

# THE IMPACT OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTITUDES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

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## ABSTRACT

The current study was conducted to investigate the impact of using social media and internet on the academic achievement of prospective teachers. Focus group of the research could be expressed as 204 prospective teachers that were studying in 2016-2017 fall semesters. To collect data, Attitudes Towards to Social Media Scale was employed. Result of the study revealed that, prospective teachers' attitudes towards to social media had an influence on academic achievement. Furthermore, it could be stressed that prospective teachers with lower attitudes towards to social media were more likely to have lower academic success when compared with the prospective teachers with higher attitudes towards to social media. In addition to these, results of the current study also expressed that prospective teachers with social media accounts were achieved better grades when compared with the prospective teachers who did not have any social media account. Lastly, it could be indicated that prospective teachers' attitudes towards to social media was at a moderate level.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

No doubt that, we are experiencing with technological developments which are influencing our daily life. Beside of this, social media tools are becoming vital for society especially for the students. (Subrahmanyam et al., 2008). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) have identified social media as a web-based application groups that are shaped by the technological and ideological characteristics of Web 2.0 which provide users an opportunity to create and modify the content. Moreover, the

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widespread use of social media tools has also revolutionized habits of society such as reading, research, shopping and communication. Furthermore, high interaction in social media has triggered cooperativeness at a working environment and the usefulness of it within the education and training process.

It could be discussed that advancements and popularization of computers and mobile phones have led the community to spend more time on the internet and social media. Camilla, İbrahim and Dalhatu (2013) indicated that social media has become one of the most influential communication tool which could be effectively used on teaching process. Moreover, Bedir and Gülcü (2016) have argued that teachers and students could effectively discuss and exchange their course related ideas via social media. In addition to these, it is believed that multi-functionality of social media encourages students to actively engage with group works, discuss and share more easily

among themselves about what they have learnt and communicate via multiple chat rooms.

### ***1.1. Significance of the study***

It could be indicated that characteristics of the society are rapidly changing with the transformation from industrial epoch to information age which facilitates the generation of updated information. Thus information which people have elicited by traditional learning context could be characterized as insufficient.

Needless to mention that, in today's dynamic world, people are more likely to focus more on continuous education to update and advance their knowledge by actively concentrating on researching for having a better life. Therefore, people should intensively engage with discussions, sharing and exchanging ideas, deal with group works to deepen their knowledge. Furthermore, it might be argued that all these above-mentioned activities to advance learning could be provided through social media which is also enriched with well-designed audio and visual communication options for promoting virtual learning environment to fuel boundless learning.

Aside from these, this study could be considered significant in several ways. First, since the present literature fails to provide sufficient research on the impact of using social media on academic achievement and attitudes of prospective teachers in TRNC. Thus the findings of this study are expected to expand the understanding of the role of using social media for educational purposes. Secondly, the current study may be considered as one of the initial study to add scholarly research and literature about the impact of using social media on academic achievement and attitudes of prospective teachers

### ***1.2. Previous studies***

[Alwagait et al. \(2015\)](#) have conducted a study to test the impact of using social media on academic success on 108 students in Saudi Arabia. Study revealed that there is no linear relationship among students' weekly social media use and their grade point average. Moreover, students also indicated that time management has negatively influenced their achievement.

[Mawdsley \(2015\)](#) conducted a study to measure students' perceptions of social media in education, to consider how social media may be incorporated as a complementary

learning tool. Focus group of the study could be indicated as undergraduate pharmacy students that are studying in University of Manchester. Study revealed that 92 % respondents reported that they are actively using social media; nonetheless, 57 % favours the University virtual learning environment in preference to social media for learning. Study also stressed respondents have reservations regarding on-line professionalism, and doubt the place of social media in education which includes the teacher.

[Sarsar et al. \(2015\)](#) conducted a single case study on 18 doctoral students at Ege University during Fall Semester in 2012-2013 to determine their opinions regarding usage of social media tools on teaching and learning process. The results outlined that all students met their expectations during the course and they had positive attitude towards using Facebook. However, only the half of students thought that Blogger is a useful tool for the course activities.

[Bulut et al. \(2016\)](#) have conducted a research to investigate general attitudes of students towards the use of social media with the light of some socio demographic variables such as their class, gender, academic background of their parents, socio-economic status, memberships regarding social media tools, social media environments and lastly tools which used for connecting social media accounts. Study indicated that groups were statistically different in terms of frequency of using social media and time spent in social media environments. Moreover, research also revealed that students' attitudes towards using social media were high and positive.

### ***1.3. Aim of the study***

The aim of the current study could be stated as to determine the attitudes of prospective teacher towards to usage of social media in education and to investigate their attitudes towards to usage of social media in education with the light of various variables and lastly measuring the impact of using social media and internet on academic achievement.

