

A Study on the Impact of Social Media Usage on Student Academic Performance: University of Tabuk an Example

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Abstract

The use of social media has met a rapid growth among the few past decades. This growth make it very popular for the communication amongst university students especially Tabuk university students. In fact, these social websites can be a good manner to exchange the information between students and even with their teachers. However, excessive social media can affect the student academic performance and make this use in question. This research tries to investigate about the benefits and the drawbacks of the social media use on student academic performance by conducting a survey on university students in Saudi Arabia especially in Tabuk university. The survey also explored which social network is the most popular amongst Tabuk university students and which one is useful for their academic skills. The survey has received 270 responses and descriptive statistics shows the relationship between the numbers of hours spent exploring the social media sites and the academic performances for the student. The results of this paper can be useful to propose an effective plan to enhance the academic performance for the students by improving the use of the social media sites.

Keywords: Social media networks; Academic Performance; Tabuk University Students.

1. Introduction

The use of social media has met a great growth since the increase evolution in internet technology. They become very popular and play an important role in all domains of our lives especially in education. For this reason, in the last decade, researchers pay more attention for the use and the impact of social media on the educational operation. In [1], authors prove that the use of social media plays several roles such as sharing ideas between educational staff, aiding students to build their own communities in order to collaborate with each other, facilitating the art of learning and reaching out to the students.

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Many studies such as [2, 3, 4] have questioned the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of students in other countries such as USA, Nigeria and Pakistan. In fact, in Saudi Arabia, it exists some researches that examine the impact of social media usage on students' academic performance like [5, 6] but the particularity of our paper is that it focus in Tabuk university students. Additionally, in our research, the investigation is made online and by paper in order to achieve the best collection of answers among the Tabuk university students which is the essential particularity of our paper. This research study consists in collecting information about the use of the social media and its impact in the academic performance. This paper is structured as follows. In section two, we review the literature and the related work to our research. Then, the section three describes the research methodology and the section four presents the data analysis and results. Finally, the section five gives further discussion of the findings and concludes the paper.

2. Related work

This section presents an overview of the relevant literatures in social media use in the educational society in order to gain a deep understanding in the research domain.

2.1. The evolution of social media

The social media are defined as web-based applications that allow people to create, share or exchange information, ideas and pictures or videos in virtual communication and networks. Among the most popular social media are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. The great growth of social media is proved in 2016 by the statistics given in [7] where Facebook had 3 million reach monthly in average; Twitter had 500 million active users worldwide. The entire community of students is constantly connected to the social network sites. The teenagers and college students (age 18 - 29) are among the highest users of the online social media [8]. They use these sites for interaction, entertainment, and even for information seeking which incite researchers to investigate the way of use that should be considered in order to such social media participate in enhancing the learning process.

3. Methodology

A quantitative approach has been considered in this study by using a questionnaire distribution. By this investigation, we asked students about their opinions in the use of social media and how it enhance the learning operation; we have asked them also about how many hours that spent daily using the social media and which is the best social network that improve the educational process. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first one concerns with the personal data of the respondents such as gender, educational level and their study field. The second section consists the different questions that are related with the use of the social media.

In fact, the aim of the survey is to find answers for the following questions

R1 – Which social network is the most popular among Tabuk university students?

R2- How many times do you spend daily using the social media?

R3 – How can the social media networks improve the communication and the relation between the students and their teachers?

R4 – How the social media networks can improve the educational process during the lecture?

R5 – Does the use of the social media networks benefic for the educational process?

4. Results and discussion

In this section, the data collected is presented and analyzed. the questionnaire was distributed over three months. The respondents are 270 universal students, which consists of 45% male and 55% female. 37% of the respondents are in the doctoral stage and 17% are in the second year of their academic study.

4.1. R1 – Which social network is the most popular among Tabuk university students?

The figure 1 shows the number of respondents on different social networks. YouTube is the most popular site that is used to communicate among students followed by Twitter then other social networks e. g. LinkedIn, Instagram and What's up then the Facebook. Out of the 270 respondents, 40% of the respondents use YouTube to communicate between them while 20% use Twitter network. The results demonstrates that YouTube is almost twice popular than the Twitter among Tabuk university students.

