Relationship between Social Networking Addiction and Academic Performance in Students of University

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There is no doubt whatsoever that social networks affects our lives both positively and negatively. Social media addiction is one of the negative impacts of social networking and affects students on a global scale. The research seeks to find out whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the patterns of social addiction and the academic performance by gender of students at the university. The study used the descriptive approach, through a random sample of 383 students from Al Ain University, United Arab Emirates. The results of the study showed a strong negative relationship between social media addiction and academic performance. 68.93% (264 participants), were within the moderate level of addiction, and the Mann-Whitney U test for nominal qualitative variables revealed that social networking addiction was higher. In male participants compared to social networking addiction in female participants. The results of the research are important at the local level due to the social and economic well-being of the Emirati society, and consequently the spread of the Internet in a wide field and the ease of children's possession of information technology tools. The researchers recommend conducting more studies at the local and global levels to spread awareness of the effects of this phenomenon. We suggested to university leaders, lecturers, and parents to adopt effective educational and training measures in guiding children to exploit social networks in effective education and to advise them about the dangers of Internet addiction and unhelpful networks.

Keywords: networking, performance, social media, students, technology

INTRODUCTION

In its simple form, social networking addiction refers to the uncontrollable desire or urge to use social networking sites, regardless of its impacts on other important aspects of life. Social networks include the applications as well as websites that allow the user to download, watch or share contents such as music, entertainment, and so on. Examples of social networking sites include Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, Whatsapp, Twitter, Telegram, Skype, and so on. Generally social networking appears harmless as a

way of relaxing and entertainment (Silomba, 2022). Most people use social networking to share information as well as to 'pass time'. However, too much of social networking can have physical, social, psychological, as well as emotional impacts on the user. Social networking is actually addictive (Arness & Ollis, T; Ahmad & Abdelrahman, 2018).

The number of social network users in the world is gradually increasing, day in day out. Most people nowadays, especially the youth, use social networking on a daily basis. Some use it to market their services or products, while some use it just for entertainment purposes (Streimikiene et al., 2021). Actually, some of the youths are earning a living from social networks such as YouTube and Instagram as influences or through the number of views or subscribers in their channels. As such, pros as well as cons for social networking among the youths.

On the other hand, studies indicate that teachers and students need the presence of social networks in the educational process and lessons, as they enhance the sustainability of lifelong education by providing appropriate learning methods and proposing an adequate educational and learning environment (Salleh et al., 2019).

One of the population groups that have been significantly affected by social networking is the students. While some students have been using social networks for academic purposes such as e learning, others use it just for entertainment purposes. Either way, the effects of social networking is significantly felt in their academic performances (Kwok et al., 2021). This has been proven by numerous research studies that sought to identify the real nature of the relationship between social networking and students' academic performance.

In Addition, "With the increase use of new technology for instruction and communicating with others and the popularity of the Internet (Ryding and Kuss, 2020), still there individuals who are not addicted to social network usage may still be distressed about app's compulsive use, research on Facebook users found that about 20% of college students were described as compulsive users (Iskandar,2021). Social Network Sites (SNS) have become an activity that is done primarily on the Internet. New technologies have the potential to support all generations. In many cases technology must be retrofitted to meet the diverse needs of all users" (Abdelraheem & Ahmed, 2018, 1).

However, the nature of the relationship between social networking addiction and students performance at Al Ain University remains unclear. It is for this reason that this study was designed and completely implemented to identify the exact nature of the relationship between social networking addiction and Al Ain University students' academic performance, because the academic achievements are important for students they greatly influence a person's future success (Al Majali, 2020). Nowadays, the technological resources used in the digital ecologies of learning have generated a series of benefits and potentialities with respect to the traditional methods of content transmission, as they allow for a greater access to knowledge and more collaborative methodologies, attending to the characteristics of each individual and potentiating the autonomous learning of students (Esteban et al,. 2022, 53).

Review of Literature

Social networking and student's academic performance

Numerous empirical studies in the past have sought to identify the relationship between social networking addiction and student's academic performance among students in various places and study institutions in the world. Majority of similar studies have described the negative interrelation between students' social networking addiction and their academic performance.

