The Impact of Social Networking Sites on Study Habits and Interpersonal Relationships among Vietnamese Students

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Social media has a profound influence on every aspect of human beings nowadays. This study investigated the impact of social networking sites on study habits and interpersonal relationships at the tertiary level. A total of 125 college students from different universities in Hanoi were chosen through a convenience sampling technique. Quantitative methodology was employed for the research instrument and a descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The researchers designed questionnaires with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of at least 0.84 to collect data for the study. Analysis of the data was carried out using frequencies, percentages, means, *t*-tests, and Pearson correlation statistics at the 0.05 alpha level. The findings revealed that students' level of using social networking sites had a negative influence on their study habits and their interpersonal relationships. Based on the findings, it was recommended that regular orientations should be given to students on how and when to use social media to enhance their study habits or to spend time improving their interpersonal relationships with their families, friends, and teachers.

Keywords: interpersonal relationship, social networking sites, learning styles, study habits, ubiquitous

Introduction

Technological innovation has led to the development of many social networking sites (SNSs), which have drawn much attention from netizens. Thomas (2005) writes that "Never before in the history of the planet have so many people - on their own - had the ability to find so much information about so many things and about so many other people" (p. 159). He also emphasizes the impact of the contribution of search engine companies, remarkably Google. Additionally, people are becoming their own editors, researchers, and selectors of entertainment in their homes. Thomas (2005) also states that "personal digital devices can be digitized and therefore shaped, manipulated and transmitted; virtual – these processes can be done at high speed with total ease; mobile – can be done anywhere, anytime by anyone; and personal – can be done by you" (p. 161). Thus, the influence of digital, mobile, personal, and virtual gadgets might impove connectivity, which serves as a basis for the development of the fourth industrial revolution or Industry 4.0 for short, on which Schwab (2016) presented at the World Economic Forum in Geneva, saying that Industry 4.0 strengthens the continuous breakthroughs in fields ranging from gene sequencing to nanotechnology and from renewables to quantum computing. Industry 4.0 cooperates tightly these technologies and their interaction across the physical, digital, and biological domains.

Thanks to SNSs, virtual interpersonal relationships are strengthened to develop a long-term association between them. Nowadays, students use many types of SNSs for different purposes such as updating information, confessions, sharing resources, and entertainment. There are questions about whether SNSs influence the study habits and interpersonal relationships of students in Vietnam in general and those in Hanoi Law University, Vietnam in particular. Although SNSs provide many benefits such as ease and comfort for students, it has been observed that students tend to focus on non-educational, unethical, and inappropriate activities such as useless chatting and using SNSs on their mobile phones, laptops, and other devices. Currently, students

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seem addicted to using their mobile gadgets. They even use mobile devices to get online while the teaching is holding a class. Outside the classroom, students waste a great deal of time on social networking activities; they neglect their studies, which results in poor academic performance (Badri et al., 2017; Langat, 2015; Gok, 2016; Oginni et al., 2016; Perpetua & Kelechi, 2018). Until now, the relationship between the frequent use of SNSs and the effect on interpersonal exchanges has been investigated in many studies to demonstrate whether SNSs help students improve their involvement with other people. The findings in the studies such as Arjun and Juna (2015) and Shakiratul (2013) have shown that students receive negative results from an over-dependence on SNSs. On the other hand, these provisional virtual lives provide chances for those who do not have the confidence to speak face-to-face with other people. It can be more convenient and they feel freer to interact in their virtual societies. Some researches, namely Amin et al. (2016), Bernard and Dzandza (2018), Thomas et al. (2016), and Yamakanith and Gurusamy (2014) support the fact that SNSs contribute to the enhancement of communication. When students log on to SNSs, they feel like they are in heaven and they do not realize that addiction to SNSs can harm their inner self-confidence forever.

