**Abstract**

            In the past few years, ways and methods of communication have improved over the years and social networking sites are on the rise. Why do people go to social networking sites? Does going to social networking sites affect our studies? If yes, then do people know about it? Also, if yes, then why do people still go to social networking sites? As such, our research project aims to investigate if RI Year 2 students’ academic performances have dropped due to going to social networking sites, more specifically, Facebook games and to evaluate the degree of addiction to Facebook, the games that they are addicted to and why Facebook is addictive. Through a social survey, reasonable conclusions were drawn. The results revealed that Facebook games cause a decline in academic performance and Mousehunt was the main game in Facebook that pupils played but Facebook games were not the sole reason that their academic performance had declined.

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**Introduction**

Statement of problem

            Using Facebook is one of the favourite activities of youths and teens. It is one of the few activities that breaks all barriers of race, gender, education and culture.

            The popularity of Facebook has increased drastically as more and more youths and teens use Facebook to contact each other after school. However, although it is convenient to use Facebook on the computer or phone, it may bring about problems without careful usage.

             For example, some teenagers’ addiction is getting from bad to worse and the effect is a decline in academic performance. Once there is addiction, teens tend to neglect their school work or do it sloppily. (P. Kirscher 2010).

            For instance, (S.C. 2010) argues that they fail to hand in or complete their homework to their standards on time.

            Furthermore, the temptation to play Facebook game is tough to resist and pupil may find it hard to concentrate on their studies.

Purpose of Study

            From our research, we seek to identify if RI Year 2 students’ academic performances have dropped due to addiction to Facebook games. At the same time, we hope to highlight the dangers of addiction to teens. Facebook games are addictive and have a great impact on teens. We aim to create awareness not only among teens but people all around. (Chan) argues that more preventive measures need to be taken as one needs help to stop it.

**Methodology**

Survey Methodology

A social survey was carried out to collect relevant data to our research between 14 February 2011 and 18 February 2011. The objectives were to assess the extent of addiction among RI Year 2 students and to assess the decline of academic performances in them due to Facebook games.

A structured questionnaire was designed and conducted among 20 RI Year 2 students. The respondents were selected based on random sampling, to ensure the results were a representative of the batch.

            The 10 questions in the survey form were structured with clarity, non-ambiguity and allowance to give comments by the respondents. A pilot survey was conducted with a few people to validate the questionnaire. As pupils are sensitive about their GPA scores, we decided to place that question to the last.

Social Survey Respondents Statistics

A response rate of 100% was achieved from the survey.

Age group: 13-14 (RI Secondary 2 students)

Gender: Male

Number of respondents: 20

**Results**

From the Social Survey

            To investigate RI Secondary 2 students’ decrease in academic performance due to Facebook games, a social survey was conducted with 20 respondents.

Participation in Facebook games

            Overall 25% of the respondents reported that they played Facebook games for over 10 hours a week. In terms of participation by types of gambling activities, Mousehunt and Backyard Monsters were the most popular.

Analysis of time spent on Facebook and Facebook games. (Q1 and 2)

Table 1—time spent on Facebook

Table 2—time spent on Facebook games.

Further analysis reported the majority of pupils using Facebook between 16 to 25 hours and playing Facebook games between 1 to 10 hours.

Perception towards Facebook. (Q3)

Next, the respondents were asked whether they agree to the general statements as to why they use Facebook.

9 pupils answered no and the reasons were:

1)    It gets boring after a while.

2)    I think it is very childish.

3)    Very lame.

The other 6 pupils did not provide any reasons.

10 pupils answered yes and the reasons were:

1)    It has many games in it.

2)    (It has) Games and the ability to interact with each other.

3)    I like chatting.

4)    I can communicate with my friends.

5)    Got very nice applications.

6)    The games are nice and you can play with your friends.

7)    It is very cool.

8)    The applications are interesting.

9)    We can interact with our friends.

10)                       Because it is fun.

The last pupil answered: think so. Very cool.

It was found that 5 out of the 10 positive answers were due to Facebook games and applications.

Pupils who really are addicted to Facebook games. (Q4, 5 and 6)

19 out of the 20 respondents discussed about games more than twice a week with their friends in class. 11 out of 20 respondents studied their homework less because of Facebook games. 8 out of 20 respondents thought about Facebook during class.

It was found that majority of the respondents are addicted to Facebook games but it did not affect most of their concentration in class.

Analysis of games that most pupils are addicted to. (Q7)

Figure 1

Others consisted of none (3), Ninja Saga (1) and Wild Ones (1). It was found that Mousehunt was the main game that attracted pupils.

Analysis of things that affects or helps pupils’ studies. (Q8 and 9)

Figure 2

It was found that majority of the pupils’ reasons that affected their studies in Facebook was due to chatting with friends. We can infer that decline in pupils’ academic performance not solely due to Facebook games.

Figure 3

(Pupils were allowed to give multiple answers) Although decline in academic performance was not due solely to Facebook games, majority of the other reasons were due to computer games.

Analysis of pupils’ GPA score according to time spent on Facebook games. (Q10)

A general less amount of time spent on Facebook games resulted in a general increment in GPA scores. It can be inferred that Facebook games cause a decline in academic performance.

**Discussion and Analysis**

Review and Implications of Findings

The objectives of the research are to investigate if RI Year 2 students’ academic performances have dropped due playing Facebook games and to evaluate the degree of addiction to Facebook, the games that they are addicted to and why Facebook is addictive.

The results have shown that Facebook games cause a decline in academic performance. (Banquil, Chua, Bruce, Matienzo, & Timog, 2009)Majority of the respondents were addicted to Facebook games as reasons were the games and applications, while some were because of chatting. Most people would associate low academic performance with playing games, mostly electronic games such as Facebook on the computer. It was proven by our research that was conducted.

Further analysis revealed that although Mousehunt was the main game in Facebook that pupils played, Facebook games were not the sole reason that their academic performance had declined.

Furthermore, Facebook, which was launched seven years ago, but only became popular one year after in 2005 is still popular now and is still attracting more pupils to join this social networking site. (Harvey, 2010)

The implications of this finding suggests that parents or even pupils themselves should restrain themselves from playing too much of Facebook games and also computer games.

Further research

We believe that no research is perfect and there is indeed room for improvement. Suggestions for further research could include or specifically aim on another social networking site and to find out who students go to to seek help if they realize that they are addicted to Facebook games or computer games. (John, 2010) Furthermore, more questions about their background may result in finding them giving same answers if they were from the same background. Government effort to help curb addiction could also be evaluated. Perhaps finding out if the elderly used Facebook would be an interesting research and to why or why not the elderly use it. Further research could also be done on why pupils usually do not consult the counselor even if they know that they are addicted to computer games. From the results of the research preventive initiatives may be implemented in order to curb computer addiction to prevent numbers from rising.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Our research on RI Year 2 students’ academic performance dropping due to playing Facebook games and evaluating the degree of addiction to Facebook, the games that they are addicted to and why Facebook is addictive has enabled us to draw many meaningful inferences.

Facebook games cause a decline in academic performance. Pupils were addicted to Facebook games because of the games and applications, while some were because of chatting.

Mousehunt was the main game in Facebook that pupils played, but playing computer games were also the reason that their academic performance had declined.

            Learning of the social networking site is by word of mouth so prevention programes should not only be concentrated on addicted students but also in organizations, schools and parents. These programs should also focus on preventive measures instead of helping an addicted pupil.

            Lastly, we hope that from this research, we are able to highlight the importance of research in this field of social networking sites and the effects of social networking sites.

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