

## Influence of Utilization of Social Networking Sites (SNS) on Study Habits Among Saudi Nursing Students in Ha'il University

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Few studies have looked into the effects of SNS to nursing education in Saudi Arabia dedicated to study habits of nursing students in the digital age. Hence, this study was conducted mainly to determine the relationship between utilization of SNS according to type, frequency, hours per week and influence of others, and study habits with regard to time management, concentration and motivation.

**Methods:** A correlational research design was used in this study. The study framework is grounded in Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to guide the systematic inquiry on the behavior of Saudi nursing students. TAM was also applied to generate the items in the researcher-made tool. One hundred eighty nursing student respondents are recruited by convenience sampling, ( $n=100$ ; 55.6%) with age less than 21 years old ( $n=57$ ; 31.7%).

**Results:** Whatsapp is the most utilized social media followed by Twitter and Snapchat. Friends is the most influencing factor ( $n=111$ ; 61.7%) in SNS, duration is >10 hours/week ( $n=75$ ; 41.7%), and frequency is >6 times/week ( $n=151$ ; 83.9%). Utilization of SNS is significant as predictor of study habits ( $R^2=0.231$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) but moderately significant and positive in relationship ( $r=+0.480$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Gender is not statistically significant with the use of SNS ( $t=1.518$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and study habits ( $t=1.305$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Results confirmed the findings reported in the related studies.

**Conclusion:** Positive use of social media may improve study habits of nursing students however, faculty members should be able to guide students on the use of social media and include SNS in the nursing curriculum to optimize communication and learning. Additional study is needed to examine other outcomes such as impact of SNS on students' academic performance. TAM as a research framework in nursing may be studied using structural equation modeling and system dynamics simulation to analyze the constructs applied in the setting and to predict students' behaviors in multiple dimensions and conditions.

**Keywords:** Influence, social networking sites; study habits; nursing students; Saudi Arabia

### INTRODUCTION

Studying is a skill and developing a good study habit is vital in the progress of a student's academic performance. Self-discipline, concentrating, persevering, setting priorities and managing time efficiently are some of the factors that can greatly affect one's study habits. However, with the rapid phase of innovation, products of technology are not only abundant but also accessible to many, specifically to the youth. As a consequence of this, a good study habit becomes a challenge. Among those that can affect a student's study habit is the unique phenomenon of social networking sites. It could not be denied that social networking also came about and is fast becoming a fad (Williams & Merten, 2008). The Arab Social Media Report in 2015 has mirrored the landscape of social media use in Saudi Arabia in an extensive magnitude and revealed worldwide connectivity is largely harnessed by young adults at college and university levels. An array of studies emerged to investigate the phenomenon involving the effects of social media to student users since social networking sites or 'SNS' proliferated in the internet.

While there are published literatures on the effect to determine the utilization of SNS (De Rossi, 2010; Sharif and Sargent, 2006; Osham, 2009; Binsahl & Chang 2012), few studies have looked into the effects of SNS to nursing education in Saudi Arabia dedicated to study habits of nursing students in the digital age. Available literatures have proven that SNS could make or break on the study success of the students, such the likes of Dias (2009) who stated that Facebook and other SNS represent the biggest distraction to college students thereby

affecting their study habits and grades; Good (2007) who mentioned social networking is an important aspect among today's adolescents and poses effectiveness if properly channeled; the study of Ito et al. (2008), who claimed that the digital world or social networking is creating new opportunities for the youth to grapple with social norms, explore interests, develop technical skills, and experiment with new forms of self-expression, and many more. On the other perspectives, Karpinski (2009) conducted a statistical study and surveyed more than two hundred college students to investigate the possible link of Facebook and low grades. The respondents of the survey all came up to link Facebook with less time for study habits and lower academic grades. Leake and Warren (2009) stated that students who use Facebook or play games in Facebook devote less time on their academic work. Most of the Facebook members do not believe any link their academic grades have in relation to their social networking habits. Pasek, et al (2009) found out that active SNS users neither decline nor improve their academic standing relative to non-users. Therefore, Facebook does not have a generalized impact on grades. Pierce and Vaca (2007) stated that because of the benefits SNS gives to teenagers' social life, they spend many hours using them, and later on, distracts young people and influences their academic performance. Results also showed that those who have a MySpace account, cell phone and IM had significantly lower grades than those who do not have one.