Literature Review

Definitions of social networking sites

There are many definitions relating to SNSs. According to the APA Dictionary of Psychology, SNSs are defined as online social networks that consists of a set of interconnected individuals who communicate with each other via computer-based technologies rather than interacting face-to-face. In addition, CALD (2013)1 defines SNSs as websites designed to help people communicate and share information, photographs, etc. with a group. OALD (2015)2 defines an SNS as an application through which users can communicate with each other by adding information, messages, images, etc. The Collins Dictionary3 calls an SNS "a website that allows subscribers to interact, typically by requesting that others add them to their visible list of contacts, by forming or joining subgroups based around shared interests, or publishing content so that a specified group of subscribers can access it." Together with the development and innovations in internet-based connections, SNSs have recently mushroomed. Although some popular SNSs have appeared and disappeared since the internet became popular in the 1990s, SNSs such as Twitter, Facebook, Weibo, and YouTube have drawn a great deal of attention from both businesses and subscribers. Actually, there isn't much difference between the terms 'social network sites' and 'social networking sites'. Therefore, these two phrases are used interchangeably without much misunderstanding. Boyd and Ellison (2007) differentiate between them by arguing that 'networking' refers to the commencement of the relationship the strangers while 'network' covers a broader meaning including not only meeting strangers but also articulating and making their social networks visible. While Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) propose an equivalent term called 'social media', which is "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content" (p. 61). However, they focus only on the technical features that allow subscribers to exploit the facilities of the websites.

Influence of social networking sites on students' school performance

It is necessary for students to engage themselves in school performance to keep updated about their schooling activities. Maslowski (2001) claims that school performance involves "the effectiveness and efficiency of the schooling process" (p. 13). The difference between effectiveness and efficiency is that the accomplishment of the school's objectives reflects effectiveness while efficiency refers to the conditions through which the objectives were completed in a timely and cost-effective manner. In a broader view, the schools' objectives are to supply learners with effective and efficient learning approaches and environments.

When examining whether SNSs help or harmfully the students' school performance, Alwagait et al. (2015) carried out research on 108 students in Saudi Arabia and concluded that the usage of SNSs by students did not

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1 CALD (2013). Social networking site: 1 the use of websites and other internet services to communicate with other people and make friends. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary - 4th Edition*. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/social-networking-site

2 OALD (2015). Social network noun 1 a social networking site or application through which users can communicate with each other by adding information, messages, images, etc. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 9th edition © Oxford University Press, 2015*

3 COBUILD 9th Ed. (2018). *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's Dictionary: The Source of Authentic English*. Glasgow: HarperCollins UK; Ninth Edition, Ninth edition.

have a negative effect on their GPA scores. This matches the findings of Sutherland et al. (2018), who investigated whether SNSs facilitated engagement in offline environments with peers within university communities. The study claimed that social media profiles improve students' communication within their academic community. Similarly, an empirical study conducted by Erick (2015) concluded that SNSs have a positive effect on students' academic performance. Badri et al. (2017) also suggested that students should choose suitable SNSs because their SNSs help them relieve the stress in their lives. In addition, Sandra and Ismail (2016) examined the impact of the use of social media on students' academic performance in Malaysian tertiary institutions. Their findings revealed that, under the supervision and thorough guidance of the universities and colleges, their students exploited the resources from SNSs, which eventually resulted in a positive impact on their academic performance. Thus, SNSs can increase convenience and be useful resources for students.

Doubts might arise whether SNSs have a positive effect on students' performance. Rabbani et al. (2015) investigated the effect of SNSs on student performance. Their findings revealed that students use SNSs for connecting with other people or for enjoyment; they do not use SNSs for academic purposes. In another research study on the relationship between the use of SNSs and communication skills, Shakiratul (2013) claimed that students suffer from poor communication skills because they are highly addicted to SNSs and disengaging from reality. He also recommended that students cut down on the time spent on SNSs and spend more time communicating with real people in the real world, face-to-face, not just via virtual settings. Bernard and Dzandza (2018) investigated the level of engagement of students at the University of Ghana on SNSs and determined the effect of their use on their academic work. They claimed that students' academic lives were negatively influenced due to it distracting their attention. SNSs have a negative effect on student achievement according to a study by Elizabeth (2012). Similarly, Wong et al. (2017) found that being addicted to SNSs led students to acquire less new knowledge and be lazier regarding outdoor activities.

