



SOCIAL MEDIA AND BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS OF CONSUMER SCIENCE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ESWATINI

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive survey study was conducted to examine the influence of social media on behavioral patterns of Consumer Science High School students in Manzini, Eswatini. The mixed methods research approach was employed and data were collected using semi-structured interviews and close-ended survey questionnaire. Purposive and random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 16 students for interviews and 200 students for survey questionnaires respectively. Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis and survey questionnaire data using SPSS Version 23.0. Key findings revealed Facebook and WhatsApp as the most commonly used social networking sites by the students and mainly Social Media for leisure purposes such as chatting and following latest fashion trends. There was however, minimal use for research and academic purposes. Students spent the greater part of their time on social media, which they agreed could have been spent on more beneficial activities like studying. Students' behavioral patterns have been negatively influenced, including strained relationships with family and anti-social tendencies. The study recommends that network providers come up with strategies to filter information that reaches young people through media platforms to avoid exposing them to unwarranted materials.

Key Words: Behavior patterns, Social media, High school students, Social Networking Sites.

Introduction

The world today is celebrating the improvement in media communication which has broadened in scope through information and communication technologies which have turned the world into a global village. Numerous benefits have been obtained through distant communication with the use of social networking sites (Walton, 2017). Until the 1980s communication relied primarily upon print and analog broadcast models, such as those of newspapers, television and radio. The last twenty-five years have seen the rapid transformation into media which are predicated upon the use of digital technologies, such as the Internet and videos (Mingle & Adams 2015). According to Drussel (2019), the emergence of new digital technologies signals a potentially radical shift of who is in control of information, experience and resources. There is an evolution of a universally interconnected network of audio, video and electronic text communications that blur the distinction between interpersonal and mass communication and between public and private communication (Rooney, 2018).

Social media has become the most used technology of the day. Social media is a group of Internet-based applications that is interchangeably used as social software and build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 that allows the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (Njoronje, 2015). Social media is a broad term consisting of blogs, microblogs, images, sounds, videos, networks, social web profiles and other social networks (Asemah & Edegoh, 2016). Examples of these Social Media platforms include Twitter, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, and Blackberry Messenger (BBM), WhatsApp messenger, 2go messenger, Skype, Google talk, Google Messenger, iPhone and Androids. These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical and internet friends (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

The internet revolution has transformed and impacted the information world with regards to sharing, speed, storage and retrieval of information in whatever form, communication, learning, research and education, irrespective of the person's location. In general,

Social Network Sites have become the most modern and attractive tools for connecting people globally (Kyoshaba, 2019).

Technology is two sided as it brings with it both negative and positive influences. It helps people to be better informed, enlightened, and keeping abreast with world developments, which includes the classroom. For instance, technology can expose mankind to a better way of ensuring that teaching and learning occurs through Social networking sites. Social media is an enabling interaction between teachers and students, creating materials and allowing the students to share materials with each other and their teachers (Aghazamani, 2010). With these features, social media is competent in responding to the demands of change in today's learning. Learners are no longer passive receivers of information but active creators of their own meanings as they create their own contents. This offers learners a time and space-independent opportunity to contact their peers and manage their own learning activities (Au, Lam & Chan, 2010).

On the other hand, literature attests to the fact that Social Media has stolen children from their parents even communicating with the rest of the family as these devices divert them from their daily studies and completing their homework (Hlatshwayo, 2014). The use of social media encourages and results in the reduction of their command over English language and also writing skills (Salvation & Adzharuddin, 2014). The shorthand used for texting or instant messaging jargon is also incorporated into school work (Badri, Nuaimi, Guang & Rashedi 2017). More generally, schools are in a dither about how to control use of cell phones and texting during school hours and how to counter their use as a device to aid cheating. In addition to the above, teachers are raising concerns about a negative impact on writing skills. Students are integrating learning and research capabilities have experienced drastic low reduction as a result of students relying more on the information accessible easily on these social networking sites and web in general (Maqablesh, Rajab, Quteshat, Masa'deh, , Khatilo & Karajeh, 2015).

The use of social media is believed to be a factor in discouraging face-to-face communication. Some educators are concerned that while real-time digital stream may create a safe harbour for students who are uncomfortable expressing themselves, students are missing valuable lessons in real-life social skills. Students may find themselves struggling during college admission or job interviews when they need to command attention and deliver a coherent message. Life demands that these students be able to effectively express themselves and connect with others at gatherings and in personal relationships (David, 2018).