Studies have found that social networking addiction leads to a lower score in the students' Grade Point Average (GPA). According to a study by Al-Yafi et al. (2018) on Qatar students, Learners who were found addicted to social networking were found to have recorded a lower score in their Grade Point Average (GPA) compared to those students who were not addicted. Al Yafi study revealed that there is no linear correlation between the participant's academic performance and the social network sites. However, after dividing the participants into three groups; low usage (passive users), normal usage (engaged users), and high usage (addicted users), this study revealed that; the normal usage group (engaged users) had a better performance compared to the low usage group and addicted users.

Additionally, there was no statistically significant difference between the low usage group and the addicted users (Al-Yafi et al., 2018). As such, this study concludes that, usage of social networks by students should be limited to normal usage or engaged social network usage. This means that addicted social network usage, as well as passive or low usage can lead to low academic performance.

In another study done among Indian Medical students by Kumar et al. (2018), it was revealed that; the study concluded that; students' addiction to social networking and internet had adverse effects on their academic performance as well as their mental health conditions. As such, this study recommended mental counseling for the high-risk individuals.

Kim et al. (2017) also conducted a study of student's academic performance based on their purpose of social network usage among Korean students. The study revealed that the students who had a higher usage of social networks for general and non-academic purposes recorded a lower academic performance compared to the students who had a lower usage of social networks for general and non-academic purposes. As such, the study concludes that the usage of social network sites among students should be limited to academic purposes and not for general and non-academic reasons.

Upadhayay and Guragain (2017) found that, there is a negative correlation between social networking addiction and the students' classroom concentration and academic performance. This study found out that students who are addicted to social networking record substandard academic performance as well as poor levels of classroom attention or concentration.

In another cross-sectional study, Imani et al. (2018) among the students of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences; students' addiction to social networking and internet

was found to be significantly interrelated to academic fatigue. In addition, there was statistically significant interrelationship between students' addiction to social networking and lack of academic motivation, emotional exhaustion, and inefficacy subscale. This means that, internet addiction among students exposes them to negative conditions, which results in poor performance at school, including educational burnout or fatigue.

Social networking and social and physical well-being

Studies have also revealed that students' addiction to social networking is statistically significantly related to their academic performance as well as their social and physical well-being. In a study by Ndubuaku et al. (2020), university students in Nigeria were found to have different levels of social networking usage. The usage of social networking sites among the students was found to be very high with almost every student adopting social media networking. A significant number of postgraduate students repeated, that the use of social networking sites significantly impacted their concentration on their research work and activities.

In a study by Sumen & Evgin (2021), a high number of students in a university education setting are found to be addicted to social media networking. In this study, social media addicted is established to impact negatively on the performance of students in classroom environments. The research work populates two reasons that may be contributing to the poor performance amongst students who are addicted to social media networks. One of the reason is that students who are addicted to social media networks often have low quality of sleep. This contributes to mental instability to a particular extent, which results to poor performance. The other reason is that students who are addicted to social media networks often have psychological problems. This consequently contributes to mental instability, which results to lack of composure academically leading to poor performance.

Hou et al. (2020) also supports the correlation between social media addiction, psychological health and performance of students. This study establishes that social media addiction positively contributes to anxiety, stress and depression, which affects performance negatively in the long run.

Habes et al. (2019) used the YouTube perspective to assess the relationship between the Yarmouk University student's use of social networking and their academic performance in Jordan. This study found out that; that, there is a statistically significant correlation between students' academic performance and their level of social networking usage.

Abu-Shanab and Al-Tarawneh (2015) found that there is a significant correlation between high school student's academic performances and their use of social networking media. While using the Grade Point Average (GPA) of high school students, the study analyzed the influence of Facebook use on students' performance. With regards to the total time spent on Facebook and internet, this study found out that there was a negative interrelation between a high school student's academic performance and the total time that the student spent on Facebook and internet. The study concludes that,

the amount of time that students spent on Facebook should be controlled in order to boost their academic performance at high school.

