

## Social Media Behaviors: A Study of International Students in BBA Program in International Business

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to examine social media network behaviors of international students in BBA program at a selected government university. Thirty-three students who enrolled in 'principles of management' course in the second academic year of 2019 were requested to fill out the survey questionnaire through the Google classroom. Only twenty-two students from three different countries agreed to complete the questionnaire and returned with completion. Results showed that Instagram was the most frequently used social media application among this group of students. Additionally, participants reported that the major purpose of using social media was 'follow people', and they approximately spent 4-6 hours a day in using social media. Chi-square correlation with Cramer's V technique indicated a statistically significant association between nationality and length of time in using social media within a day at a significant level of 0.05.

**Keywords:** Social media, Social media behaviors, Social networking sites, International business, International students.

### INTRODUCTION

Social networks have increasingly become the most popular interaction platform of today's society [1]. Social networks can help configure individual connections and interaction with other people around the world through common interests. In addition, social networking sites allow users to post or upload the personal information and photos, and communicate with other people in a creative way such as sending messages both personally and publicly or sharing photos and VDO clip online [2]. In the past, social networks were mostly viewed as a technological tool used for entertainment purposes solely. Nevertheless, in today's world, social media and networking can be employed for other serious purposes such as business and academic [3]. The involvement of students in using social media has dramatically increased in the past decade. Prior studies reported that today's college students are actively engaged with at least a few social media programs or applications [4].

The focus on user behaviors in social networking sites usage have been extensively conducted

in different contexts such as degree of social media use, privacy concerns, individual differences, cultural differences, personal characteristics, and self-presentation [5]. The use of social media behaviors in educational institutions has also been placed more emphasis on as excessive use of social media applications by students has become a controversial issue whether it has altered the structure of students' social behaviors and academic performance [6]. However, the recent survey of media online usage by students demonstrated the positive perceptions on using social media as it could help students in terms of social connections and academic [7].

The purpose of this present study was to investigate students' social media behaviors and examine the relationship between different nationality of students and the amount of time spent in social media on a daily basis. This present study was to help enhance the body of knowledge in social media behavior in different context. This study also attempted to explore whether international students who were away from

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their home countries had more frequency of social media usage than Thai students.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

Akubugwo and Burke [4] gathered data from 120 post graduate students using both quantitative and qualitative approaches for data collection to scrutinize the academic significance, possible influence on social behavior, and academic performance. Findings indicated that social media usage could have negative effects on students' social behavior such as the use of bad slangs, lack of respect, and laziness.

Rahman [2] studied the use of social networking sites of international students. Data were gathered from 316 international students who studied in New Zealand through a survey questionnaire. This study tried to examine whether or not international students who were away from their home countries had more frequency of social networking sites usage than host country students. This study found that the most favorite social networking sites of international students were Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Myspace, and LinkedIn. Interestingly, this study discovered that the most favorite social networking site of Chinese students was QQ, which was a Chinese SNS. Results showed that the reasons use social networking sites of international students were for their personal purposes, entertainment, commercial, and academic. Also, this study revealed the different findings of other studies in which female students were found to have a more frequency of sharing their personal information than male students.

Al-Sharqi, Hashim, and Kutbi [6], examined similarities and differences in Arts and Science students' perceptions of social media impact on social behaviors. Data were gathered from 2,605 students in the university in Saudi Arabia via a survey questionnaire. Data were calculated by the analysis of t-test, z-test, ANOVA, correlation and regression, and classification analysis. Findings showed that the major purpose of social media usage was 'entertainment' followed by 'information searching', and 'learning', respectively. Also, this study found that respondents perceived that advantages of using social media on social behavior were 'learn about individual different thinking style', 'connect to other people', and 'improve ability to be open-minded.' Conversely, these respondents perceived that social media usage on social behavior had some disadvantages such as 'make students become physically inactive', etc. In addition, this study found that the most used social media among both majors of students was 'YouTube' followed by 'Twitter' and 'Facebook.'

Kaya and Bicen [1] investigated the impact of social media on students' behaviors, which Facebook was the main focus of their study. They attempted to explore a positive association between confidence,

social media participation, and social media engaged with behaviors of students through the use of Facebook. Data were collected from 362 high school students in Turkey through a survey questionnaire. A questionnaire used in this study consisted of a 5-point Likert scale of 51 statements to measure the confident level, engagement, and the effect of educational studies. This questionnaire showed a high internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.88. Data were analyzed by using t-test and One-way ANOVA to assess the students' behaviors in using social media. Findings revealed that students used Facebook for communication, entertainment.