### ***1.4. Research questions***

Research questions of the current study could be mentioned by the following:

In context of academic achievement of prospective teachers is there any statistical significance with

- Having a social media account,
- The time spent on the internet,
- The purpose and frequency of using social media
- The most frequently used social media tools

In context of prospective teachers' attitudes towards to social media is there any statistical significance with

- Grade point averages,
- Their departments,
- The most widely used social media tools,
- The purpose and frequency of using social media.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

It could be argued that current study aims to investigate the impact of using social media on academic success and as well as analyse the attitudes of students towards the usage of social media in education. Moreover, it may be mentioned that relational survey model was employed as a research method for the study.

### 2.1. Participants

Prospective teachers at private university who are studying in faculty of education during 2016-2017 fall semesters constitute the participants of the study in North Cyprus. Moreover, the participants of the study consist of 204 participants that randomly selected among 1800 prospective teachers through simple random sampling method.

### 2.2. Data collection tool

Moreover, "Attitudes Towards to Social Media Scale", which was proposed by Bedir and Gülcü (2016), was employed as a data collection tool for the current study. The questionnaire consists of 3 parts. On the first part of the questionnaire, the questions are designed to address socio-demographic profile and the grade point averages of the respondents whereas on the second part, 8 questions are administered to determine respondents' habits and frequency of using in internet and social media tools of the students, and in the last part attitudes towards social media scale is appointed in the forms of five-point Likert type and 17 items. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.839.

## 3. RESULTS

It could be stressed that of those 204 respondents 46.1 % were male while 3.95 % were female. Moreover, it might be discussed that most of the respondents were studying at Guidance and Psychological Counselling, pre-school teaching and special education departments. Furthermore, it might be indicated 33.8 % of the respondents had at least 3.00 grade point average. Lastly, it could be stated that majority of the respondents had social media account (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Demographic profile of the participants

Variables	Group	f	%
Variables	Male	94	46.1
	Female	110	53.9
	Total	204	100.0
Departments	Computer Education and Instructional Technology	16	7.8
	Guidance and Psychological Counselling	34	16.7
	Special Education	28	13.7
	Music Teaching	19	9.3
	Elementary School Mathematics	19	9.3
	Teacher Education Department of Pre-School Teaching	28	13.7
	Elementary School Teaching Department	19	9.3
	Social Sciences Teacher Education	18	8.8
	Turkish Language Teaching	23	11.3
	Total	204	100
	Grade Point Average	Less than 2.00	18
	Between 2.00-3.00	117	57.4
	At least 3.00	69	33.8
	Total	204	100
Having Social Media Account	Yes	177	86.8
	No	26	12.7
	Total	203	100



Descriptive findings regarding the attitudes and grade point averages of prospective teachers were illustrated by Table 2. As seen from the table above, mean scores for attitude and grade point average could be indicated as 3.59 and 2.79 respectively.

**Table 2:** Descriptive findings of prospective teachers' attitudes and grade point averages

	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.
Attitude	204	3.59	.058
Grade Point Average	204	2.79	.039

Table 3 exhibits the findings of parametric independent samples t test which related with the impact of having social media account on grade point average. Findings revealed that two groups were statistically significant ( $t_{(201)}=2.325, p<.05$ ). In other words, prospective teachers who have social media account tend to achieve higher academic achievement ( $\bar{X}=2.82$ ) when compared with the grade point averages of prospective teachers who do not have social media account ( $\bar{X}=2.5515$ ).

**Table 3.** Impact of having social media account on grade point average

Having Social Media Account	N	$\bar{X}$	Sd.	df	t	p
Yes	177	2.82	.552	201	2.325	.021
No	26	2.55	.642			

It could be argued that t test finding of the current study regarding the impact of having social media account on grade point average was parallel with the findings of Al Rahmi and Othman (2013) while it was not congruent with the study of Alwagait et al. (2015) since scholars found that having social media account does not have any impact on grade point average.

**Table 4.** Impact of time spent in the Internet on to the grade point average

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Between Groups	1.228	4	.307	.947	.438
Within Groups	64.542	199	.324		
Total	65.770	203			

One way Anova test was conducted to test statistical difference among time spent on the internet by prospective teachers and their grade point averages (Table 4). With the light of the findings it may be stated that there was no statistical difference among time spent in the interned by prospective teachers and their grade point average ( $F_{(4,199)}=0.947, p>.05$ ).

**Table 5.** Impact of time spent on the social media on to the academic achievement

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Between Groups	1.687	4	.422	1.310	.268
Within Groups	64.083	199	.322		
Total	65.770	203			

One way Anova test was conducted to test statistical difference among time spent in social media by prospective teachers and academic achievements (Table 5). Findings revealed that stated that there was no statistical difference among time spent by prospective teachers and their academic achievement ( $F_{(4,199)}=1.310, p>.05$ ).

To test correlation between purpose-frequency and academic achievement Spearman's rank correlation analysis had been employed as collected data failed to match with normality conditions (Table 6). Non-parametric correlation analysis revealed that purpose - frequency of using social media and academic achievement were not statistically significant ( $p>.05$ ).