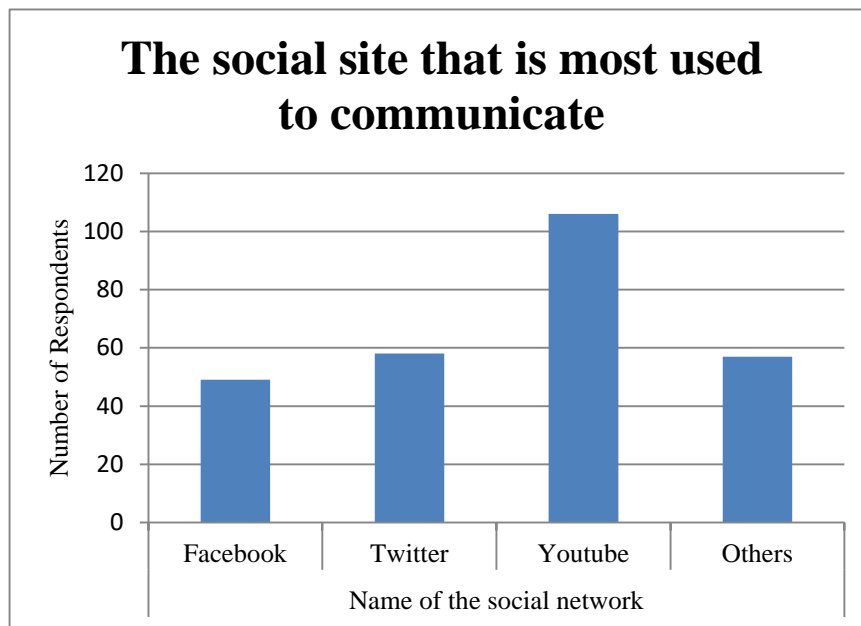


Figure1: The most social networks used to communicate.

33% of respondents in this study have profiles in more than three of the social networks as illustrated in Figure 2. This shows the importance of the social networks in the student lives. In fact, only 77 respondents who are satisfying with a single network.

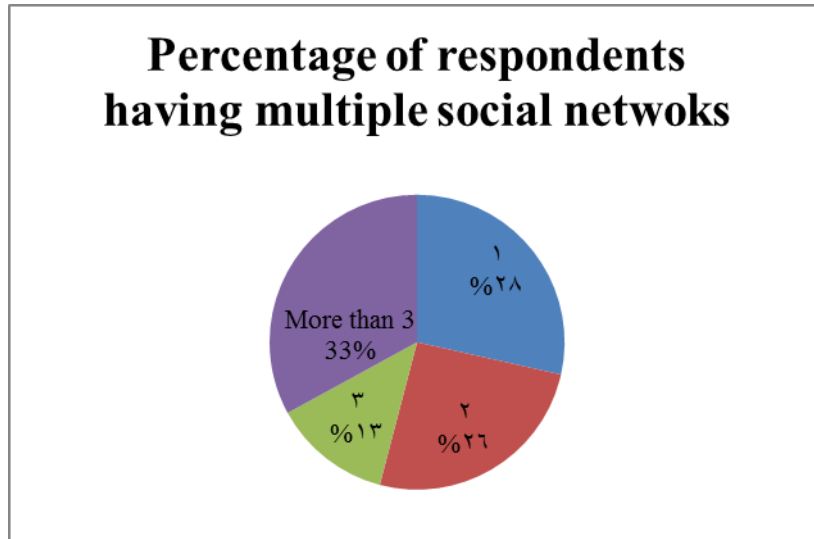


Figure 2: Percentage of respondents having multiple social networks.

4.2. R2 – How many times do you spend daily using the social media?

In measuring the usage of social media, two questions were used. The questions are as follows:

- How much time do you spend browsing social networking sites daily?
- Do you prefer to devote specific time using social media or at specific hours daily?

The results show that 45% of respondents indicate that they spend from one hour to three hours using the social networks daily. However, 47 respondents reclaim that less than hour is sufficient for them to browse our social profiles as presented in figure3.