Kettle, Gilmartin, Corcoran, Byrne, and Sun [7] surveyed the use of social media behaviors of students at Maynooth University in Ireland and discovered that most students spent at least four hours or more on a social media on a daily basis. Almost all of them accessed the online social media through their electronic device like smartphone during the college day. The most popular social media applications among these students were Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Spotify. The purpose of using social media during college day was for social interaction rather than educational purpose.

Kawsar [8] surveyed 300 students in department of pharmacy in East West University to examine social media usage, engagement, and addiction and their impacts on students' academic performance. Among these students, Facebook was their most favorite social media application and they began to use social media since they were in the age of 14-17 years. The main reason of using social media was for entertainment and relaxed interaction. Results of this survey showed that more than 50 percent of students agreed that social media had negative effects on their academic performance. However, data analysis of this study did not find the negative correlation between the amount of time a student spent for social media usage and academic performance. Additionally, findings revealed that these students did not have addiction on social media.

These literature reviews highlighted the focus on social media behaviors of college students, which provided a guideline for a questionnaire development for this present study.

## METHODOLOGY

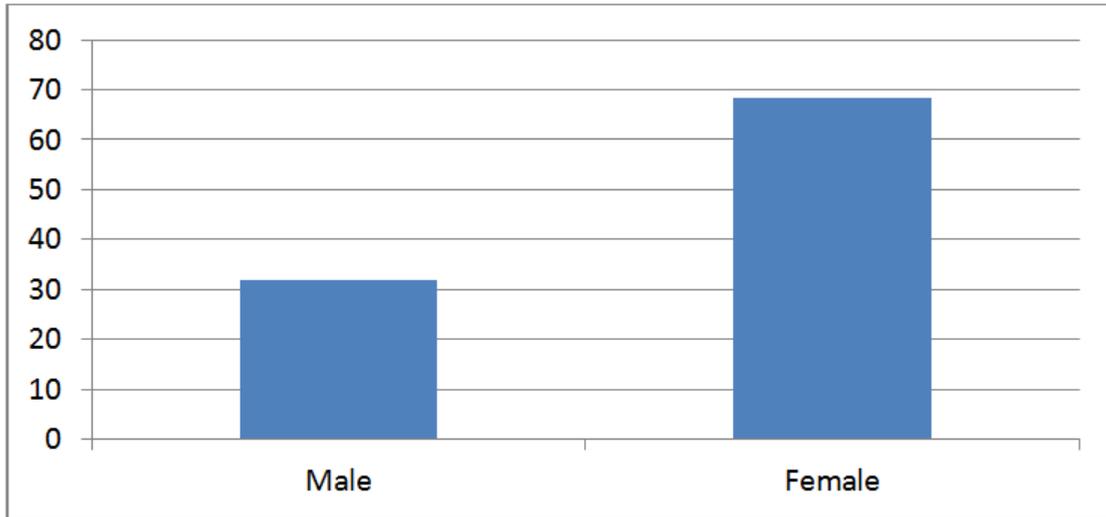
This study was a descriptive study. A group of international students who had taken "principles of management" course was a participant in this study. A total of 37 students was distributed a "social media network behaviors" questionnaire through Google classroom. Only 22 students completed the survey questionnaire and returned it via the research email. A questionnaire used in this study consisted of 6 basic questions relating to respondents' profile and social

media network behaviors including gender, year of study, nationality, social media platform (the most frequent used application), the purpose of using social media, and the frequency of using social media on a daily basis. Data were analyzed by using frequency, percentage, and Chi-square correlation with Cramer’s V technique to measure whether there was a significant

association between nationality and frequency of using social media within a day.