**Table 6.** Correlation between the purpose-frequency of using social media and academic achievement

Purpose of using social media	N	r	p
To share photos and videos	204	.059	.405
To follow the agenda	204	.029	.680
To find friends	204	.011	.871
To chat	204	.009	.895
To make new friends	204	-.014	.844
To advance foreign language	204	.073	.299
To follow friends	204	.094	.183
To play interactive games	204	.070	.321

To test relationship among most widely used social media tools and academic achievement One-Way Anova method was employed

(Table 7). Findings revealed that most widely used social media tools and academic achievement were not statistically significant ( $F_{(4-199)} = 1.657, p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 7.** Relationship among of most widely used social media tools and academic achievement

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Between Groups	2.119	4	.530		
Within Groups	63.651	199	.320	1.657	.162
Total	65.770	203			

*Analysing prospective teachers' Social Media Attitude Scale scores with the light of some variables*

The main goal of this part of the study is to investigate statistical differences between prospective teachers' Social Media Attitude with grade point average groups which could be expressed as less than 2.00, between 2.00 to 3.00 and lastly at least 3.00. It could be argued that prospective teachers' social media attitude scores had failed to match with normality conditions thus non-parametric k independent samples test (Kruskal-Wallis H test) was conducted to test statistical significance among prospective teachers' social media attitude scale scores and academic achievement (Table 8).

**Table 8.** Impact of prospective teachers' attitudes on academic achievement

Grade point average	N	Mean Rank	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p	Statistical Significance
1 Less than 2.00	18	66.08				1-2
2 2.00 - 3.00	117	105.52	2	7554	0.023	1-3
3 At least 3.00	69	106.88				
Total	204					

Findings of the analysis stressed that prospective teachers who had less than 2,00 as grade point average were found to statistically different with grade point averages of the prospective teachers who least 3.00 ( $\chi^2=7554, p=0.023, p < .05$ ). The main reason behind of this finding could be stated as prospective teachers with lowest academic achievement may be unconscious about using social media.

One-Way Anova was conducted to test significance among department of prospective teachers with their attitudes towards to social media (Table 9). Findings revealed prospective teachers' department and their attitudes

towards to social media were not statistically significant ( $F_{(8-195)} = 1.183, p > .05$ ).

**Table 9.** Impact of prospective teachers' departments on attitudes towards social media

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Between Groups	6.486	8	.811		
Within Groups	133.684	195	.686	1.183	.311
Total	140.170	203			

To test the impact of most widely used social media tools on attitudes of prospective teachers, One- Way Anova test was employed (Table 10). With light of the findings it could be stressed that most widely used social media tools and attitudes of prospective teachers were not statistically significant ( $F_{(4-199)} = 1.877, p > .05$ ).

Correlation between the purpose- frequency of using social media and attitudes of prospective teachers was tested with the Spearman's rank correlation analysis as collected data failed to match with normality conditions. Findings stressed that except advancing foreign language, other items were found to be positively correlated and statistically significant with the attitudes of the prospective teachers.

**Table 10.** Impact of most widely used social media tools on attitudes of prospective teachers

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	p
Between Groups	5.096	4	1.274		
Within Groups	135.074	199	.679	1.877	.116
Total	140.170	203			

## 4. DISCUSSIONS

No doubt that Web, 2.0 technologies have directly influenced the living styles of societies on both advanced and developing nations. Moreover, usage of social networks has also shaped patterns of advertising, marketing, shopping, entertainment, communication and education. To be more accurate, social media tools have promoted interactivity, also stimulated cooperativeness at working sphere.

Furthermore, it is discussed that usage

of social media tools could be as both teachers and students could be online and engage with course related discussions through social media tools.

Aside of these, current study revealed that prospective teachers' attitudes towards to social media and their academic achievement are positively related. Moreover, study also revealed that students who have social media accounts tend to achieve better grades when compared with the students who do not have social media accounts.

Current study also indicated that time spent on internet and social media, purpose and frequency of using media were found to have no impact on the academic achievement of prospective teachers. Social media can improve the academic success of students if they are used correctly in the classroom environment. It also encourages active participation in the class (Alghazo and Nash, 2017). In some studies, it has been stated that social media does not influence the academic success of students. For example, Gupta and Irwin (2016) have said that Facebook can disturb students, especially making their learning duties less important. A similar thought was shared by Junco (2012).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Correlation between the purpose- frequency of using social media and attitudes of prospective teachers was tested with the Spearman's rank correlation analysis. Findings stressed that except advancing foreign language, other items were found to be positively correlated and statistically significant with the attitudes of the prospective teachers. Moreover, it might be no statistical difference was investigated among attitudes of prospective teachers towards to social media and their academic achievements. In addition to that, it could be expressed that departments of prospective teachers and the most widely used social media tools were not statistically significant.

As a conclusion it is believed that sharing course related videos and photos, intensively engaging with course-related discussions and exchanging ideas would positively affect the academic achievements of the students thus it would be beneficial to use social media tools for educational purposes.

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### Conflict of interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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