology has led its use as the best medium for communication.

In the present world, social media usage is becoming acritical issue especially for its effect on the psychosocial adjustment of adolescents (Kalpidou, Costin, & Morris, 2011.) For instance, people who use social media excessively showed significantly more symptoms of depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and loneliness than those who are not users (Morrison & Gore, 2010). Similarly, Andreassen (2015) investigated that those individuals who are highly concerned about social media, strongly motivated to use social media and who devoted excessive amount of time to use social media negatively affected in their psychological well-being, health well-being, social and academic activities.

It is assumed that improper use of social media has a negative effect on the academic performance of adolescent students. Therefore, the present study focused on examining the effect of social medias on different aspects of psychological, academic and social adjustment among adolescent students of selected secondary and preparatory private schools in Hawassa city. The research questions of this study were: Is there statistically significant relationship between social media (facebook, whatsapp and viber) usage and adolescents' psychosocial adjustment (self-esteem, social anxiety, depression, social connectedness and academic performance) adjustment? Which social media has major determinant effect on the psychosocial adjustment among adolescent students? Is there statistically significant difference between the three forms of social medias and psychosocial adjustment of adolescents? and is there a gender difference regarding psychosocial adjustment of adolescents?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media has become a global phenomenon and a very important means of communication among peers, families and all manner of persons in the world. Social media sites such as Face book, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Instant Messaging Services (IMS) such as Whatsapp, Viber and IMO and video calling services like Skype have become a popular means of communication in the past few years. Boyd and Ellison (2007) defined social media as "a public web-based service that permits users to create a personal profile, identify other users with whom they can relate to or have a connection with, read and react to posts made by other users on the site, and send and receive messages either privately or publicly". Kuss and Griffiths (2011) also defined social media as "virtual communities where users can create individual public profiles, interact with real-life friends, and meet other people based on shared interests". Any website that enables social interaction by users is considered a social media site. Such sites are an online technology with the ability to allow users to interact and share information online Bastani and Zarandi, (2009).

2.1.Forms of Social Media

2.1.1.Facebook

Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes (2004) were the founders of facebook. This media site is a popular online social media and is the most visited website in the United States (Orelind, 2009). Since many people join this online social networking site, it is said that "if facebook were a country, it would be the fifth most populated in the world, ahead of Japan and Russia" (Zuckerberg, 2009).

2.1.2.Whatsapp

Whatsapp is a mobile messaging application which allows the users to exchange messages without having to pay for SMS. Whatsapp started in the year 2009, by J. Koum to make communication and the distribution of multimedia messaging more easily and faster.

2.1.3.Viber

Viber as a social media was founded in 2010 by Talmonmarco and igormagazinnik in Tel Aviv, Israel. According to these founders, with the help of viber application, an individual can chat with family, friends beyond the limit of seas and keep contact to everybody at one time.

2.2.Social Media Usage and Social Connections of Adolescents

According to Madge (2009); McKenna and Bargh, (2000), adolescence is a stage that is associated with a strong need for friendships and peer-group affiliations along with the need for person-to-person communication. Consistently the study of Madge, (2009) stated that the changing dynamics of communication within the adolescent population especially those in their teenage years, have important implications on their social relationships and communication in real life. Subrahmanyam, and Greenfield (2008) identified that the presence of higher positivity and lower negativity in a peer interaction in early adolescence period predict a greater number of friends on their facebook and telegram use. This in turn keeps them logged into their social

networking site to chat with the increasing number of friends they have online, impacting in one way or another on their interpersonal relationships both offline and online. Similarly the study conducted by Greenfield (2008) found that the long hours adolescents spend logged in their social media (whatsapp, facebook, telegram and messenger) has an effect with peer-based connectedness and their interactions with others enhance their sense of belonging and help them understand their individual self .