Various scholars have theorized about the issue of social networking addiction. Through their developed theories, scholars seek to explain the issue of social networking addiction from its origin and impacts. There are numerous theories about the addiction of social networking and internet, as well as the impacts of that addiction.

Theoretical explanation for social networking addiction

Theories have explained why people get used to social networking. Ahmad (2018) theorized that social networking addiction is related to dopamine release in the body. In what is normally referred to as the biomedical explanation of addiction, this theory likens social networking addictions to other types of addictions such as gambling addiction, video game addiction, food addiction, drugs and substance addiction, and so on. This explains why students become addicted to social networking. According to Cherney (2020), as social networking and internet gets to calm and relax the user's mind, it affects his or her brain. Specifically, dopamine levels in the brain rises. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter or a chemical in the brain that controls pleasure in a person. This makes the social network user to develop an irresistible urge or addiction (Zhang et al., 2018). Actually, research studies have found that it is easier to overcome alcohol or tobacco addiction, compared to overcoming social networking and internet addiction (Tang and Koh, 2017). A good number of the addicted individuals have indicated that they are afraid of missing 'something important' from the social networks (Wang, et al., 2018). In another study, it was revealed that the average social network user spends an average of 135 minutes daily on the social networking sites (Modara et al., 2017).

Theories have also explained the social aspects of social networking addiction. Benjamin James Sadock and Alcott Virginia Sadock theorized the development of social networking addiction. In what is commonly referred to as the social control theory, Sadock and Sadock (2007) theorized that; certain types addictions are highly likely to be found within in specific groups of the community compared to other types of addictions. This difference is brought by the fact that, the level of addiction is different in terms of age, gender, nationality, and socio-economic status of an individual. As such, the social networking addiction is prevalent among students who are majorly comprised the adolescents, young, as well as middle adulthood. This means that, theoretically, the level of social networking addiction among older adults might be significantly lower. Therefore, the impacts of social networking addictions are more for students compared to other groups in the society.

Hartney (2020) theorizes the concept of behavioral addiction. This is a behavioral perception of addiction, which can be used to explain social networking addiction among students. Behavioral theory explanation suggests that a social network user uses internet or the social networking sites for purposes of rewards like entertainment, or running away from reality (Salem et al., 2016). Behavioral perspective views social networking addiction as a type of disorder, namely the impulse control disorder. It can

also be referred to as behavioral internet use (Laconi et al., 2014). In this disorder, the social networking user gets an uncontrollable pressure to engage in social networking sites regardless of the adverse consequences to the users' psychological, emotional, or physical well-being (Kuss et al., 2014). In other words, it social networking addiction becomes an addictive behavior that the user gets compulsion to engage in, despite the possible negative consequences that might come with the behavior. In this case, the negative consequences to the students might be the wastage of time, which contributes to poor academic performances. In addition, addiction might also lead to withdrawal symptoms, anxiety, or depression (Hartney, 2020). As such, this theory explains why social networking addiction is closely associated with poor academic performances.

Cognitive theory explanation, students' addiction to internet and social network sites is usually as a result of defective cognitions (Alavi and Jannatifard, 2012). In other words, addiction to social networking is a form of altered cognition (Gould, 2015). The brain regions that are associated with addiction overlap substantially with the brain regions that are associated with cognitive functions such as memory, reasoning, as well as learning. This explains why the students that are addicted to social networking have a poor academic performance: It is simply because, the areas that are associated with learning at school, overlap substantially with the areas that are associated with the addiction (Gould, 2015). Consequently, their academic performance becomes poor. According to this perspective, students or the users of social networks, do so as a way of trying to escape from their external or internal challenges (Alavi and Jannatifard, 2012). According to Malak (2017), cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is the most appropriate intervention for social networking addiction, since it corrects people's cognitions. As such, it is recommended that, students that are addicted to social networking should seek professional assistance for cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) to improve their performance in their academic performance at school.

