
Business Education Students' Involvement in Social Networking and its Effects on their Academic Performance

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Abstract: This study examined business education students' involvement in social networking and its implication on their academic performance. The study highlighted that business education is an aspect of theories and processes of vocational education that is offered in colleges of education and universities. On the other hand, the advent of social networking has revolutionised the way individuals interact and communicate, extending its influence to various domains, including education. This work explored various interrelated concepts in the course of carrying out this study; such concepts included business education, social networking, academic performance, types of social networking involved by business education students, and the effect of business students' involvement in social networking on their academic performance. It further stated that students' involvement in social networking can have both positive and negative effects on their academic performance. The study explained in detail the different types of social networking that business education students are involved in, including, among others, online communities and forums, professional networking sites, educational and collaborative platforms, and academic and learning platforms. The study concluded that the involvement of business education students in social networking presents a complex dynamic with significant implications for their academic performance. One of the recommendations made was that business education programmes should integrate digital literacy and time management training into their curricula. By educating students on the effective use of social networking platforms for academic purposes, they can learn to balance their social and academic lives.

Key words: Business, Education, Students, Social networking and Academic Performance.

Introduction

Business education is an aspect of theories and processes of vocational education that is offered in colleges of education and universities. On the other hand, the advent of social networking has revolutionised the way individuals interact and communicate, extending its influence to various domains, including education. Basse (2019) mentioned that education also implies the development of transformable knowledge and capabilities. For business education students, the use of social networking platforms has become an integral part of their daily lives, blending social interaction with academic activities. This blend, however, raises questions about the impact of social networking on their academic performance. According to Sutherland & Jalali (2017), while social networking can offer collaborative learning opportunities, it also presents potential distractions that could detract from academic focus.

Social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter provide business education students with platforms to engage in academic discussions, share resources, and collaborate on projects. These platforms enable students to build professional networks and stay updated on industry trends, which are crucial for their future careers. Clark & Fine (2018) highlight that social

networking facilitates peer-to-peer learning and provides access to a wealth of information and diverse perspectives, enhancing the learning experience. However, the dual nature of these platforms means that their impact on academic performance can be both positive and negative.

On the positive side, social networking can enhance students' engagement and motivation. When used effectively, these platforms can support academic collaboration and provide real-time feedback. Ahmed (2019) noted that LinkedIn groups and Facebook pages dedicated to business education topics can serve as valuable resources for students to seek advice, share experiences, and learn from professionals in the field. Moreover, social networking can help students develop critical skills such as digital literacy and online communication, which are essential in today's digitalized business environment.

Concept of Business Education

Business education is a designed field of study for the development of skills, attitudes, appreciation, and creativity, as well as the creation of awareness and competencies in the office and business worlds (Okeke, 2020). This degree equips students with knowledge and skills that are necessary for everyone to manage their personal business affairs and make use of business services. Education in and about business is known as business education. It blends information that is both theoretical and applied. In a similar spirit, it gives the recipient exposure to his nation's economic structure and gives him the lifelong skills necessary to enable him to make rational decisions whether he is a producer, employee, or consumer of goods and services. Akpan and Udom (2024) explained business education to be an “attempt to create value through recognition of business opportunities and communication and management skills to mobilise the human, financial, and material resources necessary to bring a project to fruition.” A business education programme is an umbrella that shields all business course(s) (Ngozi, Ebiere, and Paul, 2024).

Bupo (2011), cited by Inegbedion (2020), defined business education as the transfer of pedagogical and business competencies necessary for teaching business attitudes, concepts, skills, and knowledge. Ikpe & Bepeh (2014) emphasised that business education is used in laying the foundation for commercial growth and development globally. The goal of business education is to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully navigate the demands of the workplace. It makes it possible for a person to obtain the proper mindset, ideas, information, comprehension, and abilities in business-related activities for employment as a manager, administrator, or teacher, or in any other capacity within the business sector. One aspect of schooling that aids students in acquiring practical skills for daily life is business education.

Furthermore, business education is a term that encompasses a number of methods used to teach students the fundamentals of business practices. According to Barde, Lele, & Moh'd (2022), business education is a core component of the Technical and Vocational Education programme and taught by professionally trained male and female business educators in universities and colleges of education. Also, Udo and Iniobong (2024) defined business education to be a major component of vocational education. The field of study is concerned with the development of skills, attitudes, appreciation, creativity, as well as awareness and competencies in the office and business world. Business education is considered to be one of the crucial vehicles for social equity as well as sustainable development if it is accorded proper status by the government and other stakeholders. It can be a major instrument for national development because it promotes industrialization through its entrepreneurship offerings.

Howbeit, Ola (2019) described business education as an area of education that deals with the study of the subject of related disciplines. It is a combination of two disciplines dealing mainly with the art of shorthand writing, typewriting, accounting, business mathematics, secretarial duties, commerce, and office practice. Business education is a discipline that provides for the needs of individuals and that of society, and it embraces current trends in modern technologies in order to meet the academic and economic demands of society (Akpan, Akpan, and Homevor, 2023). The

field of study offers every individual an opportunity to develop those abilities, skills, and understanding of the vocational opportunity available.