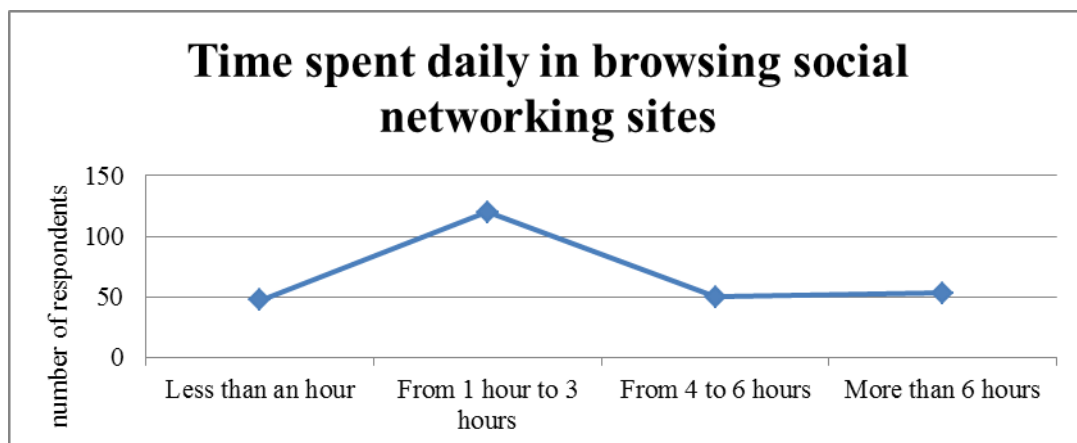


Figure 3: Time spent in browsing the social networks daily.

Based on figure 4, the idea of devoting a specific time to use the social networks in the day is recorded high where 130 from the respondents agree with the latter suggestion. Whereas, 24% are neutral and 28% disagree with the idea and prefer that the use will be all the day.

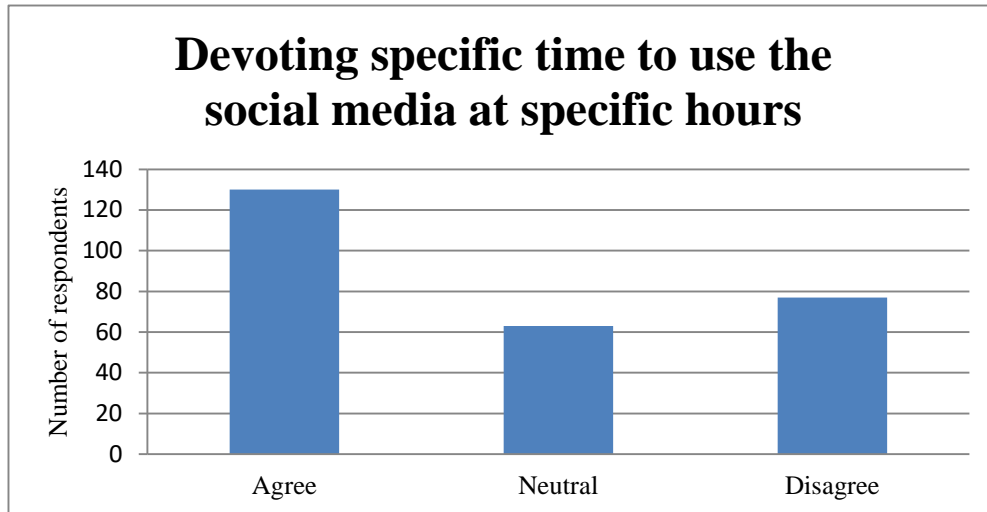


Figure 4: Devoting specific time to use the social networks daily.

4.3. R3 – How can the social media networks improve the communication and the relation between the students and their teachers?

Three questions were used to measure the way in which the social media improve the communication between the students and the teachers as follows:

- Does the faculty members provide you with their social networking sites?
- Do faculty members activate social networking sites with their students?
- Do you use social networking sites to communicate with your professors?

Figure 5 illustrates the responses of respondents who their teachers are providing with them their social profiles.

The responses are classified into three categories namely yes, to a certain extent and no.

42% of respondents deny that all the faculty members provide to them their social networking sites.

However, 37% reclaim that some of their teachers give them their social profiles.

Only 21% of the respondents confirm that all their teachers provide to them their social networking sites.

To investigate the fact if the faculty members in Tabuk university are activating and using their social sites to communicate with their students, the figures 6 and 7 illustrate these facts. The result show that 47% of respondents indicated that the faculty members do not activate with them their social sites. This fact is confirmed when 41% of respondents declare that they do not use the social networks to communicate with their teachers.

