

Social Media Impact on Employees' Performance

¹Mohammed H. Alfaifi and ²Saleh M. Alharbi

²MBA, King Saud University,
College of Business Administration, KSA

Abstract: This research studies the relationship between the usage of social media and employees' performance. The results state that the usage of social media affect the employees' communication, learning and collaboration skills and those skills in turn affect the employees' performance. In addition, the results determine that there is no direct relationship between employees' usage of social media and performance.

Key words: Social media • Social networks • Employee's performance • Communication • Learning • Collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Social media, such as WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn provide global platform for users allowing them to connect, interact and share information with each other. These platforms are often referred to as social media, social networks as well as web 2.0. Social networks are defined as "web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" [1]. The use of social media or social networks is increasing at an incredible pace [2] and social media are being used by millions of people across the globe for different purposes [3,4]. Moreover, social networks have grown stronger as forms of organizing human activities and have influenced larger social processes [5-17]. On the other hand, studies of employees' social networks have revealed potential competitive advantages for organizations and individuals. For example, a descriptive analysis was conducted by some researchers and found that majority of organization members spent around 30 minutes using social networks during working hours in chatting, checking, or replying to messages [1]. As the Internet has led to fundamental changes in the ways people interact in both the private and the business world [13], technology will continue to significantly change how people communicate, learn and interact with each other one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many [1].

From communication perspective, social media provide simple, inexpensive ways to organize events, arrange meetings, disseminate information and share opinions [6]. In addition, social networks can serve well as a medium for universal linkage between individuals working for an organization regardless of demographical differences [5]. As some researchers conclude, there are ways that social media have affected both internal and external organizational communication [11]. Moreover, as social media have developed into one of the most utilized forms of communication today, researches have indicated various ways in which social media been incorporated into the organizational setting [11]. The first hypothesis assumes that there is a positive relationship between the usage of social media and communication while the second one assumes that there is a positive relationship between the communication and the employee's performance.

Learning is a social activity that expands when shared with others and social media can be the tool for powerful self-directed learning for students [9]. As a result, social media tools are becoming critical part of organizational learning. To illustrate, survey results have shown a high level of awareness that social media technology plays an important and growing role in organizational learning and a proper use of social media tools enhances the learning environment and improves productivity [16]. As Schein highlights, the new reality is that learning needs to be adaptive and be able to focus on putting the learner at the center of learning. For instance, some researchers found that employees who are more

social by nature and are connected with other people through social networks are better persons in the workplace, which means they are skilled at interacting with others and solving problems [2]. The bottom line is that social media usage has a positive relationship with learning activities that employees say they carry out in their jobs as studies have proven [18]. The third hypothesis supposes a positive relationship between the usage of social media and learning whereas the fourth one presupposes a positive relationship between learning and the employee's performance.

Social networking generally motivates collaboration and knowledge sharing between individuals, which can lead to increased productivity [10]. In addition, social media have provided a revolutionary tool for communication and collaboration, resulting in a valuable transformational tool for personal and professional growth [19,20]. Therefore, collaborative media are currently being used as learning tools by many organizations and their implementation in the workplace will continue to increase [21, 22]. Hence, controlled and monitored social media will enrich the organization's work processes and ultimately enhance collaboration [3]. The findings of some studies support the argument that social networking are becoming an acceptable means of sharing work and non-work experiences with family, friends and coworkers [14]. The fifth hypothesis in this research presumes a positive relationship between the usage of social media and collaboration while the last one supposes a positive relationship between collaboration and the employee's performance.

Social media are essential tools for understanding the dynamics of employee outcomes such as turnover, job satisfaction and performance [8]. Regarding the impact of using social media on work, the results of some studies indicated a significant impact of social media on employees' performance [12]. Moreover, social media offer a new medium for knowledge creation and offer organizations the potential to enhance productivity [15]. The results of one research show that there is a positive relationship between the organization's culture and employees' performance [19]. In addition, some researchers have studied the changes in employees' networks and performance before and after the introduction of social networking tools, to find that a structurally diverse network has a positive effect on work performance [23, 24]. Preceding researches have proven that there is a positive relationship between communication and performance [11] and between learning and performance [18] as well as between

collaboration and performance [3]. As some researchers have also found a relationship between use of social media and the employees' performance [12], this research tries to test this relationship in a different way. It will identify the relationship between the usage of social media and employees' performance by studying the relationship between use of social media and communication, learning and collaboration. Then, it will study the relationship between those variables and the employees' performance.