Dynamic psychology theory- the causes of social networking addiction among students is as a result of childhood mental shocks or psychological deficiencies, psychosocial status, or even their personality traits (Azizi et al., 2019). This theory focuses on how a student's past events, feelings, conditions, or thoughts, determines their level of current addiction behaviors. Basically, these past events make a person to behave in a certain manner that leads them to social networking addiction (Roblyer et al., 2011). For example, a student who had been abused or molested as a child might get involved in unhealthy behaviors in as much as they might try not to form them. In this case, unhealthy behaviors involve their addiction to social networking. In other words, this approach focuses on unconscious factors from a student's past, which acts as a motivation towards the student's social networking addiction. A student might turn to addiction as a result of factors in his or her childhood. As such, treatment for students who are addicted to social networking should involve this approach to addiction (Roblyer et al., 2011). This has been considered as one of the successful approaches to social networking addiction.

Other theorists have also theorized the connection between social networking usage or addiction, and poor mental health conditions as well as low self esteem. Hawi and

Samaha (2017) theorized that; increased use of social networking leads to low self-esteem, which is positively correlated with academic performance. According to Hawi and Samaha (2016), people who are addicted to social networking develop a less interaction with their friends, family members, as well as the society in general. In addition, they lose connection with their studies at school as well as physical exercises or extracurricular activities at school as a result of the addiction (Stockdale and Coyne, 2018). People who are addicted to social networking can also be deprived of enough rest, which interferes with their sleep (Bijari et al., 2013). Consequently, this might have significant adverse effects on their concentration at school, which affects their learning. Gabre and Kumar (2012) also theorized that, too much time spent on social networking can have negative impacts on an individual's mental health condition. Specifically, addiction to social networking can cause emotional stress, anxiety, and even depression (Bajini et al., 2018). As a result of bad time management due to much time spent on social media, students begin to feel the direct impacts on their academics. As such, these theorists recommend that schools or learning institutions should control the level of social networking usage among their learners.

METHOD

Design

This research study was designed to establish the relationship between students' addiction to social networks and their academic performance. The study was conducted at Al Ain University in the United Arab Emirates. The time frame for the study was 4 months which was part of the academic year 2020/2021. The descriptive approach was used in the social survey method through a special questionnaire prepared for this study (Monette et al., 2013). This study was based on a voluntary self-report process, where: All participants were voluntarily invited to submit reports on their social media use as well as their academic performance at university. To ensure the validity of the tool, it was reviewed by a group of arbitrators at Al Ain University, and their observations were taken into consideration. The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha test, where its value was 0.91. This means the high reliability of the study tool.

Sample and Sampling Method

The study's research population comprised of all the students who were registered as students at Al Ain University at the time of the study. Therefore, the inclusion criteria of the study included the participant's registration as a student at the Al Ain University, at the time of the study. This meant that, former students of Al Ain University, as well as the students who were aspiring to join the institution were not eligible for this study. All the students, from the first year of study to the final year, were included in the study. As such, there was no basis of exclusion from the study, or the exclusion criteria for Al Ain University students, since all the registered students at the institution were eligible for the study.

The sampling method involved in this research study was a stratified random sampling. This was aimed at obtaining a sample population that effectively represented the entire

population of the students being studied in this research. As such, the entire population was divided into various strata, based on the year of study. For instance, first year students on their stratum, second year students, third year students, as well as the final year students at the Al Ain University. the study obtained 383 participants. Out of these participants, 237 (61.88%) were female, while 146 (31.12%) were male. In terms participants' year of study; 97 (25.33%) participants were first year students; 96 (25.07%) participants were second year students; 94 (24.55%) students were third year students; while 96 (25.07%) students were fourth year students. The youngest participant was 17 years old, while the oldest participant was 26 years old. The mean age of the participants was 23 ± 2.49 years of age. Table 1 notes these frequencies and distribution.

Table 1
Distribution of the sample members according to the gender variable

Type	Repetition	Percentage
Year1	97	25.33
Year2	96	25.07
Year3	94	24.55
Year4	96	25.07
Total	383	100

Instruments

This study involved using two study tools to assess the required information from the participant. Two dependent variables were to be determined in this case social networking addiction, and academic performance. As such, the two study tools that were used in this case were personal information questionnaire, and the Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS).

