

The Relationship between Facebook, Religiosity and Academic Performance

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Abstract : Our study empirically examines the effect of student activities on Facebook and religion on academic performance. We extend prior research in this area in a number of ways. First, given the paucity of the research in this area particularly from the Asian context, we provide the evidence from developing country like Malaysia. Second, our sample drawn from Sultan Idris Education University in Malaysia, where graduates from these universities are unique since they are expected to be able to work in both education and industry environment, and presumed to play significant roles in shaping the development of future student's intellectual at the Malaysian secondary school and Malaysian economy in general. Third, we control for religiosity aspect when examining the association between Facebook and academic performance, something that has been predominantly neglected by the prior studies. Fourth, unlike prior studies that circulating around the Christian sphere in measuring religiosity, we provide evidence from the Islamic perspective where the act of worships and practices are much more comprehensive rather than the Christian counterparts. Fifth, we examine whether Facebook activities and religiosity are complementary or substitutive each other in improving student's academic performance. Our sample comprise of 60 undergraduates. Our result exhibit that students with high number of friends on facebook and frequent engagement on facebook activities, such as sharing links, send message, posting photo, tagging video as well as spending long hours on facebook generally are associated with lower academic performance. Our results also reported that student's engagement in religious activities promotes better academic performance. When we examine the potential interaction effect between facebook and religiosity, our result revealed that religiosity is effective in reducing student's interest on facebook, hence lead to better academic achievement. In other words, religious student will be less interested in joining activities on facebook and make them more perform than their counterparts. Our findings from this study should be able to assist the university management in shaping university policies and curriculum to regulate and manage student's activities in order to enhance overall student's quality. Moreover, the findings from this study are also of use to the policy maker such as Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commissions to regulate the policy on the student's access and activities on facebook.

Keywords : facebook, religiosity, academic performance, effect of student activities

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