2.3.Social Media Usage and Academic performance

Over the years, many studies have been conducted and social media has depicted both positive as well as negative effect on the academic performance of students. According to Pasek, et al. (2009) the use of online social media has a positive relationship with academic performance. Similarly, the study of Selfhout, Brantje, Delsing, Bogt, and Meeus (2009) and Baran (2010) investigated those social networking sites such as: Google, YouTube, whatsapp, facebook and imo are quite appropriate for the harmony of teachers and students. Such tool can allow them to share knowledge in formal education context. On the contrary, other studies suggested that excessive usage of online social media can become an addiction especially among students and it can cause academic problems (Akhtar, 2013); Uses of social media particularly facebook and viber for a prolonged time significantly contribute to poor academic performance (Karpinski, & Duberstein, 2009); social media is negatively associated with academic performance of students and is a lot more momentous than its advantages (Englander, Terregrossa, & Wang, 2010); and social media addicted users prefer using internet setting back their personal and professional responsibilities, which ultimately leads to poor academic performance (Nalwac& Anand, 2003) Consistently the study of vein, Karpinski (2009) indicated that social media users devoted lesser time to their studies in comparison to nonusers did and subsequently had lower GPAs.

2.4.Social Media Use and Adolescent’s Self-esteem

According to Heine, Takemoto, Moskalenko Lasaleta, and Heinrich (2008),. the use of social medias enhances adolescents self-esteem by offering organized way of social interaction with the rest of the society. Use of online social media in general might have a beneficial effect on children and adolescents self-esteem by enhancing communication, social connection, and even technical skills. For example, Ito, Horst, and Bittani (2008), stated that social media sites offer multiple daily opportunities to connect with friends and share common interests and recently, facebook and Whatsapp messenger was shown to stimulate online socialization, thus supporting self-esteem and various forms of social capital. Furthermore, Valkenburg et al. (2006) found that online socialmedia enhances social self-esteem, measured as a perception of one's body image, close relationships, and romantic appeal, especially when users receive positive feedback from online social media friends. This authors also reported that individuals with low self-esteem can improve their condition through the social opportunities provided by online social media.

In contrast, to the positive values of social medias in developing positive self-esteem other studies identified that adolescents who are high in social media usage are generally low in various aspects of psychosocial development particularly self-esteem (Selfhout et al., 2009); students with lower self-esteem show a stronger preference for email or online communication than those with higher self-esteem (Johnson, 2004); young people with lower self-esteem showed higher levels of instant online messaging use than those with higher self-esteem (Ehrenberg et al. 2008, cited in Sturm, 2010); and there is significant negative prediction of self-esteem from the time spent on facebook per session (Mehdizadeh,2010).

2.5. Social media use and Depression

Pantic, (2012), disclosed that that the time spent on online social media by high school students were positively correlated with depression. Similarly, Rosen Whaling, Rab, Carrier, and Cheever (2013), stated that participants who spent more time online and those who performed more facebook, whatsapp messenger, telegram, you tube and viber evidenced a more clinical symptoms of major depression. On other studies, Davila et al., (2009) and Selfhout et al., (2009) proposed a new type of depression, termed “social media depression” which develops when preteens and teens spend long periods on social media sites and then begin to experience symptoms of depression. Thus, acceptance by and contact with peers are important elements of adolescent life and social networks are commonly used for social dialogue among peers. Therefore, references of dejection or despondent behaviors are common with social media usage; for example, being unable to gain social approval and wrong judgments (bullying) of their peers on the site (Selfhout et al., 2009).

2.6. Social Media usage and Social Anxiety

Several studies link social media to social anxiety and compulsive behavior. A recent research study Anxiety UK, (2012) found that 45% of British adults indicated they feel worried or uncomfortable when they cannot access their email or social network sites. Social anxiety also has been linked to a preference for online versus face-to-face communication. In addition, Caplan (2007); Valkenburg and Peter (2007) stated that socially

anxious adolescents who receive positive online communication from friends tend to increase closeness within their friendships offline. This indicates that making such connections helps socially anxious adolescents to improve their feelings of social interaction. In the study of Ando and Sakamoto (2008) it was found that for adolescents who perceive themselves as less physically attractive, having a large online friend network use viber, imo and telegram predicted decreases in feelings of social anxiety and loneliness. This finding suggests that difficulties related to physical cues might be ameliorated online and that on-line connection allows youth to expand their social connections in this domain.

