Use of Mass Media and its impacts on Academic Performance of Universities Students: A study of University of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania

Gabagambi, Jovin Peter, Professor Song Wei
School of Public Affairs,
University of Science and Technology of China,
Hefei, Anhui (230026) People Republic of China (P.R.C.)

Abstract: The main focus of this study was to assess the use of mass media and its impact on Academic Performance of University Students in Tanzania, where the study shows how the contribution of social media on Academic performance of University students in Tanzania.

In this study the researcher was used qualitative and quantitative method as an instrument of data collection in which questionnaire observation and interview has been used, also the researcher was used a total number of 300 respondents from different Universities in Tanzania as a sample size to be conducted, finally both primary and secondary data has been applied in the data collection process.

Results reveals that social media is widely used by students of University of Dar es salaam in Tanzania. At least every student makes use of one social media. Moreover, data revealed that, participant are in support of the idea that social media contribute a significant quota to the development of their academic life in the University of Dar es salaam. Apart from social media to have positive impacts on Students performance also has negative impacts as well, the study recommends among others that, students with mobile phones having internet facility should be encouraged to use it to supplement their research in the library rather than the usual charting with friends all the time.

Key words: Mass media, Academic performance, Universities, Technology, Tanzania

I. Introduction

According to (Junco, Heiberger et al. 2011) social media are a collection of internet websites, services, and practices that support collaboration, community building, participation, and sharing”. Currently years technology has tried to play its role in assisting community leading to the substantial medium of interaction in the social world as well as in teaching and learning aspect. Social media has exploded as a category of online discourse where people create content, share it, bookmark it and network at a prodigious rate. Because of its ease of use, speed and reach, social media is fast changing the public discourse in society and setting trends and agenda in topics that range from the environment and politics to technology and the entertainment industry (Asur and Huberman 2010).

Since the independent in 1961, Tanzania has made significant progress in ensuring that the majority of educational institutions have access to quality education. This has been made possible through the implementation of several policies reforms in education and different adverts done by various social media and other institutions in ensuring the quality education in the country (Ministry of Education and Culture [MOEC], 2001).

According to (Wandela 2014) Tanzania has realized that quality education is the pillar of national development, and therefore it is through education that the nation obtains skilled manpower to serve in various sectors of the nation’s economy.

In the last ten years, the online world has changed dramatically, thanks to the invention of social media, young men and women now exchange ideas, feelings, personal information, pictures and videos at a truly astonishing rate. Seventy-three percent of wired American teens now use social media websites (Wang, Chen et al. 2011).

In the past years, social media websites have become common; giving young people a new way to interact with each other and communicate with the world. Social networking became popular between 2004 and 2006, after Facebook and MySpace were created. Facebook, for example has over 500 million members and it is still growing and approximately 85% of undergraduate students are Facebook users (Schneider, 2009).

In Tanzania technology has altering the way people interact and has given about the existence of an open social platform such as social media that allows the students in educational institutions to connect with each other. Social
media such as Facebook, Twitter, Google, Blogs, and Flickr, are being used in learning for the purpose of convenient communication with other students and potentially with others outside the class such as students of the same topic and subject experts from different educational institutions.

According to (Hess 2014) description of a technology enhanced new culture of Learning that says, learning is based around principles of collective exploration, play and innovation rather than individualized instruction, it could be argued that social media supports the aspect of knowledge consumption and construction that are very different to the epistemological principle of formal education and individual instruction as well as sounding with currently fashionable constructivist and socio cultural learning theories.

The main focus of this study was to assess the effect of social media on education institutions in Tanzania, where the study shows how the contribution of social media on education institutions in Tanzania

A. Statement of the problem

The rapid advancement of media technology has had a great impact on the way people communicate on a daily basis(Moran, Hawkes et al. 2010), (Owusu-Acheaw and Larson 2015), (Mehmood and Taswir 2013), (Jacobsen and Forste 2011), believe that the use of technology such as internet is one of the most important factors that can influence educational performance of students positively or adversely. Regard with the explosive increase in the number and use of social media in everyday communication method for individuals and organizations in Tanzania, there has been a corresponding increase of its incorporation in teaching and learning in higher institution. In regard to this, this study analyze and assess the use and impacts social media has on teaching and learning in Universities in Tanzania either be it positive or negative impacts.