Ultimately, while the debate continues over what role social media should play in the classroom, no one can argue the influence that social networking has on today's students. This tech-savvy generation conducts much of their life through social media channels. Not surprisingly, they are already using YouTube, Facebook and Twitter as tools for learning and collaboration (Van Deursen, Görzig, Delzen, Van Perik & Stegeman, 2014).

The increasing use of social media by students and teachers therefore requires that schools have an acceptable use of policy. Such policies reflect underlying values about access to information, student discipline, instructional creativity, and community expectations. The most successful policies are developed collaboratively and attend to the needs of students and teachers and at the same time meet the school's needs to provide a safe teaching and learning environment. Balancing the risks and opportunities of social media is one of the challenges in developing an acceptable use policy (Hundley & Shyles, 2010). This is so because it is also as equally important to spend time evaluating what you are putting on social media as well, as some content may be harmful or damaging to others. Social media can easily make people feel as if they are not good enough which can then lead to negative feelings and desiring to alter their selves or their lives.

The emergence of social media in the Kingdom of Eswatini has been received with mixed feelings. At one extreme, it is criticised for promoting immoral behaviour while on the other hand welcomed as an opportunity to produce, distribute and exchange information that is more relevant to social lives and the academic world (Achieng, 2012). With this in mind, it is prudent for today's institutions to get on the social media train and find ways to successfully integrate these tools into the classroom, hence the need to carry out this study.

Despite the fact that there seems to be over usage of social media by the youth today, there is no clear evidence that it has a negative influence on academic outcomes. The researchers identified and selected this issue not only an area of personal interest but also an area dearth in literature. In Eswatini, several studies on effects of cell phone use on academic performance on University students were carried out. Therefore, it is evident that a gap exists on the Influence of Social Media on behavioural patterns of Consumer Science high school students. The intent of this study is to investigate the possible influence that Social Media Usage may have on Eswatini High school Consumer Science students behavioural patterns.

Research Questions

- What are the Social Network Sites commonly used by Consumer Science High School students?
- How much time do Consumer Science High School students spend on Social Media?
- What are the behavioral patterns associated with the use of Social Media?

Methodology

The researchers used the mixed methods research approach employing the descriptive survey research design. Mixed methods research studies contain the elements of both qualitative and quantitative methods within the study. A mixed methods approach employs different strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems (Rambe & Nel, 2015). The researchers used triangulation to determine the behavioral patterns associated with the use of Social Media of Consumer Science High School students in the Manzini Region of Eswatini. The data collection was done in two (2) phases. Phase I involved the collection of qualitative data using semi-structured interviews procedures in data collection and data analysis and Phase II was collection of quantitative data using a survey questionnaire.

Population and sample

The target population of the study was the Form 4 Consumer Science High School students in the Manzini region. Purposive Sampling was used to select 16 Consumer Science students, two (2) from each school in the Central Manzini from both urban and peri-urban schools.

Instrumentation

The instruments used for the study were the face-to-face interviews and survey questionnaires

Semi-structured interviews

The researchers recorded and transcribed all the interviews. The interviews were conducted on sixteen (16) Form 4 students comprising of two (2) students from eight (8) schools, based on the fact that they owned cellphones or other gadgets that they were using for social media. A semi-structured interview is a qualitative method of inquiry that combines a predetermined set of open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are questions that cannot be answered with yes or no or simple responses (Creswell, 2014). The researchers asked open-ended questions and probed for more detailed and contextual data. Responses from the interviews were recorded down in a notebook, by two research assistants.

Survey Questionnaire

For the survey questionnaire, a total number of 200 students were selected using simple random sampling, based on Sekaran's table which determines sample size from a given population (Sekaran, 2003). After obtaining class lists of Form 4 students in the selected schools in the Manzini region, that were obtained from the class teachers in those schools. The students were randomly picked from the class lists. A survey questionnaire provides a quantitative description of attitudes or opinions of a population (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen & Razavieh, 2010). A survey was used to collect data from all sampled students who were doing Form 4 in 2018 in the selected schools in the Manzini Region. The questionnaire was developed based on the literature that addressed the objectives. The questionnaire used a Likert type scale for rating the Influence of Social Media on students' behavioural patterns. The instrument was given to three experts for validation.