Research Objective: As social media are driving new forms of social interaction, dialogue and collaboration in communities, it is necessary to study their effect on different aspects, such as employee's performance. Therefore, this research aims to find the impact of using social media on employees' performance. The research's question is how does the use of social media impact employees' performance?

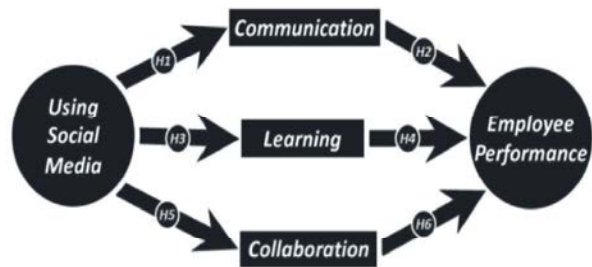


Fig. 1: Research Model

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology used in this research is designing a survey and distributing it to different employees in different working sectors. The survey contains five variables with a total of 56 questions in addition to 11 personal questions. A five-point Likert scale (1 for strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) was used to measure the five variables. Then, the data were collected and analyzed to find the relationships between different variables and to come up with a conclusion of the subject. The unit of analysis in this research is individuals (employees). Therefore, the questionnaire was designed for employees' input. The survey was distributed online through social networks and using printed papers. Total online responses were 112 from which 106 were relevant and the hardcopies were 87 from which 80 were relevant. The sample size used in this analysis is 186 [25].

Variables and Measures: Use of social media (SMUS) is the extent to which an employee is using social media for social interactions, personal relationships, communication and experience sharing. This variable is measured by asking questions including the frequency of use, medium used and whether the employee is active on social media or not. Communication (COMM) is the information exchange by speaking, writing, or using some other medium. It is measured through asking questions about interaction with coworkers, use of body language and eye contact as well as employees' listening and speaking skills. Learning (LERN) is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through study or experience which is measured by questions addressing employees' plans to learn and improvements in learning curve as well as the overall willingness to learn and develop. Collaboration (COLB) is the action of working with someone to produce something including knowledge sharing, cooperation, building trust and appreciation and it is measured using questions, such as the level of cooperation with coworkers, team working and inspiration. Performance (PERF) is about how well an employee does his job from the employee and manager perspectives and the efficiency of performing the work. This variable is measured through asking related questions covering the performance improvement, punctuality, task prioritization and efficiency in performing the work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis is done on a sample of 186 employees in both private and public sectors. Male employees represent 64% of the sample whereas female employees present 36%. The sample contains 56% of public sector employees and 44% employees from private sector. Most of the employees are Saudis representing 94% of the sample and the majority of the employees hold bachelor degree. Moreover, 90% of the employees are between 21 and 40 years old. The demographic details are shown in Table 1.

The reliability tests for usage of social media (SMUS), communication (COMM), learning (LERN), collaboration (COLB) and performance (PERF) are 0.50, 0.66, 0.83, 0.88 and 0.80 respectively. This test shows that the stability of the variables is satisfactory, which means that the questions are good measurements for the variables. The stability of the usage of social media variable is relatively low compared to other variables because it contains five different components. The details are as illustrated on Table 2.

To test the research hypotheses, a Pearson Correlation Test was applied as shown on the Table 3. The correlation between usage of social media (SMUS) and communication (COMM) is 0.43 at a significance level of 0.01, which proves the first hypothesis (H1). Similarly, the correlation between communication (COMM) and performance (PERF) is 0.17 at a significance level of 0.05, which justifies the second hypothesis (H2). From these significant relationships, we found that the usage of social media (SMUS) affects the employees' communication skills (COMM), which in turn affect the employees' performance (PERF). Moreover, there is a correlation of 0.26 at a significance level of 0.01 between usage of social media (SMUS) and learning (LERN) and this confirms the third hypothesis (H3). In addition, there is a correlation of 0.57 between learning (LERN) and performance (PERF) at a significance level of 0.01, which means that the fourth hypothesis is correct. Hence we can say that the usage of social media (SMUS) affects the employees' learning skills (LERN), which in turn affect the employees' performance (PERF).