Influence of social networking sites on study habits

This section discusses the influence of SNSs on study habits with the positive aspects first. Thanks to the availability and convenience of the internet, SNSs arm students with a powerful tool to acquire knowledge from a variety of internet resources via search engines such as Google. SNSs have become an educational tool thanks to students' ability to use search engines. SNSs can also serve as a 'meetup' for students to exchange ideas with their friends. The more students have good study habits and various social skills, the more valuable and useful the social networking sites can be (Arjun & Juna, 2015). The positive influence of SNSs on study habits is also reflected in the findings by Salman, Mohannad, and Joannes (2016) on social media utilization and the study habits of nursing students at Ha'il University. They claimed that the more the nursing students exploited SNSs, the better they improved their study habits. Thus, the utilization of SNSs plays an important role in predicting students' study habits. Furthermore, Thomas, et al. (2016) also presented their findings with the conclusion that SNSs may improve the study habits of nursing students in the College of Nursing.

On the other hand, many other studies have proved that SNSs have negatively influenced students' study habits. The frequent use of SNSs by students at Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education distracted them from the lecture notes and students either failed to submit or carry out their assignments (Perpetua & Kelechi, 2018). These findings are somewhat similar to those of other previous studies (Ariel & Raymund, 2015; Langat, 2015) whose results revealed that SNSs could negatively influence students' study behavior and academic progress. Tolga (2016) conducted research at a vocational school of higher education with 220 students. The author pointed out that SNSs can have a negative impact on students' studying and habits. Simultaneously, Oginni et al. (2016) examined the influence of students' engagement with social networks on their study habits and cognitive skills in science classrooms. Their findings indicated that SNSs can have a bad effect on study habits because of continuous students' engagement via online social networks. In short, it has not been widely concluded whether SNSs are good or bad for students' study habits.

Influence of social networking sites on interpersonal relationships

Industry 4.0 speeds up more activities happening on the internet. New terms appear overnight, such as tele-working, tele-sales, and e-learning. In a thesis by Mwangi (2013) on the impact of SNSs among teenagers, the results revealed that teenagers develop positive relationships thanks to SNSs; they think that the world would

be boring without them. Yamakanith and Gurusamy (2014) also share the same views when pointing out that SNSs have improved communication among college students and their family members, friends, and teachers. Although students use different SNS applications, their overall social connectedness has greatly improved (Jesse, 2016). Aishwarya and Vinod (2017) also claimed that using SNSs improves communication for users who prefer participating in SNSs more than face-to-face communication.

On the contrary, many researches blame SNSs for hindering the closeness of interpersonal relationships. Drussell (2012) investigated the influence of SNSs on interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills among college freshmen and the findings pointed to the importance of face-to-face interactions between individuals for resolving conflicts. Similarly, Hamza (2013) accused Facebook of reducing the desire for interpersonal communication among students, which resembled the findings of Pritta's research published in 2014. The findings strongly emphasized that face-to-face interactions are required for serious and personal conversations to avoid the misundestanding that people can have when communicating via SNSs. The findings also confirmed that while the influence of social media is acknowledged, it cannot completely replace the interactions of human beings. Due to the fast pace of life, people now depend heavily on SNSs; they seem to avoid face-to-face communication by switching over to mobile phones (Subramanian, 2017). The use of SNSs is highly influential as using SNSs might ease or create family tension if family members who live far away use SNSs for connectedness to avoid becoming sad or lonely, but they cannot usually communicate with each other over SNSs (Anika et al., 2015; Saida, 2017). Spencer (2018) shared the same ideas by accusing SNSs of decreasing the quality of family relationships. Alona, Arnon, and Rebecca (2015) concluded that there was a positive association in the teacher-student relationships on SNSs, especially Facebook. Arnon and Alona (2017) also carried out research on the significant associations between student-teacher relationships and student-teacher Facebook-mediated communication. Similar to their previous study in 2013, they claimed that students feel it is comfortable and convenient to befriend teachers via Facebook. Another research study conducted by Arnon (2018) revealed that one-to-one computing programs positively affect student-teacher relationships. In conclusion, the effects of SNS use on students' interpersonal relationships is still controversial.

This study investigates the hypotheses that:

1. There is no influence from SNSs on students' study habits and the interpersonal relationships with their families, friends, and teachers.
2. There is no difference in the use of SNSs between male and female students.