Personal Information Questionnaire

This was a self-report questionnaire was used to obtain the participants' personal information. The participants in this case were required to fill their personal information including age, year of study, gender, and their end of semester academic grade/score. The participants' end of semester score was used to assess the participants' academic performance.

Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS).

Bergen Social Media Scale (BSMAS) was used to assess the participants' level of social networking addiction. BSMAS is a 6-items report. The six items include: tolerance, withdrawal, salience, conflict, mood modification, and relapse. Each item consists of 3 questions. Therefore, the report has a total of 18 questions. The rating scale for BSMAS consists of a 5-point summative or likert scale. This scale ranges from 1 point (very rarely) to 5 points (very often). As such, the minimum points that a participant can score is 18 points (18 × 1), while the maximum that a participant can score is 90 points (18 × 5). Once the participant's points were obtained, this is how the grouping was done;

o   18 – 19 points were considered 'normal usage'

 o 20 – 47 points were considered 'mild addiction'

 o 48 – 69 points were considered 'moderate addiction'

 o 70 – 90 points were considered 'severe addiction'

This is what the questions in each of the six BSMAS items involve:

First, tolerance item in BSMAS includes the questions that are related to the participants' craving for the social networking sites (Guedes et al., 2016; Owusu and Larson, 2016). This item describes the consistent increase in the participants' use of internet and social networking for the purposes of pleasure (Moraitis, 2016).

Second, the salience item consists of questions that are related to the participant's behavior and thinking in their use of social networks and internet (Alahmar, 2016). It implies that, the participant's addiction to social networking and internet is revealed in his or her dependency on internet and social network sites (Blachnio et al., 2016; Ebrahimpour et al., 2016).

Third, the withdrawal item involves questions that involve the discomfort feeling that the participant experiences when he or she is disconnected from the use of internet or social networks (Salem et al., 2016). It also includes the feeling that a participant gets when he or she is unable to use the social networks.

Fourth, the relapse item involves the questions that entail the participant's failed attempt to prevent the urge for the social media usage (Madaiah, 2017). They represent the uncontrollability of the participant's urge to use the social networks or internet (Al-Dhanhani et al., 2015; Keles and Deniral, 2012).

Fifth, the conflict questions represent the participant's involvement with other issues that create conflicts or tensions in effective relationships with other people at home, school, and so on (Hamid et al., 2013; Avci et al., 2015). In other words, conflicts refer to the relationship strains created by the use or addiction to social networking (Hamid et al., 2013).

Finally, mood modification items represent the questions that expose the modifications of the participants' mood or behavior as a result of use or addiction to social network and internet (Andreassen et al., 2017). This means the participant's use of social networks to escape from unpleasant feelings.

Data Collection

To collect the data from the students, we had to first obtain the permission from the Al Ain University research officer. In addition, the participants were also requested to give their consent for their participation in the research. This meant that the participants were well aware of the objectives of the research study, and the basis of participation in the study was voluntary.

The data collection method that was used in this research was the questionnaire method. Each of the 383 participants was given the self-report questionnaire together with the

Bergen Social Media Addiction Scale (BSMAS) form in a sealed envelope. This was meant to protect the anonymity of the participants. The participants were also given a maximum period of three weeks to fill and return the questionnaires in sealed envelopes too. Again, extreme care was also taken to get rid of any information that would act as identification marks for the participants, or the information that would link the participants to his or her returned questionnaires. This is an important process since it helps to preserve the privacy of the participants, who had voluntarily agreed to take part in our research study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted after all the data had been collected from the participants. This was done to present the data in a reliable and accurate way. This is what we used to perform data analysis for the obtained data.

To conduct data analysis, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used in this case. The data normality test was also conducted by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (ks test). This was done to determine if the collected data was well-modeled, and within the normal distribution of the variables.

To assess the interrelation between the social networking score and the students' academic performance, a Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used. Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) statistics, the analysis used the Mann-Whitney U test was used to make comparison of the scores for social networking and the qualitative nominal variables, in this case, the participants' gender. On the other hand, the Kruskal-Wallis H test was applied to assess the comparison between the scores of social networking and the qualitative ordinal variables, in this case participants' year of study at the institution.