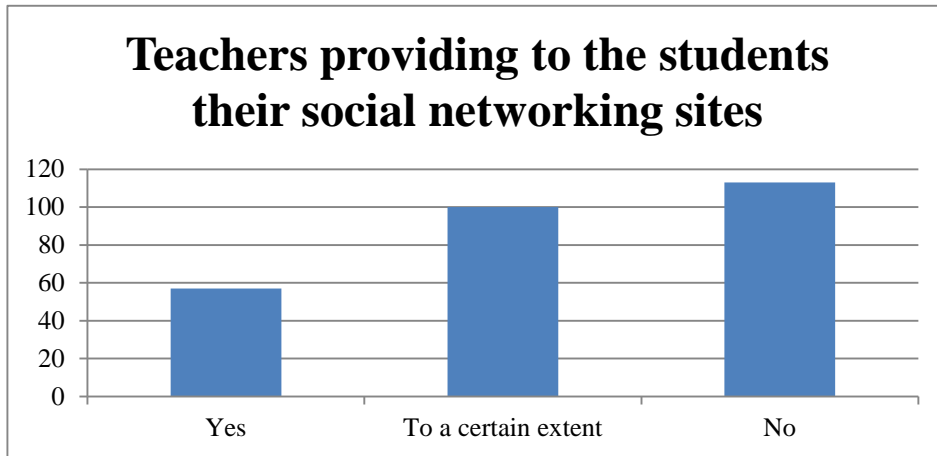


Figure 5: Faculty members providing their social sites to their students.

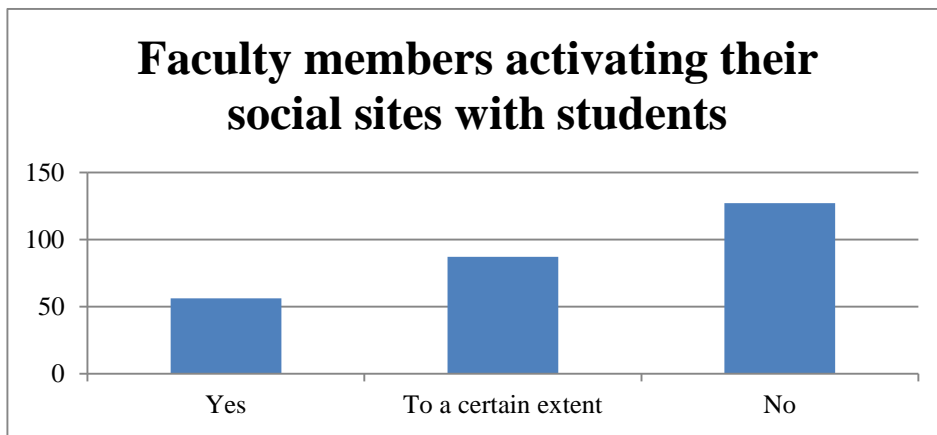


Figure 6: Faculty members activating their social sites with students.

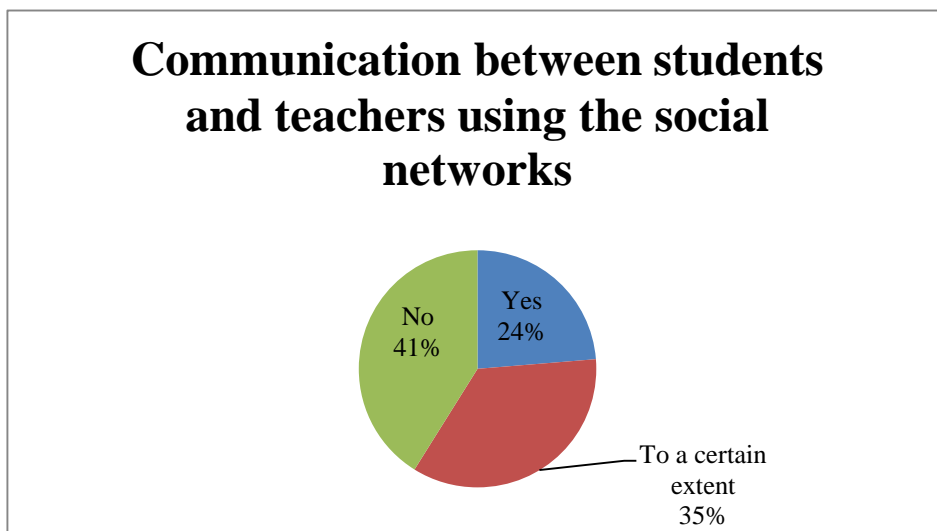


Figure 7: The communication between the faculty members and the students using the social networks.

4.4. R4 – How the social media networks can improve the educational process during the lecture?

In measuring the impact of the use of the social media in the educational operation during the lecture, three questions were used. The questions are as follows:

- The use of faculty members for the means of social communication during the educational process positively affects the academic achievement of students?
- Do you agree the student's use of the means of social communication during the lecture under the pretext of academic research is a factor in understanding the lecture?
- Do you support the use of social websites during the lecture?