Methodology

Participants

Through a convenience sampling technique, 125 respondents were chosen, namely 40 freshmen, 50 sophomores, 22 juniors, and 13 seniors. Students walking past the gates to the campuses in Hanoi were randomly invited to be the research participants. Over 500 students were invited to answer the questionnaires, but approximately 135 passers-by declined to participate. After two days of collecting data, the screening process was implemented to ascertain that all participants had taken it seriously. The 365 answered survey questionnaires were screened and 240 answer sheets were rejected as the passers-by had not correctly filled them out in spite of the thorough guided instructions. The final sample consisted of 61 male students (48.8%) and 64 female students (51.2%). Of these respondents, 25.6% were aged 18, 29.6% were 19 years old, 26.4% were 20, and 18.4% were 21 years old or older. The participants were almost all single (118 single, 7 married). They resided in rural areas (50.4%), mountainous areas (29.6%), and urban areas (20%).

Measures

The survey questionnaire consisted of demographic data, the use of devices, the places where they engaged with SNSs, the frequency of visits, and the length of engagement times.

The following limits of description were also used.

	Limits of Description	Qualitative Interpretation
5	4.2 – 5.0	very high
4	3.4 – 4.19	high
3	2.6 – 3.39	moderate
2	1.8 – 2.59	low
1	1.0 – 1.79	very low

Procedure

The researcher-made survey questionnaire was presented to five experts on educational assessment and accreditation for content validation. The questionnaire was then fine-tuned with a group of 70 students who participated in a pilot study to validate the strengths and weaknesses of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha for the respondent's reasons for use of SNSs was .952 for 20 items. A 20-item scale questioning the participants on social networking and their study habits yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .910. Similarly, three 10-item scales investigating interpersonal relationships with the respondents' family, friends, and teachers returned Cronbach's alphas of .837, .834, and .842, respectively. Finally, the five experts were again consulted for the finalization of the questionnaire before the researcher personally administered it.

The author assigned a score to each of the 125 participants based on their self-reports of SNS use. Those who reported "never" were assigned a score of 1. Those who reported at least once per month earned a 2, at least once per week earned a score of 3, at least once each day earned a 4, and those who reported more than five times per day were assigned a 5. There were 20 items for "Study Habits." The author also reversed scored items 1, 2, 3, and 18 (5 became 1 & vice versa, 4 becomes 2 & vice versa, & 3 remained 3). Then he added the scores for each of the 20 items under "Study Habits" such that a score of 5 indicated total agreement and a score of 1 indicated total disagreement. Thus, each participant could earn a score between 20 and 100. He then ran correlation coefficients between SNS use and total Study Habit score.

There were 10 items each in the Families, Friends, and Teachers categories. All of these items were scored in a positive direction. Thus, total scores on Families were correlated with self-reports of SNS use. The same procedure was used for the Friends and Teachers categories. Furthermore, a *t*-test was used to test the significant difference of respondent's interpersonal relationships in terms of the profile variable gender.

The questionnaires were treated with utmost confidentiality. All collected data were organized, summarized, analyzed, and interpreted. IBM SPSS software version 25 was used for the treatment of the collected data.

Results and Discussion

In terms of the communication tools the participants used to get connected to SNSs, mobile phones were used popularly with 52 users, which made up 41.6%, followed by 43 laptop users (34.4%), the lowest number of respondents used their desktops for participating in SNSs – 30 students (24%). According to Vietnam Internet statistics 2019[4], the number of the internet users who accessed via mobile devices was 61.73 million, which accounted for 96% of the 64 million internet users in Vietnam. Regarding the venues where participants joined SNSs, school was the most popular with 64 respondents logging on to SNSs (51.2%). The second place was their homes for 41 students (32.8%). The bottom rank belonged to the internet cafes with 20 participants, accounting for 16%. Wifi hotpots are ubiquitous in public places in Vietnam, which was ranked 75 over 200 countries in the worldwide broadband speed league 2019 (Cable organization, 2019)[5]. However, students do not frequently connect to SNSs at internet cafes.

The Table 1 presents the frequency of usage on SNSs by the participants. Zalo, YouTube, and Facebook were the most frequently used, with mean scores of 4.03, 4.02, and 3.49, respectively. Zalo is one of the most common

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[4] Vietnam Internet statistics 2019. https://vnetwork.vn/en/news/cac-so-lieu-thong-ke-internet-viet-nam-2019
[5] Worldwide broadband speed league 2019. https://www.cable.co.uk/broadband/speed/worldwide-speed-league/

social networking applications in Vietnam. Respondents also used Instagram for sharing their pictures to a moderate degree. WhatsApp, Viber, Twitter, and LinkedIn were on the lower end according to the participants' preferences. Lastly, Google Plus and other similar sites did not attract the attention of the respondents, they were at very low levels. Overall, the respondents mainly used the SNSs for the purpose of communication and entertainment.