FINDINGS

Analysis of the first hypothesis

Social networking addiction is related to the participants' gender.

The significance level, of the p-value was found to be 0.05. This means that, the p-value that was less than this (<0.05) was considered to be at significant level. The Hypothesis results are tabulated in table 2 below:

Table 2
Relationship between students' social networking addiction and gender.

Value	Relation
P-value	0.05
Significant – level value	<0.05

Table No1 indicates that there is a difference between males and females when they using social networks that negatively affect in their academic level.

Analysis of the second hypothesis

There is a negative and significant relationship between social network addiction and participants' academic performance.

Regarding the interrelationship, and since a value of significant -0.189 and it is less than 0.05 this indicates a negative and statistically significant association between social network addiction score and the academic performance of university participants (p-value ≤ 0.01, r = -0.189). This was the relationship between social network addiction and the academic performance of university participants, which is tabulated in Table 2 below.

Table 3
Student's level of social networking addiction and their academic performance at the university

Value	Relation
P-value	≤ 0.01
Significant – level value	= - 0.189

RESULTS

The findings of the study were as follows.

Results for first research question: Is the student's level of social networking addiction related with their academic performance at the university?

Majority of the students, 68.93% (264 participants), were within the moderate level of addiction; that is between 49 to 69 points of social networking addiction. 5.22% of the participants (20 participants) were within the normal usage; that is between 18 and 19 points of social networking addiction. On the other hand, 18.02% of the participants (69 participants) were within the range of mild addiction; that is between 20 and 47 points of social networking addiction. Finally, 7.83% of the participants (30 participants) were within the range of severe addiction; that is between 70 and 90 points of social networking addiction. The highest social addiction points for a participant was 81 points (Severe addiction), while the lowest social addiction points for a single participant was 19 (normal usage). The 7.83% of students in the severe addiction phase had the poorest results in class. Students in the mild and moderate addiction levels recorded average results in class while those in the normal usage grouping had optimal results. This is as shown in table 4.

Table 4
Level of social networking addiction related with their academic performance at the university

Number of Participants	Percentage	Point	Level of Addition	Classroom Results
264	68.93%	49-69	Moderate addiction level	Average
20	5.22%	18-19	Normal usage level	Optimal
69	18.02%	20-47	Mild addiction level	Average
30	7.83%	70-90	Severe addiction stage	Poor

Results for the second research question: Is there a significant relationship between students' social networking and gender?

The Mann-Whitney U test for the nominal qualitative variables revealed that, the social networking addiction was higher in male participants compared to the social networking addiction in female participants. The mean and standard deviation for the male participants was 50.72 ± 11.61, while the mean and standard deviation for the female students was 48.62 ± 10.94. This is as shown in table 5.2. -The first year participants had a highest social networking addiction, with the mean and standard deviation of 54.59 ± 13.65. On the other hand, -the fourth year participants had the lowest social networking addiction, with a mean and standard deviation of 47.93 ± 10.82. -The second year participants had a mean and standard deviation of 53.73 ± 11.24 while -the third year participants had a mean and standard deviation of 53.94 ± 10.81.

Table 5
Relationship between students' social networking and gender

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	50.72	± 11.61
Female	48.62	± 10.94

DISCUSSION

It was apparent in the results that most of the students were within the range of moderate addiction to social networking. However, according to Wiederhold and Riva (2014), moderate social networking addiction can also develop to severe social networking addiction with time. The comparison of these results in other institutions around the world indicates that Al Ain University has a higher prevalence of social networking addiction. For instance, (Masthi, Pruthvi, and Phaneendra, 2018) indicated that, the prevalence of students' social networking addiction in India was 36.9%. (Tang and Koh, 2017) also found the prevalence of students' social networking addiction was 29.5%. In addition, male students had a higher prevalence of social networking addiction compared to their female counterparts.