The results shows 70% of respondents (39% agree and 31% are neutral) are not against that the faculty members utilize the means of social communication during the lecture time and confirm that this use affects positively the academic level of student as indicated figure 8.

However, the results shows that the use of students for the social media during the lecture time for the purpose of academic research does not encounter the approval of the respondents where 106 of respondents agree with the latter fact whereas 83 of them are neutral and 81 of respondents refuse that the students utilize the social media during the time of the lecture.

Figure 9 illustrates these results.

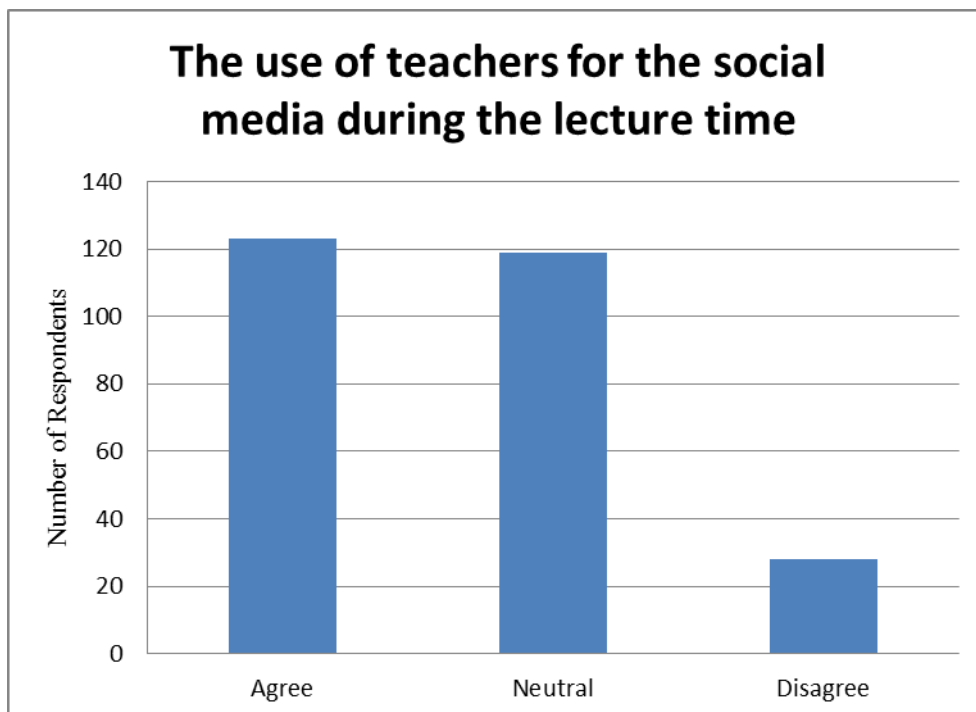


Figure 8: The use of teachers for the social media during the lecture time.