College students are living in the information age, where access to many internet resources is just a few quick clicks away. The availability of internet as a resource material today is the reason why most students tend not to go to the library to study. The availability and accessibility of information in the internet may be the reason why students choose to use it instead of the library for their paper work. Johnson et al. (2007), stated that extensive television viewing during adolescence and early adulthood can be correlated with attention and learning difficulties and poor academic outcomes. Result indicated that those watching television for more than an hour a day were at a greater risk for homework incompleteness, decreased interest towards school, low grades and successive school failure. Watching for more than three hours a day were most likely to result to these outcomes and are at risk to develop attention difficulties and are least likely to receive post-secondary education. This research suggests that children should spend an average of no more than 1 to 2 hours per day watching television.

Sharif and Sargent (2006) stated in their research that content and screen time has an independent effect on academic performance. In this study, both screen time and media content is considered a factor that can be associated with TV, movie, and video game exposure to academic performance. A total of 4508 students were included in the study. Self-report of academic performance was used as a survey measure to rate the previous school performance of the students. It was rated as excellent, good, average, or below average. Teachers' past report confirms the students' self-report of their academic performance. Television or movie and video game weekend and weekday screen time was assessed by asking the respondents the amount of hours they spent watching TV or movies and playing video games during weekends and weekdays. Content

Al-Khalifa and Garcia (2013) emphasized the astounding figures related to internet and social networking site use among Saudi nationals. They reported that close to half (47.5%) of the entire Saudi population is engaged in the internet, 82% of these internet users log in to Facebook and that Twitter users have magnified by 3000% as of 2012. They noted that these figures justify the fact that the current adoption of social media in higher education institutions cannot be halted. They went on further to identify the use of social media in education for the following roles: (1) as a channel for collaboration and exchange of ideas and opinions; (2) as a means of facilitating learning; (3) as a method of linking and reaching out to the students; (4) as a means of improving the learning abilities of both students and faculty members.

Alsereihy and Al Youbi (2014) explored the usage of different social networking applications by major tertiary education institutions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia like King Saud University, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology and King Abdulaziz University. The study revealed the prevalent use of social network applications in the abovementioned universities. However, the investigators noted that as effective collaboration and educational tools, the full potential of these social networking applications have yet to be tapped. Reasons identified for the underutilization of these social network applications were concerns related to privacy and security, particularly among the female students.

Aljasir et al. (2013) conducted a self-reported survey among 188 male and 184 female study participants taking up a basic communication course in a university in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The survey sought for information regarding how (using which electronic device) and where the students access Facebook, from whom the students hide their Facebook profiles, number of years of internet use and Facebook experience by the students, and the number of their Facebook friends. The study likewise explored differences between males and females with respect to the information gathered above. Results of the study indicated that 81.7% of the combined respondents used a laptop to log in to their Facebook account, 97% of the combined respondents

accessed Facebook from their respective homes, 34.1% of the combined respondents did not want their relatives to see their Facebook profiles, 75.3% had more than 3 years of experience in using the internet, 22.6% of the combined respondents experienced using Facebook for more than 3 years, while only 7.3% reported that they have more than 500 friends on Facebook. The study also showed that gender differences were significant in terms of accessing Facebook through a personal PC (26.6% for males and 2.2% for females) and that females had more friends on their primary Facebook account relative to males.

Shahzad and Alwagait (n. d.) explored the relationship between the use of social media by university students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and their academic performance using a quantitative and qualitative approach. The quantitative side of the study revealed that the hypothesis that the increase in use of social networks decreases the academic performance of students had to be rejected. On the other hand, the qualitative side of the study emphasized the feeling that there is a lack of relationship between social media usage and the grade point averages of students although it was likewise shown that social media usage has increased over time among the study respondents.