Table 1
The frequency of usage on social networking sites

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Facebook	125	1	5	3.49	1.175
Twitter	125	1	5	2.15	1.129
Zalo	125	1	5	4.03	1.177
LinkedIn	125	1	5	2.10	1.054
Instagram	125	1	5	2.83	1.120
Viber	125	1	4	2.35	1.072
WhatsApp	125	1	4	2.47	.921
YouTube	125	3	5	4.02	.615
Google Plus	125	1	4	1.59	.834
Other sites	125	1	2	1.42	.495
Valid N (listwise)	125				

When asked about the frequency that the participants visited a social networking site, the results showed that 64 respondents visited at least one time each day, which accounted for 51.2%, the highest rate. It's quite astonishing to know that 34 participants (27.2%) logged on a social networking site more than five times each day. The third rank was 15 participants (12%) who surfed it at least once each week. The smallest figure was 12 respondents (9.6%); they confessed that they only joined a social networking site at least once each month. Generally, students spent a lot of time on SNSs and did not have any difficulties connecting to the internet.

Regarding the number of hours the respondents spent on SNSs per day, 49 students (39.2%) stated that they spent five hours or more. For the length of 3-4 hours and 4-5 hours, the respondents shared the same numbers 30 students each, meaning 24% each. Only 16 participants or 12.8% answered that they spent one or two hours per day visiting SNSs. We can infer from these numbers that students have a chance to connect to the internet at a high level. They do not have any difficulties connecting to SNSs.

Considering the respondents' reasons for using SNSs, the results showed that the overall weighed means were high (3.54). When eliciting the participants' viewpoints, students confessed that sharing and posting content (3.22), and chatting and talking online (3.03) were at moderate levels. Other items were at high levels, namely reading content (3.45), viewing photos and videos (3.52), commenting and replying to others (3.42), expressing one's thoughts and ideas (3.52), uploading photos and videos (3.66), making new contacts (4.00), playing online games (3.45), advocating for a cause (3.52), watching virtual people (3.45), making appointments (3.95), find information for their studies (3.45), getting information about contacts (3.52), teaching cooking recipes, decorating, etc. (3.66), sharing interests (3.58), keeping in touch (3.90), editing pictures with designs and layouts (3.45), gathering advice and opinions from others (3.52), and for relaxation (3.46). The evolution of the internet is so fast that people find it hard to imagine the internet disappearing. Connecting the world has supplied people with new opportunities, new challenges, and new partners, but also new dangers (Thomas, 2005). Similarly, participants in this study were eager to make new contacts using SNSs. They also found that making appointments though SNSs was useful, convenient, and easy for keeping in touch with other people. However, the respondents were reluctant to share or post content on their SNSs. From this, we can infer that they are afraid of harassment or bullying on SNSs. The results also made it known that the respondents did not want to waste time chatting and talking online.

Table 2 presents the problems that the respondents experienced when using SNSs. Similarly, the figures pointed out that respondents encountered a high overall weighted mean. SNSs allow the respondents to post photos, show their offline behaviors, or send threatening messages to others. Practically, personal privacy is

violated when the law on cybersecurity is not strictly complied with. For example, the respondents claimed that they did not want their private instant messages, text messages, or e-mails to be disclosed illegally. It can be inferred that the participants do not want to make some of their personal matters public, they want to keep them reserved for the sake of avoiding problems with other people. Other problems such as harmful conversations, emotional distress, harassment, cyberbullying or sexual advances have been shown to be common. Actually, although many SNSs have listed some rules or warnings on their sites, no strict policies are in place to make sure that the participants comply with all these regulations, which are the sources of the problems. Spending a lot of time on SNSs can also cause some health problems. Stomachaches, sleeping problems, or headaches are the symptoms of less movement and habit changes. It is clear that when normal habits are disrupted, this can harm people's health. The findings in Table 2 also show that the participants suffered from health problems. Emotional affection was high. Real-world conflicts, danger regarding pedophiles, laziness for finishing homework assignments on time, and narcissistic tendencies or too much love for self were confessed by the participants. They spent too much time getting online, so the virtual world separated them from their real lives and the participants were negatively influenced by spending too much time on cyberspace. It is easy to understand that the relationships with their family and friends or school performance were impacted. In order to increase the number of interactions and attract more participants, most SNSs are linked to cyber games so that users do not feel bored and the virtual world which poisons the communities of SNSs is more attractive.

