

The Use of Social Networking Technologies among the Undergraduate Students of Mogadishu University, Mogadishu- Somalia

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Abstract

There are many potential social networking sites among the undergraduate students of Mogadishu University. The objectives of this study is to identify various categories of social networking sites used by MU undergraduate, to recognize their purposes of using social networking sites, the benefits of using social networking, to identify the dangers of this social networks and final to examine the strategies for protecting the risks of using social networking sites. The study used for descriptive statistics which was employed to derive responses from a sample size of 135 undergraduate students of Mogadishu University who were selected via random sampling techniques. Data was collected from this population using questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS. The questionnaire derived from Nigeria, Nsukka made by the following scholars Charles O. Omekwu (Ph.D.), Nneka Jennifer Odoh. The results seems that majority of students are using social networking sites in interaction with friends, connecting to their class mates for discussing serious issues and watching movies. There are also benefits and threats

when using social networking sites, such threats can be prevent using the strategies available in the work.

Drawn from the findings, it was recommended that university Authorities should request to the lectures of the course introduction to computer to add some specific topics relevant social networking sites.

Keywords: Social Networking, Technologies, Undergraduate Students, Mogadishu University

Introduction

Today's social networking sites become more popularity and have attracted billion of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices.

New developments in the technological world have made the internet an innovative way for individuals and families to communicate. Social media networks have created a phenomenon on the internet that has gained popularity over the last decade. People use social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, IMO, Line and Viber to create and sustain relationships with others (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 2).

Background of the Study

The first recognizable social network site launched in 1997. SixDegrees.com allowed users to create profiles, list their Friends and, beginning in 1998, surf the Friends lists. Each of these features existed in some form before Six Degrees, of course. Profiles existed on most major dating sites and many community sites. AIM and ICQ buddy lists supported lists of Friends, although those Friends were not visible to others. Classmates.com allowed people to affiliate with their high school or college and surf the network for others who were also affiliated, but users could not create profiles or list Friends until years later. Six Degrees was the first to combine these features.

Six Degrees promoted itself as a tool to help people connect with and send messages to others. While Six Degrees attracted millions of users, it failed to become a sustainable business and, in 2000, the service closed.

From 1997 to 2001, a number of community tools began supporting various combinations of profiles and publicly articulated Friends.

Friendster launched in 2002 as a social complement to Ryze. It was designed to compete with Match.com, a profitable online dating site (Cohen, 2003, p. 7).

While most dating sites focused on introducing people to strangers with similar interests, Friendster was designed to help friends-of-friends meet, based on the assumption that friends-of-friends would make better romantic partners than would strangers (J. Abrams, personal communication, March 27, 2003, p.4). Friendster gained traction among three groups of early adopters who shaped the site—bloggers, attendees of the Burning Man arts festival, and gay men (Boyd d. , 2004).

Facebook was designed to support distinct college networks only. Facebook began in early 2004 as a Harvard-only SNS (Cassidy, 2006, p. 2). To join, a user had to have a harvard.edu email address. As Facebook began supporting other schools, those users were also required to have university email addresses associated with those institutions, a requirement that kept the site relatively closed and contributed to users' perceptions of the site as an intimate, private community.

In 2005 YouTube began and other social networking sites in 2006 Twitter were designed.

Therefore, just like radio and television, social networking has spread everywhere in Somalia and are bound to be sprouting as the new media for are still obscure. In other words, from the analysis carried out by the researcher from the world Internet statistics (2015) it was found that out of the total population of 10,616,380 Somalia, 500,000 numbers of people used Facebook as of 2015. Comparing Ethiopia and Kenya with a similar population of 99,465,819 populations (2015) and 45,925,301

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populations (2015) respectively, the data shows those 3,700,000 Facebook users on Nov 15/15, 3.7% penetration rate and 5,000,000 Facebook users on Nov 15/15, 10.9% penetration rate number of people respectively used Facebook as of 2015. This result showed that Kenya with a lesser population, use Facebook more than Ethiopia. Also out of the total population, of 828,324 Djibouti, 100,000 numbers of people used Facebook as of 2015. Comparing this with the number of Somalia Facebook users, it shows that Somalia has the more number of Facebook users although this may sometimes depends upon number of population. Similarly, Florunso, etal (2010) reviewed that:

In Africa, social media networking sites are becoming widely spread than it has ever been before and it appears that people's Perception of this technology is diverse.