Concept of Social Networking

Social networking refers to using internet-based social media sites to stay connected with friends, family, colleagues, or customers. Social networking can have a social purpose, a business purpose, or both through sites like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and Pinterest. Social networks are websites and apps that allow users and organisations to connect, communicate, share information, and form relationships and may also increase students awareness and marketing opportunities (Wright & Yaser, 2024 and Udo, James and Nwokoro, 2022). A social network indicates the way people and organisations are connected through various social familiarities ranging from casual acquaintance to close familiar bonds.

It is also an act of interacting with people and organisations and sharing information online. It occurs on various platforms where people and businesses connect with each other, sell products, and spread information. Kenton (2023) emphasised that social networking connects individuals and businesses by allowing them to share information, ideas, and messages. Additionally, businesses utilise social media to advertise their goods and services, build and maintain brand awareness, and respond to questions and concerns from clients. Utilising a social network to market and advertise products and services and increase brand awareness has been shown to be a successful marketing tactic. According to Wexler (2009), social networks are Internet-based software systems that allow people who share interests and activities to easily communicate. These websites offer a variety of user-interaction options, including file sharing, blogging, discussion groups, video, audio, chat, and messaging. Millions of individuals use social networking sites worldwide, and they are revolutionising the sharing of information.

Social networking is a subset within social media. Social networking is both the process and the tool within social media that are utilised to create a posting and integration in a linked network (Furman, 2024). Social networking activity may happen on large, general-interest social media sites (like Facebook) or on smaller social networking sites with a narrower focus that serve as the foundation for an online community. The term is most commonly applied to online relationship-building, either for enjoyment or to establish social currency to be exploited.

Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance is a concept that takes into account a student's growth and accomplishments in the classroom. Numerous elements, including social, psychological, educational, and economic ones, have an impact on it. Indicators of academic performance include completion time, grades, and performance in particular topics. It is impacted by things like teaching style, assessments, motivation, and self-motivation. Academic performance acknowledges the significance of the process of teaching and learning as well as the growth of students' expectations, knowledge, and abilities. Individual traits, attitudes, and commitment to studying all have an impact.

Academic achievement, or academic performance, is the degree to which a student, teacher, or institution has attained their short- or long-term educational goals. Academic achievement is the completion of educational benchmarks comprising secondary school diplomas and bachelor's degrees. Academic performance is considered an important achievement for students during the educational process at the university. Teachers and education officials typically measure achievement using classroom performance, graduation rates, and results from standardised tests. The achievement of the performance affects the students' current and future lives (Mappadang, Khusaini, Sinaga, & Elizabeth, 2022).

Academic achievement is commonly measured through examinations or continuous assessments, but there is no general agreement on how it is best evaluated or which aspects are most important—procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. Academic performance is the knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects, usually

determined by test scores or marks assigned by teachers or both (Bhat, 2014). Teachers are urged to innovate their educational techniques and support students in achieving deliberate competencies in order to increase academic performance. Students should also adopt effective learning strategies and stay motivated.

According to Kumar, Agarwal, and Agarwal (2021), academic performance is the knowledge gained by the student, which is assessed by marks by a teacher and/or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific period of time. Good academic performance of students is of paramount importance in every educational system (Brew, Nketiah, and Koranteng, 2021).

Types of Social Networking Involved by Business Education Students

Students studying business education use a variety of social networking platforms to improve their professional growth, career prospects, and learning. Because these networks offer chances for learning, collaboration, career advancement, and staying up to date with industry trends, business education students use a range of social networking platforms to enrich their academic and professional experiences. But by actively participating in these networks, students can make insightful connections and advance their academic and professional objectives. The kinds of social networking business education that students participate in include the following:

Online Communities and Forums: Q&A sites and reddit are part of this social networking. By encouraging participation in business education-related subedits, these platforms help business students interact with one another, ask for assistance, and share their experiences with the larger community. As mentioned by Vaish (2021), being genuinely helpful to ones consumers by providing the company's subject matter expertise and answering the industry-related concerns are the primary purpose of engaging in discussion forums. Additionally, the Q&A Platform invites students to follow subjects of interest to stay up to speed on discussions and insights, as well as to ask questions and offer answers about business education and career development.

Professional Networking Sites: Students engage with instructors, industry executives, alumni, classmates, and other professionals by creating comprehensive profiles that highlight their education, experiences, and talents. In order to take part in debates and keep up with industry developments, they also join groups pertaining to business education, certain industries, or professional interests.

Educational and Collaborative Platforms: Students engage in the business education process by participating in course-related forums, group projects, and assignments, as well as by using collaborative technologies to collaborate on projects and assignments with classmates. According to Love & Dietrich (2024), the core of collaborative learning is integrating presumptions about students and their learning cycle, however instructors with different backgrounds in education may express it in a variety of ways. On the other hand, students are encouraged to share and access course materials, notes, and resources through collaborative and educational platforms. In addition to facilitating in-class interactions and collaborations, Google Classroom lets students work on group projects, exchange documents using Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides, participate in class discussions, turn in assignments, and get feedback.