Furthermore, the correlation between the usage of social media (SMUS) and collaboration (COLB) is 0.15 at a significance level of 0.05, which proves the fifth hypothesis (H5). Likewise, there is a correlation of 0.57 at a significance level of 0.01 between collaboration (COLB) and performance (PERF) which confirms the sixth hypothesis. This means that the usage of social media (SMUS) affects the employees' collaboration skills (COLB), which in turn affect the employees' performance.

The results highlight statistically positive significant relationships between usage of social media and communication, learning and collaboration. In addition, there are statistically positive significant relationships between communication, learning and collaboration and employees' performance. Moreover, the results show that there is no direct significant correlation between usage of social media and performance. Figure 2 represents the model and hypotheses with the correlation and level of significance.

To determine the components measured in each variable, a factor analysis was applied on the five variables. The usage of social media (SMUS) contains five factors, which include frequency of use and the device used. The communication (COMM) contains four components, which are mainly dealing with others, the communication tools and lack of communication skills. The learning (LERN) variable measured two components, which are the learning skills and using social media to learn. Similarly, the collaboration (COLB)

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	STD
Daily working hours	186	2.00	10.00	7.35	1.26
Experience in this company (years)	186	0.50	28.00	5.56	4.746
Total experience (years)	186	1.00	40.00	7.60	5.87
Work Sector (1 Private, 2 Public)	186	1.00	2.00	1.57	0.50
Age (<20,21-30,31-40,41-50,51-60,>60)	186	1.00	6.00	2.61	0.77
Gender (1 Male, 2 Female)	186	1.00	2.00	1.36	0.48
Marital status (1 Single, 2 Married)	186	1.00	2.00	1.75	0.44
Education level (1 High School, 2 Diploma, 3 BS, 4 MS, 5 PhD)	186	1.00	5.00	2.90	0.71
Nationality (1 Saudi, 2 Non-Saudi)	186	1.00	2.00	1.06	0.25
Valid N (list-wise)	186				

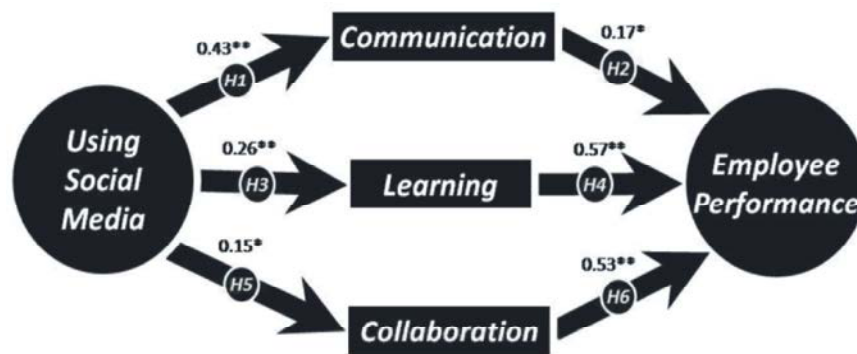


Fig. 2: Research Model with Correlations Presented

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Test

Variables	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Usage of Social media	13	0.50
Communication	11	0.66
Learning	10	0.83
Collaboration	10	0.88
Performance	12	0.80

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient

	SMUS	COMM	LERN	COLB	PERF
SMUS					
COMM	0.43**				
LERN	0.26**	0.32**			
COLB	0.15*	0.22**	0.57**		
PERF	0.11	0.17*	0.57**	0.53**	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

variable measured two components namely the employee's engagement and working with others. Finally, the performance (PERF) variable contains three different components including working hard to achieve results as well as how the management perceives the employee's performance.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the data was collected from different employees in different working sectors. The data were analyzed using stability test, factor analysis and Pearson correlation test. The results of the analysis conclude that using social media generally improves employees' communication skills, learning skills as well as collaboration skills. As a result, the employees' performance increases. Furthermore, this study found that there is no direct significant relationship between use of social media and employees' performance. The results of this research would be more solid if the data were collected from different nationalities around the globe and hence this is considered as study limitation. Overcoming this limitation will give more confidence in generalizing the findings of the study. As the use of social media is increasing day by day, it is very important that researchers give attention to this subject. The studies in this field might include the effect of social media on people's behavior such as decision making, buying and selling. Moreover, researchers should study the impact of social media on organizations and working environments.

Furthermore, the studies should focus on how individuals and organizations can invest in social media to improve and develop.