2.7. Gender Difference in Social Media usage

Bonds-Raacke and Raacke, (2008). identified as there is gender discrepancy in the use of social medias. Hence, according to these authors, teenage girls and boys who communicate using social media networks are not equally affected in their Psychological well-being; boys seem to benefit more from social media use and communication technology than girls do, and this was because boys tend to have more difficulty expressing their thoughts and emotions face-to-face with others than girls do (Peter & Valkenburg, 2009), boys have been online more than girls have in previous decades because of earlier forms of technology such as video or computer games (Lin & Subrahmanyam, 2007), Girls have reported that they use social media for things like chatting and downloading music. Because of this, one may hypothesize that girls will be more likely to be attracted to social media networks and other online social groups their affect academic and psychologically aspect (Giles & Price, 2008).

III. METHOD

3.1. Research Design

Quantitative research approach was employed for testing the research questions. The data was collected using cross-sectional survey.

3.2. Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques.

The target population of this study consisted of some selected secondary and preparatory private schools students who were 2159 in number. From these population, 337 (male=185 & female=152) respondents were selected using a stratified random sampling technique from each stratum (sex and grade level).

3.3. Instrument of Data Collection

A questionnaire with a 5 point Likert-type scale was employed to gather the opinion and information of the respondents. Basically, measures of social media usage and measure of Psychological adjustment were employed. Pilot test was conducted on 50 students to test the validity of the adapted instrument. The Cronbach's alpha reliability test resulted .071 with high internal consistency which signifies that the instrument is appropriate.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The first research question of this study was to find out if there was a relationship between the types of social medias and forms of Psychosocial adjustment. For this, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was employed.

Result of Pearson's correlation coefficient depicted a statistically significant negative relationship between facebook usage and adolescents academic performance ($r = -.71, p < 0.05$); between whatsapp usage and adolescents academic performance ($r = -.66, p < 0.05$), and between viber usage and adolescents academic performance ($r = -.70, p < 0.05$). On the other hand, statistically significant positive relationships were found between facebook usage and social connectedness ($r = .81, p < 0.05$); between whatsapp usage and social connectedness ($r = .67, p < 0.05$), between viber usage and social connectedness ($r = .61, p < 0.05$).

A statistically significant negative relationship was also obtained between facebook usage and adolescent self-esteem ($r = -.68, p < 0.05$); between whatsapp usage and adolescents' self-esteem ($r = -.54, p < 0.05$), and between viber usage and adolescent self-esteem ($r = -.50, p < 0.05$). On the contrary, a statistically significant positive relationship was obtained between facebook usage and depression ($r = .69, p < 0.05$); between whatsapp usage and depression ($r = .78, p < 0.05$), between facebook usage and social anxiety ($r = .66, p < 0.05$); between whatsapp usage and social anxiety ($r = .79, p < 0.05$) and statistically significant high positive relationship between viber usage and social anxiety ($r = .80, p < 0.05$).

The second research question was aimed to identify the social media which has a major determinant effect on the psychosocial adjustment of adolescent students. For this, to determine the predictor, Linear Regression Analysis was performed.

The result of regression analysis showed that facebook usage yielded a negative Beta Coefficient ($\beta = -0.71$, $p < 0.05$) and predicts more adolescents' self-esteem. While the remaining two variables whatsapp and viber have not been significant predictors to the criteria variable (adolescents' self-esteem), the P-value of these two predictor variables was greater than 0.05 respectively. Facebook and viber usage yielded a negative Beta Coefficient ($\beta = -0.48$, $p < .05$) and ($\beta = -0.47$, $p < .05$) predict more significantly adolescents' academic performance. Facebook usage yielded a positive beta Coefficient ($\beta = .77$, $p < .05$) predicts more significantly adolescents' social connectedness than the other social medias. The third research question of the study was set to investigate whether there is or not statistically significant difference between the three forms of social medias and psychosocial adjustment of adolescents. ANOVA was computed to give answer this research question.