Table 2
The related social networking problems of respondents

		Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1	I am permitted to be exposed to harassment, bullying, or sexual advances because of social networking.	3.45	high
2	I am permitted to publicize private instant messages, text messages or e-mails because of social networking.	2.50	low
3	I am permitted to post threatening messages because of social networking.	3.45	high
4	I am permitted to post photos that will cause embarrassment and spreading of rumors because of social networking.	3.52	high
5	I experience emotional distress because of social networking.	3.45	high
6	I conflict with others because of social networking.	3.52	high
7	I am in greater danger regarding pedophiles because of social networking.	3.66	high
8	I experience harmful conversations because of social networking.	4.00	high
9	I share too much information about name, date of birth, and location causing others to copy my identity.	3.45	high
10	I am permitted to express online expressions of offline behaviors such as bullying, clique-forming, and even sexual experimentation because of social networking.	3.52	high
11	I am prone to internet addiction because of social networking.	3.45	high
12	I find difficulty in sleeping and forgetting to eat because of social networking.	3.95	high
13	I have gap with my parents in terms of knowledge and technical skills because of social networking.	3.45	high
14	My focus on my studies is being blocked because of social networking.	3.52	high
15	I get lazy about doing work because of the over-usage of social networking.	3.66	high
16	I am distracted during instruction time and experience a negative impact on my learning environment because of social networking.	3.58	high
17	I experience stomachaches, sleeping problems, and headaches because of regular social networking use.	3.94	high
18	I show narcissistic tendencies or too much love for self because of too much posting of my photos.	3.45	high
19	I experience harassment or cyber bullying because of social networking.	3.52	high
20	I am addicted to cyber games because of social networking.	3.46	high
	Overall weighted mean	**3.52**	**high**

Table 3 presents the effect of SNSs on the study habits. From the findings, it can be seen that using SNSs impacted the understanding of the textbooks and professors. Students paid too much attention to the websites and apps, or they might think about how to make their virtual world better, such as their characters, their farm house, or their virtual families. When reading books or listening to their professors, they were obsessed by their virtual sites, which led to the poor school achievement (Bernard & Dzandza, 2018; Elizabeth, 2012). Using SNSs to discuss lessons with peers was not preferred by the respondents. This fact seems quite surprising because SNSs are so popular and easy to connect to. Students use SNSs for connecting with other people and for enjoyment, not for the sake of academic achievement (Rabbani et al., 2015). SNSs did not contribute positively to the acquisition of English skills, written expressions, or creativity according to the remarks of the students.

English is acquired as a foreign language (EFL) in Vietnam, so students can benefit from using SNSs for their purpose of learning English through making friends with people from around the world, or registering in various forums on the internet. SNSs, however, only had a minor influence on Vietnamese students in terms of acquiring English. It is interesting to question students about whether they prioritized academic-related activities. The finding revealed that no preference for academic purposes was shown in this case. Similarly, their reading and writing skills did not receive any improvement when using SNSs. In general, students do not use SNSs for the purpose of improving their study habits (Oginni et al., 2016). Using SNSs to arrange group discussions with their classmates and finding time to study were rated at moderate levels. The respondents seemed indifferent to their studies; they were very busy getting online or taking care of their personal matters, which put them in danger as this deterred them from improving in their studies (Alwagait et al., 2015; Sutherland et al., 2018). Due to not focusing on their studies, they often failed to hand in their assignments because they spent much time on SNSs. There should be strict policies in schools for those who do not obey the teachers' instructions. Students' academic weaknesses due to SNSs were also found in other studies (Langat, 2015; Perpetua & Kelechi, 2018). Thus, their study habits were negatively influenced by using SNSs to a certain extent.

