

Social Media-Related Internet Use and Academic Performance: Evidence from Fresno State

Researchers:

- Mohammad A Rahman, Ph.D. Associate Professor
Department of Public Health, Fresno State
- Tyler Launer, B.Sc., Fresno State

Abstract:

The objective of the study was to understand the nature of relationship between internet use habits and academic performance of Fresno State students at the undergraduate level. In particular, this study examined whether excessive use of internet-based social media adversely effected Grade Point Average (GPA) scores. Data for the study was obtained through a survey conducted on 188 students in six randomly selected courses at the undergraduate level. A linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the significance and relationships between the dependent variable, GPA and independent variables age, gender, employment, marital status, choice of major, hours spent on social media through internet, hours spending time texting, and hours spent studying.

The analysis showed that time spent on social media-related internet use negatively impacted students' academic performance which conformed to similar findings in other studies. Age was also found to be inversely correlated with academic performance indicating that seniors had lower GPA scores, which could be due to their choosing of more challenging courses in the final year. As expected, time spent studying was positively associated with GPA score but was not statistically significant.

It is prudent that students and academic policy makers are aware of the perils associated with spending excessive time on social media as it may adversely effect their academic performance. However, the directionality of the effect is not clear. In other words, it cannot be ascertained whether time spent on social media negatively impacts GPA or whether students with lower GPA tend to spend more time on social media. Qualitative research may be able to shed light on this matter. Findings from the study has implications on initiatives to use social media as a mode of teaching at the undergraduate level.

Goals and Objectives

The objective of the proposal was to showcase an example of a successful collaboration between faculty and students in the Public Health department. Tyler Launer, an undergraduate student

successfully carried out a research project under my supervision. It is expected that findings from the study will create awareness among students and academic policy makers on the negative aspects of social media use on academic performance.