Furthermore, as a novel phenomenon, it is necessary to examine how Mogadishu University students use the new means of communication. This is because student's contribution as youths can make or transform any nation. (Essoungou, 2011, p. 2), explain that the new communication technology is one of few ways that young Africans can bypass the inefficiencies in the system that allow the status quo to hold on. It lowers the barriers to entry for everyone to get involved and be heard. A study like this shall help to ascertain whether Students use of the media could be regulated or not. This is obviously because the disposition of people of a given community could shape the media in existence there, just like a cerebral media scholar, (Anim, 2007, p. 2) aptly notes that societies greatly influence the operations and functions of the media that operate within those societies.' 'The manner in which the social media were used and the role they play in the recent uprising which rocked the middle-East popularly referred to as "Arab Spring" could be deciphered as credence to the above academic observations.

Problem Statement

Of late, there has been strongly apparent interest in use of Social Networking Sites among university students and the emphasis on developing 21st century competencies.

Since social networking sites become more popularity and reached billions of users, this growth popularity of social networking sites have generated concerns among university authorities' communication experts. It has benefit and potential risks facing undergraduates.

Today there is a little or no research has been carried out in developing countries notably in Somalia and it remains unknown whether social networking sites can establish feelings of loneliness and increase feelings of insensitivity to disconnection, according to John J. Cacioppo, a neuroscientist at the University of Chicago (Cacioppo, 2009, p. 5). Hence, there is the need to fashion out some means of selecting and using the right social networking site responsibly. This study is concerned with the trend of use of the sites, what benefits students derive from using the sites, the dangers associated with them and ways to avert such dangers.

Research Questions

In view of the lack of sufficient research in this area of study, so the study finds out the following five questions.

1. What are the different categories of social networking sites
2. What are the main purposes for using social networking sites?
3. What are the benefits of using social networking sites?
4. What are the dangers associated with social networking?
5. What are the strategies of protecting the threats of social networking?

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to separate the Social Networking Technologies (SNTs) being used by undergraduate students in Mogadishu university, examine the various categories of social networking sites, determine the purpose of the usage of social networking sites by MUundergraduates, examine benefits of using social networking sites, identify the dangers associated with social network sites and To proffer strategies of ameliorating the dangers of social networking

Scope of The Study

Content scope: this study is limited to the use of networking sites by undergraduate

Students of Mogadishu University, Mogadishu.

Geographical scope: it covers the extent of the use of social networking sites by theundergraduate students of Mogadishu university in Mogadishu-Somalia, categories of social networking sites, benefits of using social networking sites, purposes of using social networking sites and dangersinvolved in the use of social networking sites.

Literature Review

In this section, the researcher outlines the previous studies related to the research questions as the follows:

Various Categories of Social Networking Sites

There are various types of the social networking sites such as, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Google+, IMO, Viber, Line, Myspace, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, blogs, wikis and etc. most of these SNSs are common used for communicating, advertising and educational purposes.

According to (Chris, 2010, p. 7). Some social networking websites such as Facebook, fall in the “general, category, they accommodate folks of all interest and backgrounds on this type of social networking websites. Members can after include their interest... and then locate members with similar interests by searching for key words and key phrases. The main purpose of general social networking websites is to serve as a special platform where people can reunite with old friends; stay connected with current ones, and even make new acquaintances.

Social networking sites can also be classified based on people’s areas of interest. (Harson, 2009, p. 8) Stresses that: other social networking websites have tight, niche focuses, and cater for specific groups of people. Social networking websites can revolve around sports, dating, culture, hobbies, ethnicity, education, romance, entrepreneurship and more.

Purposes of Using Social Networking Sites

The popularity of social networks grows rapidly by the second. These social sites have become effective (to an extent) means of communicating ideas and feelings among their users.

Thus, they are beginning to get more attention from educational institutions. (Gardner, 2009, p. 6) opined that institutions are taking drastic steps to educate students on the use of the sites, especially in the areas of the privacy, legal issue and potential socio-economic and psychological dangers.

In addition, social networking enhances a student’s sense of community, sharing and collaboration brings an additional responsibility and workload, which some students find inflexible and rather “forced” (Minocha, 2009, p.6).

According to the above two references we can find out the main purpose of the SNSs such as enhancing sense of commuting, sharing and collaboration, and making inflexible rather force.