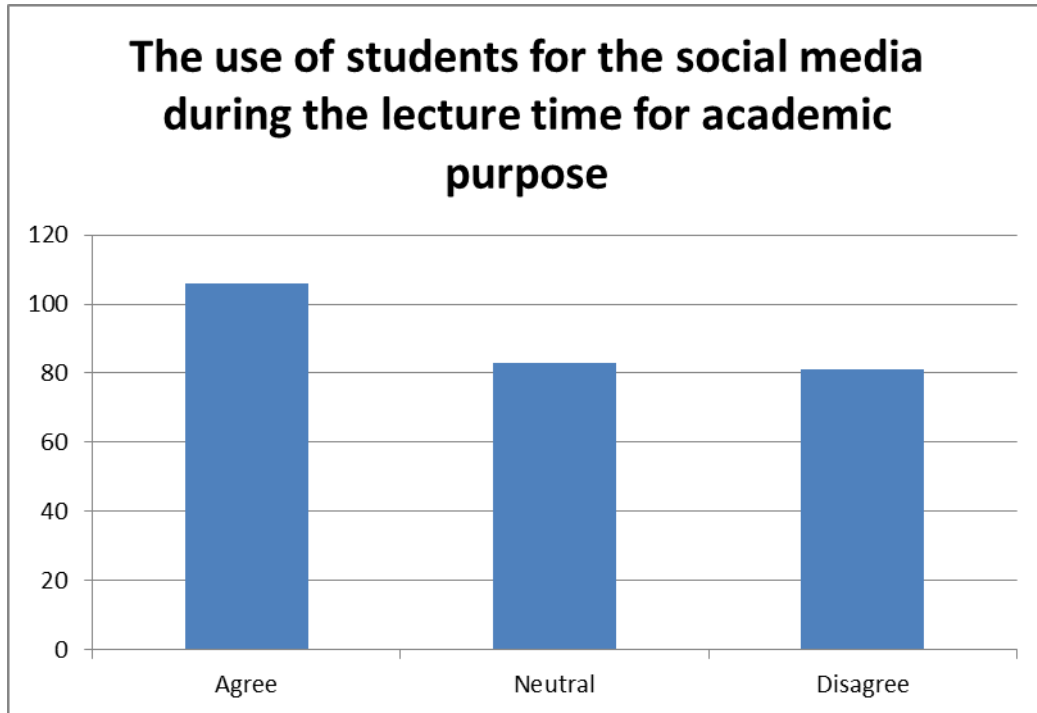


Figure 9: The use of students for the social media during the lecture for academic purpose.

In general, we have asked the respondents if they support the use of social media during the time lecture either from the teacher or the student. The results are illustrated in figure 10 and show that 103 of respondents (38%) refuse the use of the social media during the lecture while 92 of them (34%) agree with this fact and 28% of the respondents (75 respondents) are neutral.

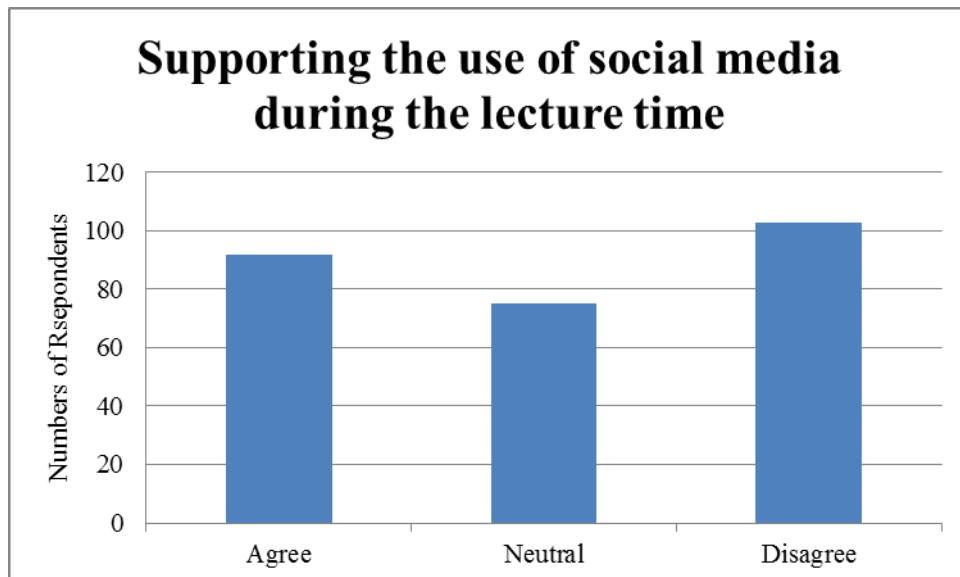


Figure 10: Supporting the use of social websites during the lecture time.

4.5. R5 – Does the use of the social media networks benefic for the educational process?

To analyze if the use of the social media networks is useful for the improvement of the educational process or not, four questions have been utilized. The questions are as follows:

- Has the teacher the ability to communicate the required information correctly through the social networking sites?
- In your opinion, do you think that the social networking has an important role in improving students' academic performance?
- Do you think that the social networks did not improve the level of study but improved communication with the faculty member?
- What are the best social networking sites for the educational process?

The results shows that 68 of respondents confirm that the teacher can fluently ensure the correct information using the social networks.

Besides 154 of respondents are neutral however 48 of them confirm the failure of the teacher to communicate the required information correctly through the social media.

These facts are illustrated in figure 11.