The researchers ensured reliability of the study by calculating post-hoc reliability coefficients of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha. The variable on the Influence of Social Media on Behavioral Patterns was 75.5% reliable (a reliability coefficient of 0.755). The reliability coefficient was acceptable, since the overall reliability was more than 0.70.

Ethical considerations

Prior to delivery of the questionnaire to all respondents, letters were written to the Ministry of Education and Training and school principals, seeking permission to collect data from schools. The respondents were assured of strict confidentiality of the responses. Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to all the selected students. The questionnaires were collected after three days to allow the respondents enough time to fill in the questionnaires.

Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data were analysed using SPSS version 23.0 and thematic analysis respectively. Qualitative data were used to confirm or to refute quantitative data.

Results and Discussion

Social Networks commonly used by Consumer Science High school students

Table 1 presents the Types of Social Network Sites used by the students in the Manzini Region. The table reveals WhatsApp as the most popular Social Network Site with 89.5 % (n= 179) followed by Facebook with 87.5 % (n= 175), and next in popularity was Instagram with 41.5% n=(n=83) while Twitter and YouTube who had the same frequency of users at 19% (n=38) each.

Table 1: Types of Social Networks used by students (N=200)

Type of Social Networks	Yes		No	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Facebook	175	87.5	25	12.5
Twitter	38	19	162	81
You Tube	38	19	162	81
WhatsApp	179	89.5	21	10.5
Instagram	83	41.5	117	58.5
Mix It	11	5.5	189	94.5
My space	6	3	194	97

Table 2 presents the Types of Social Network Sites used by the students. The table shows Facebook as the most commonly used Social Network with 100 % (n= 16), followed by WhatsApp with 69 % (n= 11) while next in popularity was Google with 31% (n= 5) and lastly You Tube with 25% (n=4). With the Social Network Sites that students are most attracted to, Facebook was the most attractive to the students with 63%(n=10), followed by WhatsApp, Instagram and Google who all had the same frequency of users with 19%(n=3) each. Following this group was You Tube with 13 % (n=2).

Table 2: Social Network Sites commonly used by students (N=16)

Social Networks commonly used by students			Sites Attractive to students	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
Facebook	16	100	10	63
WhatsApp	11	69	3	19
Instagram	3	19	3	19
Twitter	2	13		
YouTube	4	25	2	13
Google	5	31	3	19
Snap chat	1	6		
Opera Mini	1	6	1	6

Findings from the survey questionnaire indicate that WhatsApp is leading in popularity, followed by face book and others. Findings from interviews indicate Facebook as the most popular social network site, followed by WhatsApp then the others. This is an indication that WhatsApp is the most popular then face book, judging from the fact that the survey had the majority of respondents. The researchers attributed the popularity of WhatsApp and Facebook to cheaper rates and easier to communicate instantly with anyone anywhere around the globe. Since the respondents were high school students, they were still adolescence who suffer from identity crisis and therefore wanted networks that expose them to a wider population.

Facebook is a popular networking tool that is used for communication, exchanging knowledge and sharing information, with special features such as being able to chat with different people all around the world. The other reason for choosing this tool is that most higher education students interact effectively with it, as mentioned above. Online social networks have offered brilliant opportunities for users through the interaction between them.

Uses of Social Network Sites by Students

Interview findings from Table 3 present students' use of social networks

Table 3: Sub-themes emerging from interviews on the use of social media by students

Theme	Sub- themes
Social Network use by students	Hold WhatsApp discussions on school work Following trends on latest fashion Communicating with new acquaintances Motivation on issues of interest to that individual Consolation from friends when they were distressed Downloading videos Sharing posts with friends and family

Hold academic discussions on WhatsApp

Some of the students indicated that they used Social Media to hold discussion on academic work. They indicated that there are educational groups where they share educational information, past examination papers, a few said they had teachers in their WhatsApp groups who shared some information and answers with them on certain academic issues. They also indicated that they used Social Media to do research work on school assignments and enriching their academic knowledge.

Following on latest fashion trends

It also emerged, during the interviews that some students used Social Media to follow trends on what is happening around the world currently, including the latest fashion trends, latest technology and others. They even mentioned the fact that the trends they follow then in turn influence how they ultimately also handled themselves or now do things.