**FINDINGS**

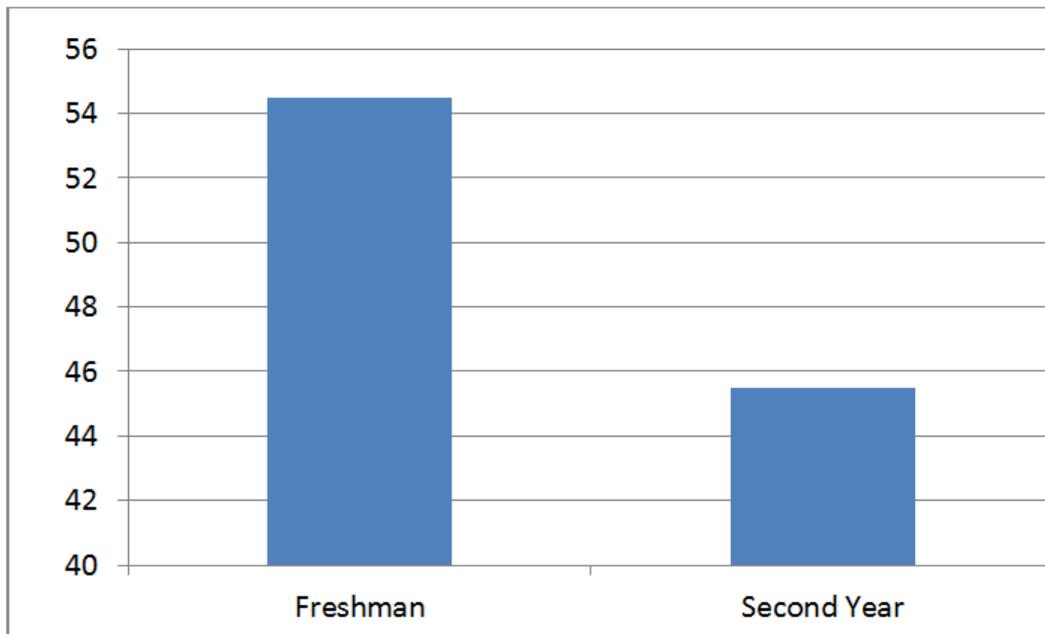
Analysis of data revealed that the majority of respondents in this study were female (68.2%), as shown in Figure-1.



**Fig-1: Percentage of a Variable for Gender**

Figure-2 showed the percentage of year in university. Results found that 54.5 percent of

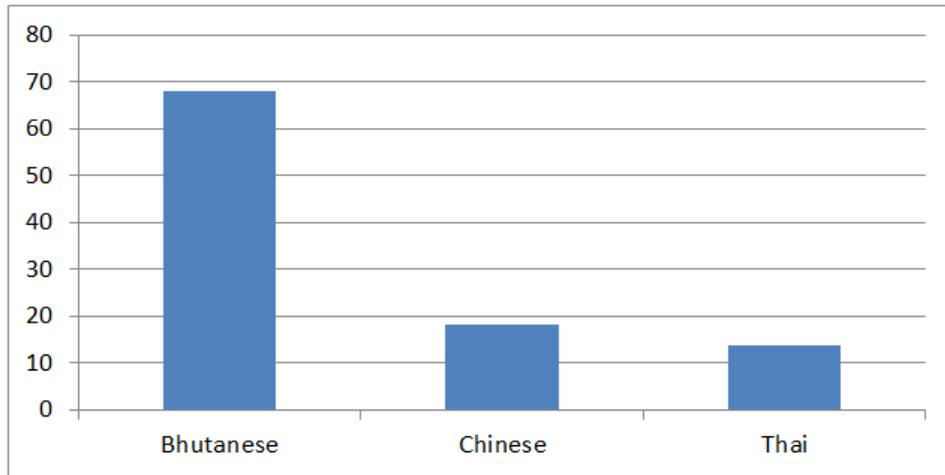
respondents were freshman students and 45.5 percent were second year students.



**Fig-2: Percentage for a Variable of Year in University**

Figure-3 demonstrated nationality of participants in this study. Findings revealed that 68.2