Binsahl and Chang (2012) explored the use of social networking sites among female international foreign Saudi students taking up courses in Australia. They specifically sought to understand what motivated these students to use Facebook. The study revealed that the propensity of this group of students to use Facebook was brought about by personal and technical reasons of peer pressure and ease of use, respectively. More importantly, the study indicated the group's receptiveness to the use of Facebook for educational purposes. Furthermore, it was noted that technical factors may play a role in decreasing the frequency of usage of Facebook while cultural factors, surprisingly for this group, was not identified as a reason for abandoning the use of this SNS.

This study was conducted mainly to determine the relationship between utilization of SNS according to type, frequency, hours per week and influence of others, and study habits with regard to time management, concentration and motivation by a correlational research design. The growing social networking sites phenomenon has brought into the attention of the investigators to further study the relationship of using social networking sites to the study habits of students. The academic environment of the students nowadays is undeniably bloated with modern gadgets and extensive utilization of information technology. As nurse academicians, it is troubling to know that even in the campus electronic libraries and in areas with Wi-Fi access, using laptops, and mobile phones, students can be observed updating their profiles and status, playing games, chatting and posting comments through these web sites.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis and Colleagues in 1989 (Morris & Dillon, 1997) was adopted to describe the phenomenon and to theorize on the relationship of use of social networking sites to study habits in this study (Figure 1). TAM is the most preferred model in a range of information technology acceptance studies due to its universal applicability and parsimony (Chin, 2008 in Al-Ghaith, 2015).

In the model, demographic factors in terms of age, gender, and academic level may affect the perceptions of nursing students on 'usefulness' (degree to which a user believes that using the system will enhance their performance) and 'ease of use' (degree to which the user believes that using the system will be free from effort) of social networking sites in view of their academic activities. Ease of use can bolster usefulness among students but influence users' attitude (intrapersonal and interpersonal) independently. Study habits constitute time, concentration, and motivation of users, which are determined by the level of use of social networking. Perceived usefulness can influence behavioral intentions indirectly. Attitude can interact between study habits and use of social networking sites.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The study was conducted to investigate on the effects of utilization of social networking sites to the study habits among Saudi nursing students at the undergraduate level in Ha'il University. Specifically, this study was designed to meet the following aims below.

1. To describe the characteristics of nursing student respondents with regard to: (a) age; (b) gender; (c) academic level; (d) frequently used social media; (e) influencing people leading to use of social media; (f) frequency of social media usage; and (g) number of hours spent on social media per week.
2. To determine the type of social media commonly used by undergraduate nursing students.

3. To determine the extent of study habits of undergraduate nursing student respondents in terms of: (a) time management; (b) concentration; and (c) motivation.
4. To determine the influence of undergraduate nursing students' level of social media utilization on their study habit.
5. To test for the presence of a significant difference between and among the use of social media and study habits by Undergraduate Nursing students when they are grouped according to their gender.

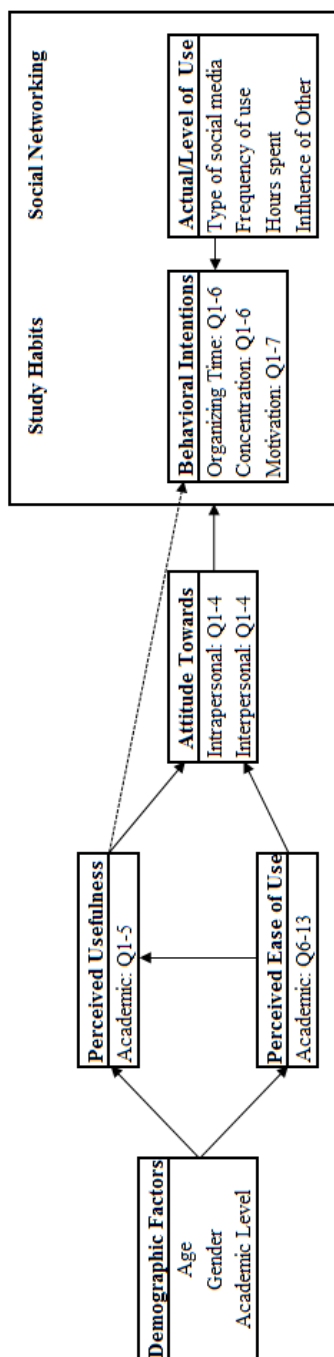


Figure 1. Application of Technology Acceptance Model.