Benefits of Using Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites can be a great way to make connections with people with related interests and goals, like a virtual meeting place where friends hang out. There is evidence of abroad range of benefits to student or users associated with the use of Social networking sites. These are just some of the several positive things that have contributed to social networking popularity among scholars because they can discuss different topics, share information and exchange files and pictures. However, from the study carried out by Konetes and McsKeague(2011) came up with certain revelations about the uses of the social networking sites especially, Facebook, The research reported that, “students are using Facebook and other channels to develop their identities, beliefs and stances on various issues such as politics, religion, and work, as well as to pioneer and develop intimate relationships.”

Dangers That Associated in Using Social Networking Sites

Since the above benefits of social networking sites also they have caused some problems for their users, individuals, families, groups and students. Most of their users, these days, prefer to communicate via the sites rather via face-to-face contact or oral communication, thus, making social network their preferred socializing forces.

(Ahmed, 2011, p. 10)reported that one of the dangers of social networks ; cyber or E-crime encourages copyright infringement which has always remain a serious case in dealing with social Networking sites especially about the video clips for instance in the YouTube. Users without considering the terms can easily upload download or watch any

kind of video clip. YouTube for instance was sued several times on these issues. For example Viacom sued YouTube claiming one billion dollar for uploading 160 thousand videos belonging to Viacom without their permission as did the French independent labels collecting society.

Another drawback to social networking is that some users simply share too much information; people can lose their jobs or a friendship over leaking information on social networking. Even if a user of a social site has her privacy settings of highest level, their information can still be passed on by someone on their friends list. It doesn't take much for an angry follower to copy and paste a status or download a picture if they are looking for revenge.

On the following note there are a number of scammers on social networks who may try to steal your personal information; information that can be used for potential crime such as identity theft or fraud.

Furthermore, there has been a recent spike in phishing attacks associate with social media sites Fisher (2011). Many people view social media sites on cell phones or other mobile devices. This makes it harder to distinguish real and fake web sites. Additionally, social media enables attackers to send phishing messages that appear to come from someone that the victim knows.

Research Method

The research design for this study is the descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey seeks to find out certain facts concerning an existing phenomenon. According to (Aina, 2006) descriptive survey is a study which uses the sample data in any systematic investigation to describe and explains what is existent or non-existence on the present status of a phenomenon being investigated. This method is used because the study intends to elicit the opinions of the respondents on use of social

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networking sites among undergraduates' students of Mogadishu University, Mogadishu.

The area of the study is Mogadishu University. The choice of the area was for proximity and to ensure effective distribution and collection of data through the use of a questionnaire. The population of this study comprises the entire undergraduate Students of Mogadishu University.

The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed questionnaire. It was titled the use of social networking sites among undergraduate students of Mogadishu University Mogadishu. The questionnaire consist of two broad parts; Part A and part B. part A is on background and characteristics of the respondents while part B was divided into six (6) clusters. Cluster 1 contain various networking sites used by the respondent with sixteen items while cluster 2 deals with the extents of used of social networking sites by the respondents with sixteen items. Cluster 3 is all about the level of agreement as to the purpose of using social networking sites with eleven items while cluster 4 is on level of agreement as to benefits of social networking sites with seven items. Cluster 5 is the dangers encountered in using social networking sites with nine items.

The questionnaire was homogeneously keyed in a 4-poing scale and the subjects were guided to respond to each item thus: SA-Strongly Agree; A-Agree; SD-Strongly Disagree; D-Disagree.

One hundred and thirty five copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondent (undergraduate student of MU) by the researcher and collected by the researcher to ensure an accurate return rate.

Results

In this part deals with the analysis of data collected from the field. They are presented according to the research questions, and the responses were organized using rank weighted means and simple percentage frequencies.

Research question one: what are the various categories of social network sites and there uses?

Table 1: The Mean Responses on the Various Categories of Social Network Sites Used.

No	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Facebook	127	8	0	0	0
2	WhatsApp	13	95	0	0	27
3	Google+	20	0	5	110	110
4	Twitter	0	57	0	74	4
5	Viber	0	56	0	0	73
6	Skype	1	0	6	4	124

From table 1, majority of the respondents answered that they use the items such Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Viber and also they indicate the use IMO and Youtube sometime as learning tool. The above table indicates 127(135) of respondents are strongly agreed that they use Facebook, so Facebook the first social network that the students use. Skype was reject that is not used by the undergraduate students of Mogadishu University.

Research Questions Two: What are the purposes for using social networking sites?

Table 2: Mean Responses on their Purposes of Using Social Networking Sites.