The ANOVA result for the three forms of social media usage showed statistically significant difference in terms of five dimensions of psychosocial adjustments. Thus, academic performance $F(44,292) = 17.89$, $p < 0.05$; self-esteem $F(44,292) = 7.77$, $p < 0.05$; depression $F(44,292) = 64.56$, $p < 0.05$; social anxiety $F(44,292) = 52.95$, $p < 0.05$ and social connectedness $F(44, 292) = 31.02$, $p < 0.05$. This result may shows that different forms of social media usage may affect variety on psychosocial (self-esteem, depression, social anxiety and social connectedness) behavior and academic performance among private school students.

The fourth research question investigated whether or not the demographic variables of the respondents vary along the dimensions of the psychosocial adjustments.

An independent sample t-test was performed to compare the academic performance score along the respondents sex. The result indicated that there is a significant mean difference in the academic performance score for male ($M = 46.99$, $SD = 12.46$) than female ($M = 43.45$, $SD = 8.49$). This difference was statistically significant $t(324.42) = 3.09$, $p < 0.05$. A mean difference was also observed in the self-esteem score among male and female students. Thus, for male ($M = 33.96$, $SD = 7.83$) and female ($M = 27.05$, $SD = 10.82$). This difference was statistically significant $t(268.09) = 6.59$, $p < 0.05$. Mean difference in the depression score for female ($M = 44.45$, $SD = 6.14$) than male ($M = 38.96$, $SD = 8.90$). This difference was statistically significant $t(325.61) = -5.08$, $p < 0.05$. Similarly there was a mean difference in the social anxiety score for female ($M = 44.45$, $SD = 5.85$) than male ($M = 41.90$, $SD = 7.83$). This difference was statistically significant as obtained by $t(332.12) = -3.42$, $p < 0.05$. Finally, there is mean difference in the social connectedness score for female ($M = 47.88$, $SD = 7.29$) than male ($M = 42.11$, $SD = 9.93$). This difference was statistically significant as obtained by $t(331.02) = -6.14$, $p < 0.05$. From the analysis carried out, one can conclude that there is statistically significant differences between male and female secondary school students in their Psychosocial adjustments.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the major findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

- There is a negative relationship between facebook usage and adolescents academic performance; between whatsapp usage and adolescents academic performance; and between viber usage and adolescents academic performance. On the other hand, there is a positive relationship between facebook usage and social connectedness; between whatsapp usage and social connectedness; between viber usage and social connectedness.
- There is a negative relationship between facebook usage and adolescent self-esteem; between whatsapp usage and adolescents' self-esteem, and between viber usage and adolescent self-esteem. On the contrary, there is a positive relationship between facebook usage and depression; between whatsapp usage and depression; between facebook usage and social anxiety; between whatsapp usage and social anxiety and high positive relationship between viber usage and social anxiety.
- Facebook usage is the most significant predictor of adolescent's self-esteem and social connectedness; viber and facebook usages are the most significant predictors of adolescent academic performance; viber and whatsapp usages are contribute for adolescent's social anxiety.
- There is a gender difference of psychosocial adjustment with social media among adolescents.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- School principals, families, teachers and other concerned bodies need to encourage and teach adolescents to use the appropriate social media sites for educational purpose.
- The government has to design a mechanism for creating social awareness on how to reduce the negative effect of social media.
- School counselor should create awareness, provide time management skill and life skill training students to decrease the negative effect of social media.

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Dr. Deribe Workineh." The Effects of Social Media on The Psychosocial Adjustment of Secondary and Preparatory Private School Adolescents in Hawassa City. " *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*. vol. 24 no. 05, 2019, pp. 73-79.