Table 3
The extent of the effect of SNSs on study habits

		Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1	I am late handing in assignments because I spent time on a social networking site instead of doing homework	3.78	high
2	I spend much of my time on a social networking site, thus it interferes with my ability to study or complete assignments.	3.50	high
3	I still keep up with the required readings in school even when doing social networking.	3.52	high
4	I use social networking for collaborative learning.	3.66	high
5	I still do well on my exams even when doing social networking.	3.55	high
6	I am provided with academic activities and establish an interaction with peers and teachers in the school through social networking	3.90	high
7	I am able to develop research skills because of social networking.	3.45	high
8	I can arrange group discussions with my classmates through the use of social networking and this improves my academic performance.	3.34	moderate
9	I still find time to study even when doing social networking.	3.14	moderate
10	I learn with social networking, it helps me participate in class discussions.	4.07	high
11	I am able to improve my interactions with classmates and lecturers via social networking.	3.45	high
12	I still get good grades even when I do social networking.	3.52	high
13	I am able to improve my communication skills because of social networking.	3.66	high
14	I feel that my opinions have been taken into account in the class because of social networking.	3.41	high
15	I understand my textbooks and my professors because of social networking.	2.20	low
16	I have the opportunity to discuss lessons with peers because of social networking.	2.02	low
17	I am able to reinforce my skills in English, written expression, and creativity because of social networking.	2.14	low
18	I tend to focus on networking and that blocks my focus on my studies.	3.52	high

		Weighted Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
19	I prioritize academic-related activities over social networking.	2.02	low
20	I am able to improve my reading and writing skills because of social networking.	2.11	low
	Overall weighted mean	**3.19**	**moderate**

When asked about the interpersonal relationships of respondents with their family, the participants had more negative responses to the questions about desiring to interact more with family (2.02), prioritizing having quality time with family (2.11), keeping in touch with family (2.02), better communication with family (2.11), doing the chores and helping their families (2.02), and enjoying having time with their families (2.11). These findings revealed that students tended to be less open with their family. They did not feel involved in their daily lives. Sadly, they wanted to live within their own world by participating in SNSs. The greater use of SNSs is highly influential to the breakdown of family relationships (Anika et al., 2015; Saida, 2017; Spencer, 2018). Surprisingly, the participants were more positive about some of the questions, particularly expressing themselves more with their families (3.45), balancing their time with their family (3.52), relating more and better with their family (4.07), and obeying the rules of their parents (3.45). After taking a serious look at these findings, some concerns surfaced because of the vague lines between these items. Some items were designed with nearly the same contents but they received different responses. The respondents were not really sure about their answers. Nevertheless, the overall weighted mean was 2.69, meaning to a moderate extent.

In terms of the students' connectedness with their friends through SNSs, the respondents showed low levels for the main ideas of questions such as interacting more with their friends (2.20), relating more with friends (2.02), being on good terms with friends (2.14), communicating better with friends (2.02), and enjoying spending time with friends (2.20). SNSs hindered the closeness of relationships with friends. Students became reserved and they did not become the focus of the attention with their friends (Drussell, 2012; Hamza, 2013; Subramanian, 2017; Wong et al., 2017). For other questions, they reported higher levels of interest, namely keeping in touch with friends (3.52), spending more time with friends, like hanging out with them (3.45), expressing themselves more with friends (3.52), being open to sharing their experiences with friends (3.66), and being ready to help friends when needed (3.58). These items were supported by the findings in other studies (Aishwarya & Vinod, 2017; Jesse, 2016; Mwangi, 2013; Yamakanith & Gurusamy, 2014). In general, the overall weighted mean was at a moderate level (2.83). In the same situation as relationships with their family, the participants were not rigid in their answers, some of the nearly same meanings produced different results.

With regards to the interpersonal relationships of respondents with their teachers, the findings revealed that the respondents reported lower weighted means for interacting more with teachers (2.12), focusing on the lesson being discussed by teachers (2.02), communicating with teachers easily (2.12), being helped much better in terms of asking teachers regarding school work (2.00), easily talking to or approaching teachers (2.12), and feeling valuable to teachers (2.00). From these findings, it can be inferred that students felt unwilling to communicate with their teachers, even when they had problems regarding school work. The reasons did not come from the difficulties talking to or approaching teachers. They might feel shy to communicate because they thought that they were not important to their teachers. The more students communicated with their teachers, the more successful they would be (Alona et al., 2015; Arnon & Alona, 2017). They also showed high levels of interest in expressing themselves more to teachers (3.42), easily opening up about their concerns/problems with teachers (3.46), prioritizing tasks given by teachers (4.06), and interacting with teachers (3.42). These findings highlighted the fact that face-to-face communication might not be of interest to students. Thanks to SNSs, students felt more comfortable discussing personal matters with their teachers. SNSs were useful for some students as an available means of communication with their teachers. In addition, students could benefit from using SNSs for doing their tasks given by their teachers. They could search the internet or consult forums or sites (Arnon, 2018; Arnon & Alona, 2017). On the whole, the overall weighted mean for this part was also at a moderate level (2.67).