No	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	I Use social networking sites for communicating and interacting with friends.	126	0	8	1	0
2	I Use social networking sites for online learning.	0	13	3	117	2
3	I Use social networking sites for finding friends online.	0	4	1	3	127
4	I Use social networking sites for leisure and personal socialization.	0	21	5	47	62
5	I use social networking sites for professional activities (searching for job).	7	3	5	119	1
6	I use social networking sites for academic purposes such as group discussion and getting study partners online.	2	126	1	3	3
7	I use social networking sites for watching movies.	1	8	2	123	1
8	I use social networking sites for connecting and interacting with business partners.	1	23	2	1	108
9	I use social networking sites for communicating, mobilizing and organizing national issues like politics, economy and religious matters	1	7	5	0	122
10	I use social networking sites for private messaging, uploading photos and online profiles.	119	10	2	3	1
11	I use social networking sites for updating profile information's.	15	25	12	76	7

From table 2, the decision shows that 126(135) of respondents answered the most the purposes for using social networking sites is for communicating and interacting with friends, second for private messaging, uploading photos and online profiles were 119(135) answered are strongly agreed and third for academic purpose and group discussion and getting study partners.

Research Question Three: What are the benefits of using social networking sites?

Table 3: Mean Responses on the Benefits of Using Social Networking Sites

No	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	It encourages virtual meeting with co-research scholars	2	127	1	2	3
2	It increases self-esteem and well-being.	1	95	33	5	1
3	It helps in research and learning.	0	24	100	11	0
4	It support collaborative and peer to-peer learning.	5	65	55	7	2
5	It helps in strengthening interpersonal relationships.	2	2	25	105	1
6	It promote read and write web skills.	0	19	48	64	4
7	It helps in developing an e-portfolio for future employment	1	8	18	86	22

From table 3, indicates that most of the items are accepted. The accepted benefits of using social networking sites are virtual meeting were 127(135) accepted and it increases self-esteem and well-being 95(135) are accepted. That all the items were accepted as the benefit of using social networking sites.

Research Question Four: What are the dangers associated with social networking sites?

Table 4: Responses on the Dangers Associated with Social Networking Sites.

No	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Lack of privacy	6	107	21	1	0
2	Laziness	0	44	38	49	4
3	Waster times	83	42	7	0	3
4	E-crime, identity theft valuable data, interruption of business, financial loss	0	96	36	3	0
5	Pornography	1	64	0	65	2

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Table 4 shows that all the items were accepted that there is severity attacks associated with social networking sites. Were lack of privacy 107(135) area agreed and e-crime 96(135).

Research Question Five: What are the strategies for ameliorating the dangers of social?

Table 5: Responses on the Strategies for Ameliorating the Dangers of Social Networking Sites

No	Items	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	By not storing information you want to protect on any device that connect to Internet.	0	1	126	2	3
2	By being careful on the kind of information you share about yourself, family and friends	120	8	1	3	0
3	By changing your passwords periodically and not reuse old passwords.	5	1	14	0	112
4	By not posting anything that might embarrass you later, or that you don't want a stranger to know.	128	1	0	3	0
5	By not sharing your username, passwords, social security numbers, credit cards, bank information's, salaries with friends	0	96	33	2	1
6	By being thoughtful and limiting personal information you share	84	5	40	2	1

Table 5 equally shows that all items were accepted as to the strategies for preventing the severity of social networking sites. A respondent specified the following strategies.

1. To take care of kind of people to be your strangers were 120(135) are strongly agree.
2. To look for what kind of information to be stored and share with others were 126(135) are selected neutral, this shows students want to share their information with their friends.

3. Not posting anything that might worried you later, or that you don't want a friend to known were 128(135) are strongly agree
4. Most of the respondents they don't like to change their passwords periodically were 112(135) are strongly disagree because the main reason students are suffering for memorization of the password they mentioned its complex.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, the researcher was discussed the findings in line with the research questions and literature review.

The mean response score representing the rate of agreement in the questionnaire reveal that the Categories of social networking site used by undergraduate student of Mogadishu university, Somalia include Facebook, Whatsapp, IMO, Twitter, Viber, and IMO. The study carried out by Chris (2010, p.6) revealed that some social networking sites such as Facebook, fall in the 'general' categories, they accommodate folks of all interest and backgrounds. On this type of Social Networking Websites, members can often include their interest and they Locate members with similar interests by searching for key words and key phrases. The study further revealed that the main purposes of general social networking websites is to serve as a social platform where people can reunite with old friends; stay connected with current ones and even make new acquaintances.