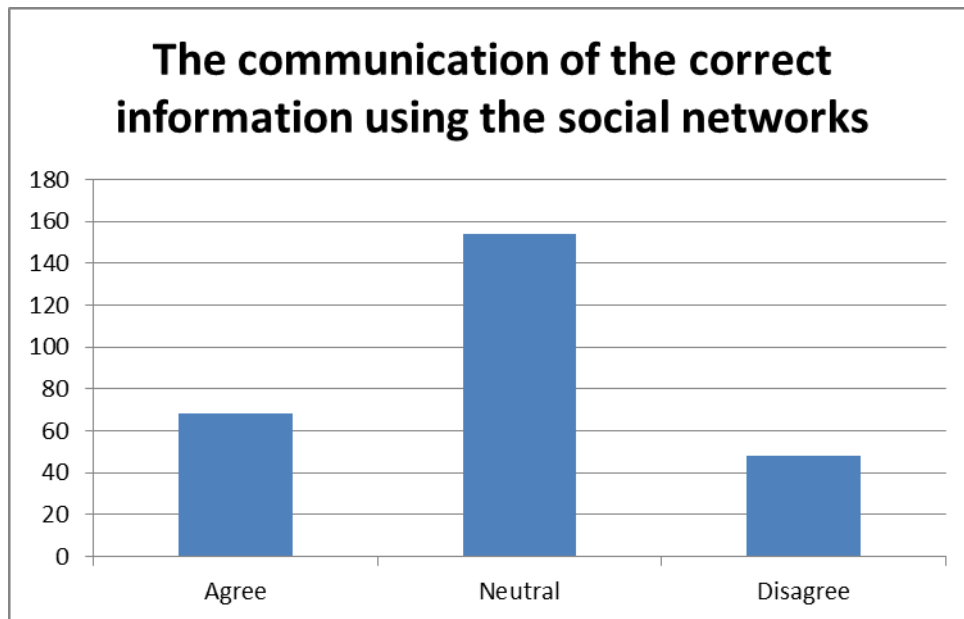


Figure 11: The communication of the correct information using the social networks.

By investigating the fact if the use of social media plays an important role in improving students' academic performance, 111 of respondents confirm the latter fact, however another 111 of respondents are neutral and 48 of the respondents deny that the social media have improved the academic performances of the students. Figure 12 illustrates the different responses.

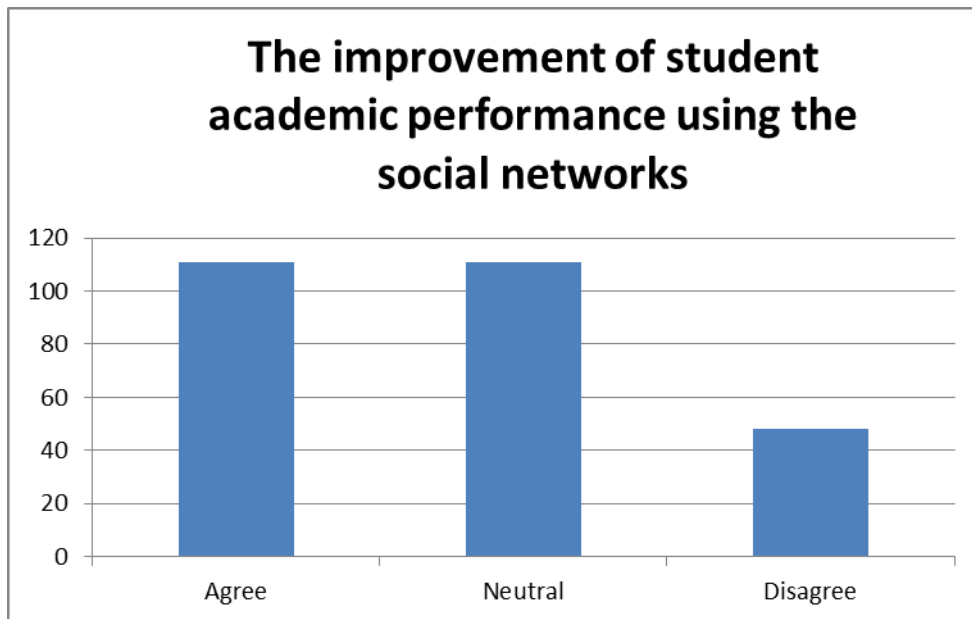


Figure 12: The improvement of student academic performance using the social networks.

By investigating the respondents if the social media had improved the communication between the students and the faculty members and did not improve the level of study, 42% of respondents confirm this fact while 40% are neutral and 18% disagree the improvement of communication between teachers and students as indicated figure 13. In the end of questionnaire, we have questioned the students about the best social network that can improve the educational process. YouTube is the best site that improve the educational process followed by Twitter then Facebook and then other social networks e. g. LinkedIn, Instagram and What's up. Out of the 270 respondents, 37% of the respondents suggest that YouTube is the best social network that improve the educational process while 36% of respondents choose Twitter network. The results are shown on figure 14.