Communicating with new acquaintances and maintaining the friendships

It emerged during the interviews that students also used social media to meet new friends and maintain communication with friends near and afar. They want to be connected to a lot of people whom they think can make good friends. Learning how to make friends is a major part of growing up, and friendship requires a certain amount of risk-taking. This is true for making a new friend, but it's also true for maintaining friendships.

Consolation from friends when stressed

It transpired; during the interviews that students said they obtained consolation from friends when they were distressed and thought sharing posts made them happy. Also, when others shared their life stories and predicaments, students felt that they identified with such, as they had also experienced similar experiences, thus they were consoled.

Downloading and sharing videos

Interview results indicated that students also used social media to download, share videos and posts with each other on the various social media platforms. These videos were diverse with some for entertainment, religious sharing and songs and a few for academic purposes. Interviews revealed that students also shared, as a way of socializing and motivating each other. Posts are of utmost importance to the young social media users, a 'like' on a post shared brings a sense of validation to them, thus boosting their ego and self-confidence. However, according to (David, 2018) social media platforms include issues like increased levels of depression and anxiety, poor sleep quality, , cyberbullying and dissatisfaction with body image. Overly, these negative impacts of social media are typically attributed to unrealistic depictions in posts that cause viewers to feel inadequate.

Amount of Time spent by Consumer Science High School students on Social Media

Time spent on Social Media per day

Table 4 shows the amount of time the respondents spent on their sites per day. Those who spend more than 2 hours a day were dominant by 40.5% (n=81), also the table showed that those who log into the site usually log on for between 1 and 2 hours were 23.5 % (n=47), between 30 minutes to 1 hour were 21.5 %(n=43) . The least number of respondents who said they log into social network sites for less than 30 minutes a day were 14.5% n=(29).

Table 4: Amount of Time spent by students on Social Media (N=16)

Time spent on Social Media a day	F	%
Less than 30 minutes a day	29	14.5
Between 30 minute - 1 hour a day	43	21.5
Between 1- 2 hours a day	47	23.5
More than 2 hours a day	81	40.5

Participants strongly agreed that they did spend quite a lot of time on Social networks, and they even lost track of the time that they spent on social networks, and could not even estimate or account for that time. Some regretfully lamented that the time could have been spent on something else more beneficial.

Frequency of use of Social Media per week

A majority of the students said that they use Social Media daily, dominating by 39.9% (n=79), followed by those who use Social media for 2 days a week 32.8% (n=65). Those who said they use Social Media for more than 2 days a week were at 20.7% (n=41). The least number of respondents were those who said they hardly use Social Media, they were 6.6% (n=13).

Table 5: Frequency of use Social Media per week

Use of Social Media per week	F	%
Never	13	6.6
2 days a week	65	32.8
More than 2 days a week	41	20.7
Daily	79	39.9

The time spent by these students point to Social Media addiction which is considered a classified disorder. Daria and Griffiths in (2011) analysed 43 previous studies on the matter, and concluded that social media addiction is a mental health problem that may require professional treatment. They found that excessive usage was linked to relationship problems, worse academic achievement and less participation in offline communities, and the more vulnerable to social media addiction included those who use social media to compensate for fewer ties in real life.

How often students Post on Social Media

Respondents who indicated that they post on Social Media every few weeks were the majority by 61.7% (n=121), followed by those who said they post on Social Media weekly by 23.5% (n=46). Those who post multiple times a day were 8.2% (n=16). Those who post daily had the least number of respondents, 6.6% (n=13).

Table 6: Frequency of Posting on Social Media

How often you Post on Social Media	F	%
Every few weeks	121	61.7
Weekly	46	23.5
Daily	13	6.6
Multiple times a day	16	8.2

People use Snapchat to share their exciting adventures, post about how much they love their significant other on Facebook, and load up their Instagram page with heavily staged photos. Many people, in search of social media fame, have definitely taken unhealthy routes to appear more attractive hence, the students may post on social media more often to gain more followers.

When do students Access Social Media

Findings in Table 7 indicate that those who access Social Media during free time were dominant by 90.0% (n=180), followed by those who access social media during meal times, at 6.5% (n=13). 2.5% (n=5) said they access Social Media whilst at school, and those who said they access Social Media during school occasions had the least number of respondents 1.0% (n=2).