Purposes for using social networking sites by MU undergraduate students. Respondents responded positively on purpose of using social networking sites. The findings of this study show that MU undergraduate students use social networking sites for different purposes. The investigation related that MU undergraduate students use the social networking sites to communicate with friends, for discussing national issues like politics, economy and religious matters, and for academic

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purposes. With the respect of respondents they didn't use social networking sites watching movies because low of internet speed and high cost.

This means that the social networking sites are platforms for the students to discuss and share ideas and information on national matters, thereby educate themselves on such issues.

The respondents indicated the main benefits of getting when using social networking site: it encourages virtual meeting with co-research scholar; self-esteem and well-being; Research and learning; strengthening interpersonal relationship; read and write web skills etc. In this study with respect to research question four, it was revealed that one of the benefits of using social networking sites is that it helps in research and learning. This is in line with the view of Brennan(2001, p.8)and Notley(2010, p.8) that 'social network help in the school and universities to leverage and complement formal education learning outcomes. The researchers reported that "students are using Facebook and other sites to develop their identities, beliefs and stances on various issues such as politics, religious and work, as well as to pioneer and develop intimate relationship. "Also citing part of the results carried out by Greenhow, Robelia and Hughes,(2009, p.10); Konetes and MC Keagu(2011, p.10) that 'self-esteem, personal validation and value are positively affected by the use of Facebook for many uses especially those who have a low self-worth.

Dangers associated with social networking sites. On the dangers associated with social networking sites and from the responses gathers from questionnaire, E-crime, Internet addiction, laziness, standard crime like, fraud, murder, kidnapping; Immoral act like, pornography, prostitution, cyber-bullying where identified. In line with the research question five, the findings revealed that one of the Dangers of social

networking sites includes cybercrime. Ahmed(2011, p.10) reported that one of the cybercrimes perpetrated through the social networking is copyright infringement. According to Ahmed, copyright infringement also remains a serious case in dealing with social Networking sites (SNSs) especially about the video clips for instance in the YouTube. Users without considering the terms can easily upload, download or watch any kind of video clip. YouTube for instance was used several times on these issues. For example Viacom used YouTube claiming one billion dollar for uploading 160 thousand videos belonging to Viacom without their permission as did the French independent labels collecting society(SPPF) in 2009 over disputed 100 music clips. Claiming to be originally theirs but uploaded onto YouTube.

In line with this research question it was revealed that one of the strategies which were proffered to ameliorate the dangers of social networking is by not publish any kind of information that might worried you later or you don't want to know your friends. Just like what Timm &Perez(2010, p.12) reviewed, "in order to avoid disclosing information to an imposter, users should follow some prudent practices when communicating on social networking sites. Primarily, users should exercise basic caution when communicating and sharing information with online friends.

Conclusions and Recommendation

The heart of the research is the use of social networking sites in Mogadishu University. It looked at the social networking sites which are being used, the extent the purpose of using social networking sites, the benefits of using social networking sites, the threats associated with social networking sites and strategies for protecting the dangers of social network sites. The study followed a descriptive research design wherein a questionnaire was used as the main research tool. Data was gathered

from 135 Mogadishu university students from different faculties. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS. An analysis of the results seems to suggest that the most popular social networking sites in Mogadishu university are Facebook, WhatsApp, IMO, Line, Viber and Twitter in that order. Further, it was also concluded that students used social networking technologies for communicating purposes and they mainly used them to conduct group work. It was also concluded that the most pronounced benefits of social networking sites include that social networking sites virtual meeting, self-esteem and well-being. The main dangers when using social networking sites they meet is lack of privacy and waste of time. Lastly, it was found out that students accepted all migrating methods to secure their account special by being careful on the kind of information you share about yourself, family and friends, by not posting anything that might embarrass you later, or that you don't want a stranger to know.

Recommendation to University Authorities.

1. Although most offaculties learning course named Introduction to computer, so the researcher recommend to add atopics related to social networking sites and its risks of the students. Such topics would be helpful here.
2. It is also recommended to take center stage in promoting the use of social networking sites in education.

Recommendation to Students

Since most of students are heavy users social networking sites at the night when there are at home or internet coffee, so this will led to sleep in the class, so the researcher proposes to avoid addiction and create a balance between their offline and online lives while using the sites.

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