Given that the study found a negative correlation between social networking addiction and the students' academic performance, there is a need for education institution, in this case, Al Ain University, to take the necessary actions towards reducing social

networking addiction among the students. The fact that other studies have found a significant correlation between social networking addiction and poor mental health conditions such as emotional stress, anxiety, and depression (Brailovskaia and Margraf, 2017; Griffiths, 2009) makes this situation to be worse. In addition, Hawi and Samaha (2016) revealed that; students' level of social networking addiction is negatively interrelated with their level of self-esteem, which is an important factor in education. It means that, the relevant authorities in the United Arab Emirates, together with the management of Al Ain University should take urgent measures that aim at mitigating social networking addiction among students. Further still, there were other studies that revealed that there was a positive significant correlation between the students' social networking usage for academic purposes, and students' academic performances. This means that, the students should be encouraged to use social networking platforms mostly for academic purposes such as e-learning, and not just for entertainment purposes such as chatting with friends or downloading videos and music. Similar measures should also be taken in other universities, as well as other parts of the world. By taking these measures, learning institutions will not only improve the academic performance of their students, but it will also improve the students' mental health conditions as well as their self-esteem.

Furthermore, the use of technology in education requires in most cases a considerable investment of time. The design of activities based on technology not only requires competence and knowledge in the tools to be used, but also a time commitment that not all teachers have. The Education and Training Monitor (2020) derived from the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS, 2018) indicates that the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for teaching was rarely included in the education and training of lower secondary teachers in EU countries. On average in the Member States, fewer than half of teachers (49.1%) report that ICT was included in their formal education or training. Teaching has been traditionally based on a teacher centred methodological model, with an emphasis on the transmission of contents and their reproduction by the students, master class and individual work. Nowadays, teaching through technological resources involves the need for a new approach based on the education of competencies and enough dedication and time to adequately integrate it in the teaching-learning processes (Aguaded et al., 2010). Regarding the preparation time, the results show that the implementation of didactic processes based on technology requires specialised training and longer time to prepare the activities and their corresponding evaluation (John, 2015). This situation is even more relevant for older teachers, and in the Education and Training Monitor (2020), teachers' sense of preparedness for the use of ICT for teaching is related to the year of completion of their formal education or training. A higher percentage of teachers who completed their formal education or training in the 5 years prior to the TALIS survey felt well or very well prepared to use ICT for teaching. In this sense, teacher training systems must be implemented to allow updating in basic digital teaching competencies for the development the curriculum and for optimizing the time that teachers need to dedicate to the preparation of activities based on technology (Esteban et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The study achieved the desired goals, which were to identify the relationship between addiction to social networks and the academic performance of university students on the one hand, and to search for differences between males and females with regard to addiction to social networks and academic performance. The results showed that social network addiction significantly affects the level of the academic performance of university students 68.93% (264 participants), and the results showed statistically significant differences between male and female addiction to social networks and its impact on academic performance in favor of males. They obtain good results, which may cause their graduation from university to be delayed compared to their other peers.

This study is one of the most prominent recent studies that dealt with the addiction to social networks and its impact on the academic performance of university students at the local level. It is only a miniature model of the total society, as it contains a large number of Arab and foreign nationalities. The results of the study are closer to global than local. The results of this study may help researchers interested in conducting more research in the same topic, or in an aspect of network addiction, and these results could be investing in drawing feasible future policies for educational and family institutions.

RECOMMENDATION

Depending on the results of the study and their discussion, the study recommends the following:

1. High recommend explore the effect of SNS sub-constructs (e.g. social interaction, educational purposes and meeting or knowing purposes).

2. Apply similar models to high school students.

3. Invite telecommunications companies to partner in this type of researchز

4. Awareness lectures about the danger of addiction to social networks and the Internet.

5. Posters in the corridors of the university showing the danger of addiction to social networks.

LIMITATIONS

Our study had some limitations. Due to the nature of this study, it was not possible to explain the causal relationships between the variables of social networking addiction and academic performance of students. In the current study, the data were collected by questionnaire method that could have affected the accuracy of the results. However, the researchers tried to solve this limitation by encouraging the participants to answer the questionnaire during researchers attendens classes.

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