Table 7: Time of Accessing Social Media

When do you Access Social Media	F	%
During free time	180	90.0
Whilst at school	5	2.5
During school occasions	2	1.0
At meal times	13	6.5

Getting worked up with anxiety or envy from what is seen on social media keeps the brain on high alert, preventing one from falling asleep (Huang, 2014). This is coupled with the light from the mobile device just inches from the face can suppress the release of melatonin, a hormone that helps one to feel tired.

Do you check on Social Media before you get out of bed?

Findings in the Table 8 indicate that most students check on Social Media before they get out of bed 54% (n=108) while a minority did not check on Social Media before getting out of bed 46% (n=92). Students are seemingly hooked on social media as they cannot wait to see what was posted while they were asleep, they don't want to miss out.

Table 8: Checking on Social Media before getting out of bed

Checking on Social Media before getting out of bed	F	%
Yes	108	54.0
No	92	46.0

Having to check on social media first thing in the morning may disturb the whole schedule of the day depending on what has been posted by the circle of people in the student's life. Checking on social media when getting out of bed maybe attributed to Fear of Missing out (FOMO), which is a phenomenon that started around the same time as the rise of social media (Lenhart & Madden, 2017). This fear receives constant fuel from what one sees on social media. With increased social network use, there's a better chance for one to see that someone having more fun that they are at that particular time

Is checking Social Media the last thing before going to bed?

Findings in Table 9 indicate that most students check on Social Media as the last thing before going to bed 70% (n=140) while a minority did not check on Social Media before going to bed (n=60, 30%). This is an indication that most of the students are so addicted to social media such that they could not go to bed without checking on their social network sites.

Table 9: Checking on Social Media before going to bed (n= 200)

Checking Social Media the last thing before bed	F	%
Yes	140	70
No	60	30

One of the worst times to use social media may be just before bed. Research has found that artificial light can inhibit the body's production of the hormone melatonin, which facilitates sleep and blue light, which is emitted by smartphone and laptop screens, is said to be the worst culprit (Huang, 2014). Sleepless nights could therefore be caused by physiological arousal before sleep, and the bright lights of devices can delay circadian rhythms.

Interview responses were as follows:

Lots of time is spent on Social Media

The majority of participants indicated sometimes with regret that they spent a great deal of time on social networks and thought that the time could be spent on something more beneficial. Many of them could estimate the time used to range between 2- 8 hours a day. Some could not even estimate the total number of hours.

Agreed that time could have been spent on something else

Some participants regretfully lamented that the time could have been spent on something else more beneficial, instead of spending all that time on Social Media. Very few said that Social Media did not have a negative influence on their academic work because they are able to control themselves on how much time they spend on social networks.

Findings from the survey questionnaire indicate that those who spend more than 2 hours a day were dominating, a majority of the students said they use social media daily, which they posted on social media often. Most participants said they access social media during their free time, some indicated that they check on social media before they get out of bed, and it is the last thing before going to bed.

Findings from the interviews on the other hand indicate that the majority of participants indicated sometimes with regret that they

spent a great deal of time on social networks and thought that the time could be spent on something more beneficial. Many of them could estimate the time used to range between 2- 8 hours a day. Some could not even estimate the total number of hours.

Paul (2018) in his study, established that teens spend all their free time on Social Media and many don't read anymore, and this could be ruining their future. Teens spend an average of 9 hours a day online. However, it contradicts with findings by (Khurana , 2015), who states that the students use social networking websites approximately 30 minutes throughout the day as a part of their daily routine life. This statement shows the importance of social networking websites in students' life.

Influence of social media on behavior patterns

Table 10: sub-themes on Influence of Social Media on behavioral patterns of students

Theme	Sub-themes
Influence of Social Media on behavioral patterns	Isolation away and not conversing with family members They try to copy fashion and other trends from social networks. Influenced by some porn videos and other posts Become rude and irritated when interrupted

All participants agreed that social media had effect on behavioural patterns. It even has changed their values and their etiquette. Some even thought that the social media had made them anti-social. It prevented them from chatting with family, they became aggressive when someone interrupted their chats, and were even influenced by some porn films posted by friends.

Staying away and not conversing with family members

Some participants indicated that their behavioral patterns have been influenced by social media use .They pointed out that they no longer socialized with their family members since they now spend a lot of their time online. They no longer conversed with them as it seemingly wastes and delays their Social media time. They even no longer appreciated quality family time.