## METHODS

The quantitative non-experimental research approach, specifically a correlational design, was employed to determine the existing relationship between usage of social networking sites and the students' study habits. A quantitative research involves the investigation of phenomena that lend themselves to precise measurement and quantification, often involving a rigorous and controlled design. A non-experimental research is a study in which the researcher collects data without introducing an intervention. A correlational research explores the interrelationships among variables of interest without researcher's intervention. (Polit & Beck, 2014)

The target population of the study includes male and female students admitted in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing at University of Ha'il. Those who enrolled during the First Semester of the School Year 2015-2016 were included in the study. The respondents were also qualified by having a currently active account in social networking sites, such as Facebook, Friendster, Twitter, Tumblr, and others.

**Table 1: Distribution of Pre-Surveyed Respondents**

Year Level	Total Number of Students	%
Second Year	84	24.85
Third Year	146	43.20
Fourth Year	108	31.95
Total	338	100%

Convenience sampling was utilized in the selection of the respondents and it is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the investigators.

The questions in the research instrument were based from the literature review made by the investigators following the Technology Acceptance Model. The survey questionnaire was composed of 56 questions divided into three sections. The first section provides information on; (1) the personal profile of the respondent consisting of name, age, year level, and section; (2) what SNS they are currently using; (3) influential person to use SNS; (4) frequency of using SNS and (5) the number of hours spent on using SNS per week. The second section was divided into 3 subtopics regarding the use of social networking sites. The subtopics are regarding use of SNS in terms of: (1) academic purposes – 19 questions; (2) intrapersonal purposes – 5 questions; and (3) interpersonal purposes – 3 questions. The third section was divided into three subtopics regarding the students' study habits. The subtopics consist of 7 questions each regarding: (1) Organizing Time; (2) Concentration; and (3) Motivation. The investigators requested three (3) experts in the field by Nursing Professors of Ha'il University to validate the content of the research instrument. Recommendations and further revisions were undertaken to make sure that the instrument is valid. A pilot study was conducted to 20 non-participants, to test the reliability of the instrument utilizing SPSS, version 22. The questions measured are only those using a five-point Likert scale ("1–Never" to "5–Always"). The internal reliability was very high at .904 by using Cronbach's alpha. Data collection procedures started by writing a letter of request to the dean of the College of Nursing asking permission to conduct a pilot and actual study for data collection inside the campus. After gaining entry, data collection protocol followed to include securing informed consent and then finally proceeding to the conduct the survey. The data gathered was tabulated in an Excel program and analysis performed using SPSS version 22. Statistical treatments employed to generate the following: (1) test for normality; (2) frequency distribution; (3) percentage; (4) measures of central tendency; (5) t-test; (6) Pearson r Correlations; and (7) One-Way ANOVA.

## RESULTS

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Undergraduate Nursing Students, N=180.**

Variable	NO	(%)	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	100	55.6
	Female	80	44.4
<b>Age</b>	21 and below	57	31.7
	22 - 23	34	18.9
	24 - 28	48	26.7
	29 and above	41	22.8
<b>Influencing Persons in using Social Media</b>	Family	18	10.0
	Friends	111	61.7
	Relatives	15	8.3
	Classmates	36	20.0
<b>No. of hours spent on Social Media per week</b>	Less Than Five Hours	55	30.6
	Five To Ten Hours	50	27.8
	More Than Ten Hours	75	41.7
<b>Usage of Social Media per week</b>	Less Than Three Times A Week	10	5.6
	Three To Six Times A Week	19	10.6
	More Than Six Times A Week	151	83.9
<b>Academic Year Level</b>	First Year	28	15.6
	Second Year	60	33.3
	Third Year	60	33.3
	Forth Year	32	17.8
<b>Entire Group</b>		180	100

The sample consisted of 180 Saudi nursing students. Most of students were male (n= 100; 55.6%) with age less than 21 years old (n= 57; 31.7%). Friends was the most influencing on students in using social media (n= 111; 61.7%). More than ten hours students spent on social media per week (n= 75; 41.7%) more than six times a week in using social media (n= 151; 83.9%). Second year and third year were the most prevalent academic year among nursing students.