B. Research question

The following research question was raised based on the background of the study

i. To what extent has social media support student’s academic life in Universities in Tanzania?

ii. Does the use of social media sites have any impact on student’s academic performance?

C. Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to assess the use and impacts of social media in Academic performance for Universities students in Tanzania.

D. Significance of the study

The study will help understanding of social media, it usage and how it is influencing students learning environment in Universities in Tanzania. The study would have great contribution to students, researcher, student’s affairs practitioners and all the various bodies that comes to play when talking of social media and University life. The result of the study will help to strategize and reconstruct their attitude regarding the use of social media.

II. Methodology

A. Research design

Sampling design is a design, is a working plan that specifies the population frame, sample size, sample selection, and estimation method in detail. Objective of the sampling design is to know the characteristic of the population and present the best conducts for the research to be done.

B. Population

Information was collected from different respondents within various educational institutions in Tanzania such has high secondary schools, colleges and universities in Tanzania.

C. Data collection method

The study was used various scientific data collection methods which include primary and secondary data source. In the primary data information were extracted from respondents through questionnaires and interview. In the secondary data the researcher was collect information from files, books, journals, newspaper and other documents.

D. Validity and Reliability of the instruments

The instrument (questioner) was first checked through the feasibility study to test the applicability and examine the validity and reliability of the instrument before starting the data collection process.

E. Organization of data collection

Data was collected personally through well designed and managed questionnaire from the respondents. The questions were into two forms open and closed ended. The respondent were given the questionnaire for three days and collected for further step of data analysis. The total numbers of respondent were 300 from different educational institutions in Tanzania.

F. Data analysis

Data was analyzed by using SPSS trough simple regression analysis based on the answers of the participants.

III. Empirical result and discussion
The total number of the respondents was 300 equivalents to 100% of the targeted sample. Female respondents were 167 equivalents to 55.7% and male respondents were 133 equivalents to 44.3%. In terms of age, 25% were between age 18-25, 35% were between age 26-34, 32% were between age 35-44, and 8% were above age 45. In terms of the level of education, all respondents were university level. When respondents were asked if mass media have negative impacts on student performance in university, the total number of respondents was 153 (51%) agree, 67 (22.3%) strongly agree, 73 (24.3%) of the respondent said they don’t know, 4 (1.3%) disagree while the remaining respondents 3 (1.1%) strongly disagree.

The findings revealed that social media have more positive impacts on student academic performance in universities if are well used by the students but also the finding reveals mass media has negative impacts as well to students academic performance in University if are not well monitored by the students.

IV. Conclusion

This study focused on the use and impacts of mass media in Student’s performance in Universities of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. Results reveal that social media is widely used by students of university of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. At least every student makes use of one social media. Moreover, data revealed that, participant are in support of the idea that social media contribute a significant quota to the development of their academic life in their university. However social media should well bemonitored to avoid negative impacts to affect student academic life such as some of the students used most of their time in social media by chatting and surfing the internet for non-educative information.

V. Recommendations

Apart from having negative impacts on students academic life in university of Dar es Salaam but also social media also has positive impacts on student academic life in university of Dar es Salaam ,social media has increased the rate and quality of collaboration for students. They are able to communicate meeting times or share information quickly, which can increase productivity and help them learn how to work well in groups. Social media should be monitored by students in Universities in Tanzania to ensure don’t have negative effects on their academic life by giving attention to their academic progress in the university.

References

(Ministry of Education and Culture [MOEC], 2001).

Acknowledgement

I am using this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone who supported me in my work, special thank for my supervisor for his aspiring guidance and commitment.