Copying fashion trends from social networks

It has also emerged during the interviews that some social media participants try to copy fashion and other trends from social networks .Some admitted that they no longer live in the normal real live, but now practically live in social media, as everything happening there seems to influence how they ultimately live their lives, including the way they dress and many other aspects of their lives.

Influenced by some porn videos and other unbecoming posts

Some participants admitted that they were sometimes influenced by some porn videos, nudity posts and other unbecoming posts from friends and strangers alike. This ultimately has a direct influence on the way the students will conduct themselves, as they are now practically living in Social Media, and seemingly everything happening there is somehow "normal".

Become rude and irritated when interrupted

Participants indicated that they become irritated thus aggressive when interrupted on Social Media. They seemingly become too absorbed and fascinated by Social media for lengthy periods, thus being disturbed is the last thing they would welcome.

Survey questionnaire findings reveal that most students believed that their behavior had changed. Some agreed that they had become antisocial due to social media, and that it promotes laziness, that it wastes a lot of one's time. They also agreed that they spent more chatting than doing better things like studying. This assertion can be attested to by a study which revealed that revealed studies in the United Arab Emirates note that parents are concerned, and claim that Social Media has stolen their children from them as these devices divert them from their daily studies, completing their homework and even communicating with the rest of the family (Schouwstra, 2016).

Findings from the interviews reveal that participants agreed that social media had an effect on behavioural patterns. It even has changed their values and their etiquette. Some even thought that the social media had made them anti-social. It prevented them from chatting with family, they became aggressive when someone interrupted their chats, and were even influenced by some porn films and other unbecoming posts posted by friends.

On a positive note, they agreed that social media improves the confidence of an individual. This is in line with a study which concluded that due to social media use social comparison and self-esteem increase. People compare themselves to assess feelings, strengths, weaknesses, abilities and perspectives. Having your social connections reaffirmed makes you feel good. Social validation is an important part of being human. A Facebook 'Like' or a Twitter 'Favorite' is a social signal that makes us feel good.

Lenhart and Madden (2017) concur in their study that social media use discourages Face-to-Face communication. Some educators are concerned that while real-time digital stream may create a safe harbor for students who are uncomfortable expressing themselves, students are missing valuable lessons in real-life social skills. Students may find themselves at a disadvantage during college admission or job interviews when they need to command attention and deliver a coherent message. At social gatherings and in personal relationships, they need to be able to effectively express themselves and connect with others.

Livingstone and Drotner (2008) purport that using social media often involves switching very quickly between tasks and this can effectively shorten the attention spans of young students. The shortened attention spans could have negative effects on teens' relationships as well. There is less tolerance among young people for delayed gratification. Psychologically their young minds are trained to expect a fast response for quick resolution from humans, forgetting that humans are not computers, they need time to process and work things through.

Conclusion

The study concludes that social media had both positive and negative effects on behavioural patterns of student users. However, the trend was more on the negative as values and etiquette were changed. Conclusions drawn include the fact that young people have even become anti-social and idle and are spending more time on social media than doing household chores. They are spending much of their time from family members and even become rude and aggressive when interrupted on their chats or time online, and this creates a barrier to clear communication. Relationship with parents has also been affected negatively as a result. The researchers can also conclude that students are also influenced by fashion and other trends they see on Social media; these also include porn videos and other unbecoming posts. On the positive Social media has improved confidence in individuals as a result of their association with people from all walks of life.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion from the study, the following recommendations were made for:

- Educators: The youths need to be trained on better usage of the social media so as to minimize time wastage on chatting and other irrelevant engagements that are not of major importance on their lives.
- The Communication Commission of Eswatini: needs to come up with means of filtering information that reaches the young people through social media platforms. This will help minimize exposing them to pornographic and other unwarranted materials.
- Policy makers: The findings of this study should be used in policy formulation and introduction of these policies such that they are in place to guide the use of social media in schools.
- Network providers: Social Networking Sites should be expanded and new pages created to enhance academic activities and avoid setbacks in the students' academic performance.
- School administration and teachers: should give advice on the dangers of addiction to social networking sites, to incoming students during orientation into high school life and be introduced to sites that can add values to their academic work and research.

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