Analysis of the results revealed that the mean level and standard deviation (SD) of use of social media among nursing students was 67.01 (13.127) (range, 32-105). The possible range of score on this scale is 21 to 105, with a higher score indicating a higher level of use of social media. The mean level and SD of study habit among nursing students was 66.00 (13.127) (range, 41-95). The possible range of score on this scale is 19 to 95, with higher scores indicating higher levels of study habit.

**Table 2. Percentages and Frequencies of Level of Utilization of Social Media among Undergraduate Nursing Students in Ha'il University.**

N	Social Media	Frequency	Percent
1.	Facebook	14	7.8
2.	What's Up*	57	31.7
3.	Instagram	14	7.8
4.	Snap Chat	47	26.1
5.	Twitter	48	26.7
	Entire Group	180	100



**Table 3. Percentages Showing the Study Habits Pattern Exhibited by Nursing Students in Ha'il University.**

N	Items on Study Habit	(Never)	(Seldom)	(Sometimes)	(Often)	(Always)
1.	Do I allot a specific number of hours for studying?	5 (2.8%)	20 (11.1)	71 (39.4%)	47 (26.1%)	37 (20.6%)
2.	Do I follow a definite study schedule?	5 (2.8%)	24 (13.3%)	68 (37.8%)	50 (27.8%)	33 (18.3%)
3.	Do I take time to study every day?	15 (8.3%)	48 (26.7%)	63 (35.0%)	35 (19.4%)	19 (10.6%)
4.	Do I know which time of the day I can study best?	2 (1.1%)	24 (13.3%)	56 (31.1%)	52 (28.9%)	46 (25.6%)
5.	Do I easily find enough time to study?	13 (7.2%)	44 (24.4%)	60 (33.3%)	42 (23.3%)	21 (11.7%)
6.	Do I allot time every week to review?	19 (10.6%)	50 (27.8%)	60 (33.3%)	32 (17.8%)	19 (10.6%)
7.	Am I able to focus entirely when I study?	4 (2.2%)	21 (11.7%)	59 (32.8%)	55 (30.6%)	41 (22.8%)
8.	Do I get interested on my studies?	2 (1.1%)	8 (4.4%)	30 (16.7%)	52 (28.9%)	88 (48.9%)
9.	Do I easily concentrate when I study?	5 (2.8%)	16 (8.9%)	56 (31.1%)	51 (28.3%)	52 (28.9%)
10.	Do I usually seek a quiet place to study?	4 (2.2%)	11 (6.1%)	30 (16.7%)	45 (25.0%)	90 (50.0%)
11.	Am I able to study best with music on/ while watching TV?	107 (59.4%)	21 (11.7%)	24 (13.3%)	14 (7.8%)	14 (7.8%)
12.	Do I study even when there are no quizzes and exams?	43 (23.9%)	40 (22.2%)	56 (31.1%)	31 (17.2%)	10 (5.6%)
13.	Do I easily complete a difficult assignment?	10 (5.6%)	30 (16.7%)	74 (41.1%)	47 (26.1%)	19 (10.6%)
14.	Do I enjoy learning?	10 (5.6%)	20 (11.1%)	61 (33.9%)	53 (29.4%)	36 (20.0%)
15.	Do I believe I could get better grades?	4 (2.2%)	14 (7.8%)	52 (28.9%)	63 (35.0%)	47 (26.1%)
16.	Before I leave class, do I make sure that I know which homework to accomplish?	2 (1.1%)	12 (6.7%)	46 (25.6%)	54 (30.0%)	66 (36.7%)
17.	Are exceptional grades important to me?	0 (0.00%)	9 (5.0%)	31 (17.2%)	52 (28.9%)	88 (48.9%)
18.	Do I prioritize studying over other activities?	3 (1.7%)	19 (10.6%)	49 (27.2%)	57 (31.7%)	52 (28.9%)
19.	Do I exert extra effort when I study?	5 (2.8%)	13 (7.2%)	43 (23.9%)	46 (25.6%)	73 (40.6%)