Table 4 presents the chi-square test on the significant relationship between the respondents' use of SNSs and their connectedness with their study habits, families, friends, and teachers. The findings revealed that there was a significant relationship, as the four values were under 0.05. That means SNSs affect students' study habits as well as their relationships with their families, friends, and teachers.

Table 4
Relationship between the respondents' use of SNSs and their surroundings

	X²⁻ value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Decision at .05 level
Their study habits	2150.089	1716	.000	significant
Their families	1388.239	924	.000	significant
Their friends	1362.854	1012	.000	significant
Their teachers	1091.881	968	.003	significant

Table 5 presents the *t*-test analysis on the significant difference of the respondents' reasons for use of SNSs in relation to gender. As shown in Table 5, the Levene's test had *sig.* 0.150, which is higher than the preset value 0.05. Therefore, the results in the row "Equal variances assumed" are taken into account. Thus, the finding shows that there was no difference in the reason for use of SNSs when grouped according to gender. Moreover, *sig.* (2-tailed) 0.755 confirmed that this figure was higher than the 95% confidence level so that the conclusion was the same with the Levene's test. The mean in the group statistics also discloses the fact that the difference between the group was not high. The mean in the male row was 3.516 compared with that of 3.5570 for the female students. Therefore, the reasons for using SNSs between male and female students were not different.

Table 5
Difference between respondents' reasons for use of SNSs when grouped according to gender

Group Statistics	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Reason	Male	61	3.5156	.80278	.10279
	Female	64	3.5570	.67799	.08475

Reasons for use of SNSs and gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Reasons for use of SNSs	Equal variances assumed	2.093	.150	-.312	123	.755	-.04146	.13268	-.30409	.22118
	Equal variances not assumed			-.311	117.563	.756	-.04146	.13322	-.30528	.22236

Table 6 deals with the relationship between social networking influence with gender. As seen from the group statistics, the mean presented little difference in the figures 3.5090 for male students and 3.5398 for female students. To put it simply, the *sig.* 0.197 in the Levene's test for equality of variances and sig. 0.824 (2-tailed) in t-test for equality of means were higher than the preset value 0.05. Therefore, the conclusion was that social networking influence affected the genders somewhat equally.

Table 6
The relationship between social networking influence with gender

Group Statistics	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Social Networking Influence	Male	61	3.5090	.83469	.10687
	Female	64	3.5398	.71232	.08904

Reasons for use of SNSs and gender

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | |
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Social Networking influence	Equal variances assumed	1.685	.197	-.222	123	.824	-.03083	.13857	-.30513	.24347
	Equal variances not assumed			-.222	118.040	.825	-.03083	.13910	-.30629	.24463

Conclusion

With the ubiquity of communication devices, together with the fast development and innovation in terms of information and communications technology, SNSs have a far-reaching influence on all aspects of life. Regarding this study, which only focuses on the impact of SNSs on students' study habits and the interpersonal relationships with their families, friends, and teachers, the outcomes prove that that students' communication skills could be negatively affected by their addiction to SNSs. By being highly addicted, students have a tendency to disengage themselves from reality, which results from wasting all their time keeping updated on the internet. As a result, the overuse of the internet leads to their poor communication skills with their surroundings. Their socialization with their teachers, friends, and families is, to some extent, badly affected due to the lack of the exchange of information in real life. Obviously, frequent face-to-face interactions help students build a better rapport with other people in the real world. Apart from the poor interchange with other people, as discussed above, this study has shown that negative academic performance is a result of students being distracted from their studies because they spend too much time on SNSs. Thus, the overuse of SNSs could have serious consequences on the academic lives of students, which might lead to harmful career prospects for students when they cannot meet the demands of the real world after graduation.

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