Academic and Learning Platforms: Through the academic and learning platforms, students can interact with business education researchers and upload, share, and collaborate on research papers, projects, and publications. This gives them the chance to find possible partners for their academic work and research projects. Additionally, it enables students to interact with academics and researchers in the subject of business education, contribute their research, and read the work of others.

Social Media Platforms: Students utilise social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, blogs, and others to learn and participate in business education. Through these platforms, students can organise and take part in events, seminars, and workshops, join groups pertaining to business education, interact with peers through posts, comments, and direct messages, and more. On the

other hand, the social media platforms give students the opportunity to follow businesses, industry leaders, and specialists in business education for up-to-date information. They can also use hashtags and participate in discussions to engage with professionals and other students. According to Godwin-Jones (2007) cited in Chukwudi, Maduiké & Constance (2015), the Youtube is a popular video sharing website where the users can upload, view and share video clips. Additionally, blogs are a type of online diary because they can have one or many authors and allow viewers to leave comments on articles about business education uploaded by students.

Effect of Business Students' Involvement in Social Networking on their Academic Performance

Social networking site popularity has grown significantly over time. It is simpler to become sidetracked by the numerous social media platforms. Business education students are more likely to be faced with the temptation of surfing the web, chatting with friends, and visiting the various social and media websites rather than focusing on getting their schoolwork done in time (Chukwudi & Constance, 2015). Social networking have the tendency to have both positive and negative effect on students, the following are some ways that social media networking sites affect a business education student's academic performance:

➤ **Negative effect**

Decrease in productivity: Because so many students wind up monitoring social media networking sites for the majority of their study hours, these sites lower productivity. They spend the entire time either tweeting or sending messages on Facebook instead of finishing their duties. When students attempt to participate in activities on these social media sites while also studying, there will inevitably be a decrease in their attention span. Frequently, this results in a sharp decline in their academic achievement.

Addiction: Regular usage of social media can become highly addicting, which is bad since it will undoubtedly have an impact on academic achievement. Students spend a large portion of their time on social media, leaving them with little time for their education, let alone personal time. Students who are addicted to social media will likely see a sharp decline in their scores as a result of their attention being diverted from more vital tasks, such as their academics, to more frivolous ones. It will also undoubtedly result in subpar academic achievement.

Encourages Poor Grammar Usage: Students that actively participate in social media platforms not only contribute to bad spelling and grammatical usage, but they also tend to employ slang or abbreviated word forms. As mentioned by Nwagbara and James (2016) "language is indisputable for communication among human beings" and social media platforms have their own language of communication. Using Twitter as an example, users are only allowed to use 140 characters. As a result, users will be forced to condense their sentences as much as possible in order to make them fit within the allotted 140 characters. A 140-character message can only convey so much information, after all. Students may not benefit much from exploring these relationships, even though they may be available through embedded links in tweets, for example. Students begin to rely more on the computer grammar and spell checks on their devices as a result of their overuse of slang and abbreviations on social media platforms. This results in the reduction of their command over the English language and also their writing skills (David, 2014).

Reduction in real human contact: Students spend so much time on social media that they start to interact with people virtually never or very little. Students are unable to interact with others face-to-face in an effective manner as a result. It should be noted that having strong communication skills is essential for success in the real world, and that as a result, employers are growing increasingly unsatisfied with graduates' communication abilities.

➤ **Positive Effect**

Professional Networking and Career Development: Business students can greatly benefit from using professional social networking sites like LinkedIn, as this can improve their employment

prospects. Students can use these channels to network professionally, look for mentorship, and keep up with industry developments. Ainin (2016) stated that LinkedIn usage positively correlates with students' career development, which can indirectly boost their academic motivation and performance. Students can improve their academic comprehension and match their studies with job ambitions by interacting with professionals and obtaining information relating to the business.

Conclusion

The involvement of business education students in social networking presents a complex dynamic with significant implications for their academic performance. While these platforms offer opportunities for enhanced learning and professional networking, they also pose risks of distraction and cognitive overload. As such, it is crucial for students to develop effective strategies to balance their social networking activities with their academic responsibilities. Future research should continue to explore the nuanced effects of social networking on academic performance, considering factors such as usage patterns, individual differences, and the evolving digital landscape.

Recommendations

1. Business education programmes should integrate digital literacy and time management training into their curricula. By educating students on the effective use of social networking platforms for academic purposes, they can learn to balance their social and academic lives.
2. Institutions should consider developing or endorsing academic-specific social networking platforms. These platforms can serve as dedicated spaces for students to engage in academic discussions, share resources, and collaborate on projects without the typical distractions found on mainstream social media.
3. Educators should encourage students to leverage professional networking sites such as LinkedIn for academic and career development purposes.
4. Institutions should implement policies that monitor and manage social media use among students. This could include guidelines on appropriate use of social media during class hours and study sessions.

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