REFERENCES

1. Abu Seman, S.A., 2014. Organizational Member Use of Social Networking Sites and Work Productivity. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 5(1): 30-34.
2. Aguenza, B.B. and A.P. Som, 2012. A Conceptual Analysis of Social Networking and its Impact on Employee Productivity. *Journal of Business and Management*, 1(2): 48-52.
3. Aguenza, B.B., A.H. Al-Kassem and A.P. Som, 2012. Social Media and Productivity in the Workplace: Challenges and Constraints, *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research in Business*, 2(2): 22-26.
4. Al-Rahmi, W.M., M.S. Othman and M.A. Musa, 2014. The Improvement of Students' Academic Performance by Using Social Media through Collaborative Learning in Malaysian Higher Education. *Asian Social Science*, 10(8): 210-221.
5. Awolus, F., 2012. The Impacts of Social Networking Sites on Workplace Productivity. *The Journal of Technology, Management and Applied Engineering*, 28(1).
6. Baruah, T.D., 2012. Effectiveness of Social Media as a Tool of Communication and Its Potential for Technology Enabled Connections: A Micro-Level Study. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 2(5).
7. Boyd, D.M. and N.B. Ellison, 2008. Social Network Sites: Definition, History and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, pp: 210-230.
8. Castilla, E.J., 2005. Social Networks and Employee Performance in a Call Center, *American Journal of Sociology*, 110(5): 1243-83.
9. Eller, L.S., 2012. Social Media as Avenue for Personal Learning for Educators: Personal Learning Networks Encourage Application of Knowledge and Skills. Pepperdine University, UMI Dissertation Publishing.
10. Ferreira, A. and T. Plessis, 2009. Effect of Online Social Networking on Employee Productivity. *Peer Reviewed Article*, pp: 11.
11. Langer, E., 2014. What's Trending? Social Media and its Effects on Organizational Communication. *UW-L Journal of Undergraduate Research*, XVII.
12. Leftheriotis, I. and M.N. Giannakos, 2014. Using Social Media for Work: Losing Your Time or Improving Your Work? *Computers in Human Behavior*, 31: 134-142.
13. Martensen, M., K. Borgmann and M. Bick, 2011. The Impact of Social Networking Sites on the Employer-Employee Relationship. *eFuture: Creating Solutions for the Individual, Organisations and Society*, Bled: 24th Bled eConference, pp: 242-256
14. Moqbel, M., 2012. The Effect of the Use of Social Networking Sites in the Workplace on Job Performance. Texas A&M International University.
15. Munene, A.G. and Y.M. Nyaribo, 2013. Effect of Social Media Pertication in the Workplace on Employee Productivity. *International Journal of Advances in Management and Economics*, 2(2): 141-150.
16. Nguyen, C.C., 2014. Leveraging the Power of Social Media to Maximize Organizational Learning and Drive Performance. Pepperdine University. UMI Dissertation Publishing.
17. NureAlam, S., M. Akhter and A. Al Masum, 2011. Analysis of Social Network and its Effect on Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance. *ASA University Review*, 5(1): 195-207.
18. Puijenbroek, T., R. Poell, B. Kroont and V. Timmerman, 2014. The Effect of Social Media Use on Work-Related Learning. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 30: 159-172.
19. Saeed, R., S. Mussawar, R.N. Lodhi, A. Iqbal, H.H. Nayab and S. Yaseen, 2013. Factors Affecting the Performance of Employees at Work Place in the Banking Sector of Pakistan. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 17(9): 1200-1208.
20. Saville, M., 2014. Stop! Collaborate and Listen: The Impact of Social Media on Communication and Collaboration among Education Professionals. Aurora University. UMI Dissertation Publishing.
21. Schein, C., 2014. The Value of Integrating Social Media Tools into Organizational Learning Processes. Fielding Graduate University. UMI Dissertation Publishing.
22. Thomas, K.J. and M. Akdere, 2013. Social Media as Collaborative Media in Workplace Learning. *Human Resource Development Review*, 12(3): 329-344.
23. Treem, J.W. and P.M. Leonardi, 2012. Social Media Use in Organizations: Exploring the Affordances of Visibility, Editability, Persistence and Association. Northwestern University, pp: 36.
24. Wu, L., 2010. Social Network Effects on Performance and Layoffs: Evidence from the Adoption of a Social Networking Tool.
25. Wu, Y. and V.R. Prybutok, 2010. Social Network Position and Its Relationship to Performance of IT Professionals, *Informing Science: the International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline*, 13: 121-137.