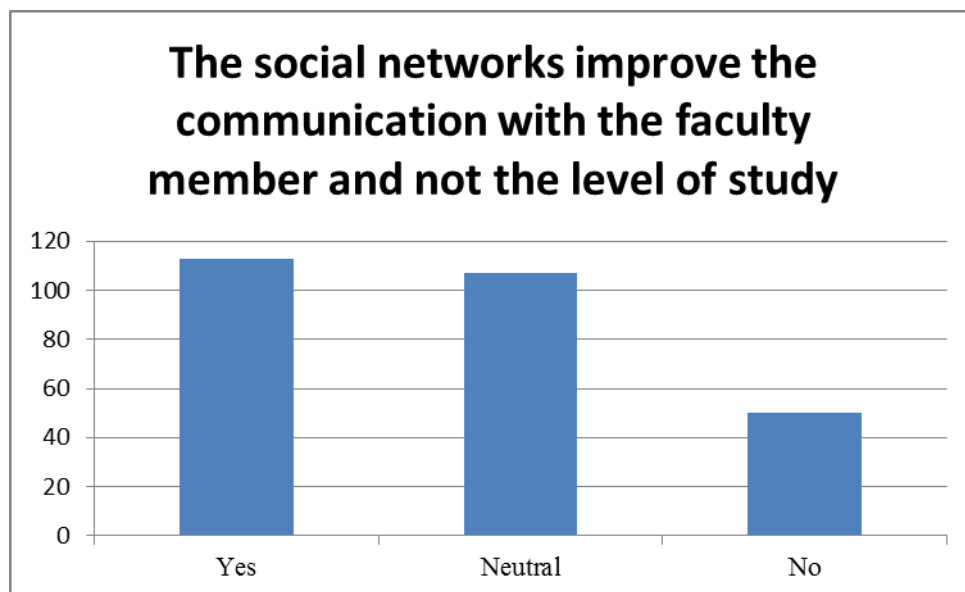


Figure 13: The social networks improve the communication with the faculty member and not the level of study.

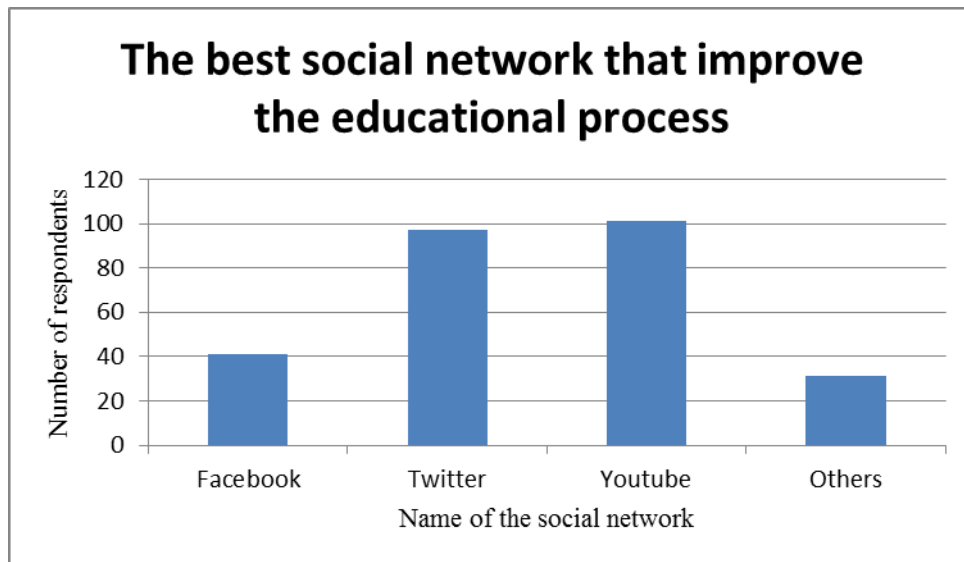


Figure 14: The social network that improve the educational process.

5. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to analyze the use of the social media and its relationship with the academic performance among Tabuk university students. This study has met some limitations which are the student interaction. In fact, the results revealed that online social media had improved the communication between the faculty member staff and the students which facilitate the communication of the correct information and improve the understanding and the development of the ideas and the courses. Based on the information collected, it is noticeable to say that the use of the social media during the lecture time is not recommended from most of respondents. YouTube and Twitter seem to be the best social networks that improve the educational process according to Tabuk University students. However, by consideration of the wide usage of the social media by Tabuk university students, further studies should be conducted with a focus on the impact of social media in the current life rhythm of students and their social relations.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that we avoid the use of the social media during the lecture time and we recommend also to conduct more studies interesting in the impact of the use of social media on the relationships that make students between them.

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