Table 3 shows that 2 (1.1%) of the respondents never agree to item 1: "Do I allot a specific number of hours for studying." while 20 (11.1) seldom agree, 71 (39.4%) sometimes agree, 47 (26.1%) often agree and 37 (20.6%) always agree. Also, 0 (0.00%) of the respondents never agree to item 17: "Are exceptional grades important to me?" while 9 (5.0%) seldom agree, 31 (17.2%) sometimes agree, 52 (28.9%) often agree and 88 (48.9%) always agree and so on.

**Table 4. Use of Social Media as a Predictor of Study Habit.**

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.480 <sup>a</sup>	.231	.226	9.92682

	ANOVA				
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	5257.577	1	5257.577	53.354	.000
Residual	17540.423	178	98.542		
Total	22798.000	179			
Entire Group	180		Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )		

Simple linear multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify influence use of social media on study habits. Table 4 shows that the use of social media explained 23.1% of the total variance in level of study habit ( $R^2 = 0.231$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Thus, this percentage is statistically significant. Therefore, the use of social media is an important factor in predicting students' study habit. The direction of influence for each of this predictor was a positive one; that is, as the value of this predictor increased the level of study habit.

**Table 5. T-test Summary of Level of Use of Social Media by Male and Female Students in Ha'il University.**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-value	p-value
Male	100	68.3400	14.56453	178	1.518	<b>0.131</b>
Female	80	65.3625	10.93854			
Entire Group	180					Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )

Table 5 indicates that the calculated t-value was 1.518 and this was not significant at 0.05 alpha level ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, there is no significant difference between male and female nursing students' utilization of social media.

**Table 6. T-test Summary of Comparison of Study Habit of Male and Female Students in Ha'il University.**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-value	p-value
Male	100	66.9800	12.09306	178	1.305	<b>0.194</b>
Female	80	64.7750	10.12826			
Entire Group	180					Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )

Table 6 shows that there is no significant difference in the study habit of male and female students in Ha'il University ( $t = 1.305$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, male and female nursing students in Ha'il University are not significantly different in their study habit.

Pearson product-moment correlation (Pearson  $r$ ) coefficient for a 2-tailed test of significance was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables, use of social media and the dependent variable, study habit (Table 7).

**Table 7. Relationship between Students' Level of Use of Social Media and Study Habit.**

Variable	Utilization of Social Media	Study Habit
Utilization of Social Media	Pearson Correlation	1
Study Habit	Pearson Correlation	.480
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Entire Group	180	Significant ( $p < 0.05$ )

Table 7 shows that there is a moderate statistically significant positive relationship between Undergraduate nursing students' level of use of social media and study habit ( $r = +0.480$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, nursing students' level of use of social media is positively related to their study habit. Hence, the more the use of social media by the students the better is the students study habits. It can also be inferred that the group of nursing students that use social media frequently are also the group that have better study habit.

## DISCUSSION

### Type of social media

Based on the investigation of the type of social media commonly used by undergraduates nursing students in Ha'il university, the results of this study shows that Whatsapp is the most commonly use followed by the Twitter and Snapchat the rest are infrequently used and some are totally not in use. The respondents who preferred WhatsApp to other social media networking technologies attributed the similar to its user-friendly



interface, its real time transmission abilities, and its flexibility and multimedia capabilities. Respondents who preferred twitter expressed their interest in twitter owing to a tag of lecture associated with the social media network. its wide reach makes it suitable for cross-cultural social interactions with users across the globe. The respondents who preferred Snap Chat to other social networking technologies owed the same to its wide spread popularity the world over, its ease of access and its user-friendly interface.

In the study of Olutola et al. (2016), Twitter is reported by students as one of those popular means of social networking followed by Whatsapp and Facebook on daily basis or three times a week. The frequency of utilization of social media in Saudi Arabia is confirmed by Arab Social Media Report in the first report of 2015 (p. 7) nominating the following survey results: Whatsapp (91%); Facebook (80%); Twitter (53%); Instagram (43%); and Youtube (40%). Moreover, Whatsapp is most preferred across Arab countries. "Connectivity" is the primary reason or motive in any type of social media at 55% while gaining information is secondary at 12%.

Langat (2015) has also showed that Whatsapp is the most popular followed by Facebook due to user-friendly interface, real time transmission abilities, and versatility and multimedia capabilities. Facebook use is attributed to accessibility, user-friendly interface and wide reach for cross-cultural social interactions. Twitter use is owed to its class in the social media network. Instagram use takes its edge on multimedia processing capabilities.

### **Influencing of social media on study habits**

The respondents' study habits were to a high degree influenced by social media. Most likely that this high influence may have been result of easy access to and brought about by the accessibility of gadgets like cell phones with mobile data and Wi-Fi connection. The affordability and accessibility of these gadgets in the shop may have been another cause. This study confirmed the findings of Olutola et al. (2016) on the significant influence of social media utilization on study habits of students in tertiary institutions in a linear regression analysis, R2 of 0.078 at P value of <0.05.

### **Relationship social media between study habits**

There is significant relationship between students' level of use of social media and study habit. In fact Respondents acknowledged that social media in deed contributes positively to their study habits. They indicated that social media allows them to receive timely class updates and facilitate their group discussions. They indicated that social media helps with distribution study materials like notes and also play a great role in team building through social media groups. Respondents acknowledged that social media plays a essential role in enhancing cooperative learning among students; this means that it has arguably more positive effects on learning than otherwise. The findings of Olutola et al. (2016) supports this study. The relationship between use of social media and study habit was significantly positive ( $r=+0.280$ ,  $P<0.05$ ).

There is no significant difference in the use of social media by nursing students in Ha'il University on the basis gender. The result is congruent with Olutola et al. (2016) that there is no significant difference in study habit ( $t= -2.206$ ,  $P>0.05$ ) and use of social media ( $t= -2.206$ ,  $P>0.05$ ) between male and female students.

Male and female nursing students in Ha'il University are not significantly different in their study habit. The findings is also in agreement with Ayodele and Adebisi (2013) which revealed that gender was found to have no significant difference on undergraduates study habits. In addition, Ossai (2004) found that gender has a non-moderating factor for undergraduate study habit. This is because both male and female undergraduates have equal tendencies. Khurshid, Tanveer and Naz Quasmi (2012) noted that there is a positive relationship between study habits and academic achievement.

On the other hand, this study is inconsistent to the study of Johnson and George (2014) which investigated the impact of WhatsApp messenger usage on students' performance in five tertiary institutions in Ghana. They observed that female participation in social media far outweighed the male counterpart. The reason being speculated by the researchers is that female students were found to be more likely to have expressions related to family relationships and friend relationships by using Whatsapp than the male students. Also, it was observed that most of the women favorite using the application for communication, especially for group discussions on specific assignment given in lecture than to meet their group members personally.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study investigated on social media utilization and study habits of nursing students in Ha'il University. All the students are highly involved in social media whereby the majority are using Whatsapp followed by Twitter and Snapchat. The study revealed that the more the use of social media by the nursing students, the better is the students study habits. It can also be inferred that the group of students that use social media frequently are also the group that have better study habit. Therefore, the use of social media is an important factor in predicting students' study habit. Positive use of social media may improve the study habit of nursing students in the College of Nursing. Gender differences in the use of social media and study habits is not prominent it is closely similar.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below were made based on the results of this study.

1. Systematic orientation should be given to students on how to and when to use social media to enhance their study habit and achievement. Nursing students should be encouraged to improve upon their study habit for better academic performance. Faculty members in the College of Nursing should guide the students to develop efficient and effective study habit while utilizing SNS.
2. Nursing curriculum should include topics on suitable use and management of social media to optimize communication on academic activities and as a valuable learning resource.
3. An additional study can also be endeavored on the effects of social media to outcomes such as academic performance of students.
4. TAM as an adopted framework in nursing research should be explored further and tested using structural equation modeling and system dynamics simulation to analyze constructs as applied in an academic setting and to predict user behaviors in various dimensions and conditional factors.

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