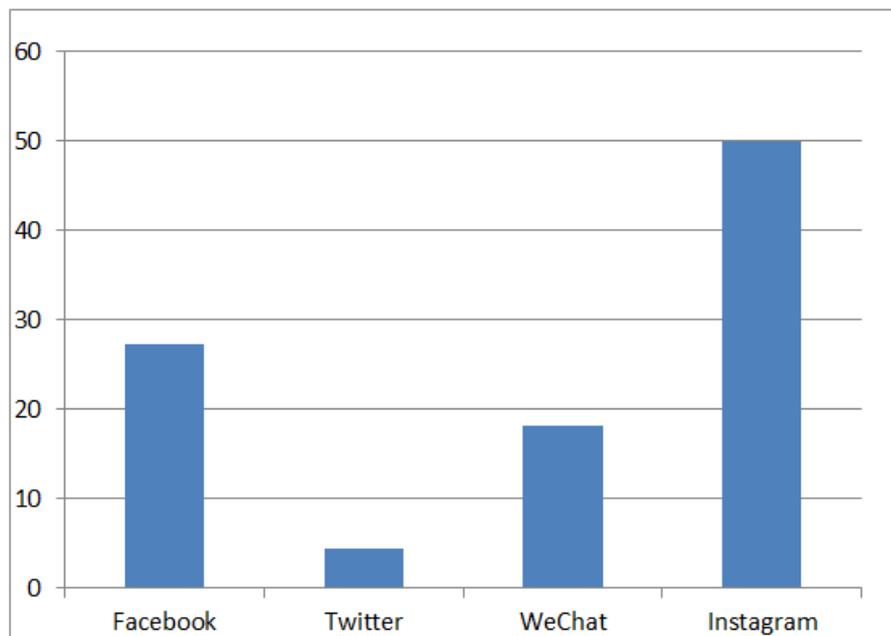
percent were Bhutanese students, 18.2 percent were Chinese, and 13.6 percent were Thais, respectively.



**Fig-3: Percentage for a Variable for Nationality**

When respondents were asked to expose the most favorable or the most used social media application, there is a variety of applications listed to be checked such as Facebook, Line, Twitter, WeChat, Snapchat, and Instagram. Figure 4 displayed that

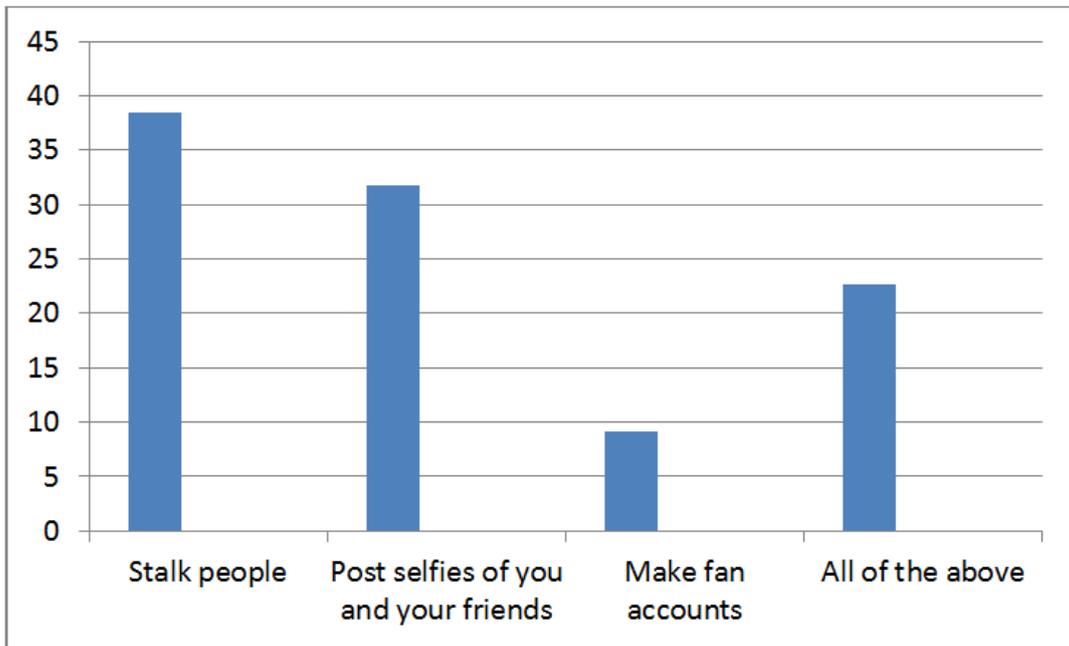
Instagram was rated as the most frequently used application among this group of students (50%), following by Facebook (27.3%), WeChat (18.2%), and Twitter (4.5%), respectively (Figure-4).



**Fig-4: Percentage for the Most Favorable Social Media Application**

Figure-5 showed the percentage for purpose of using social media in which ‘stalk people’ was rated as the major purpose of using social media (36.4%) following by ‘post selfies of you and your friends’

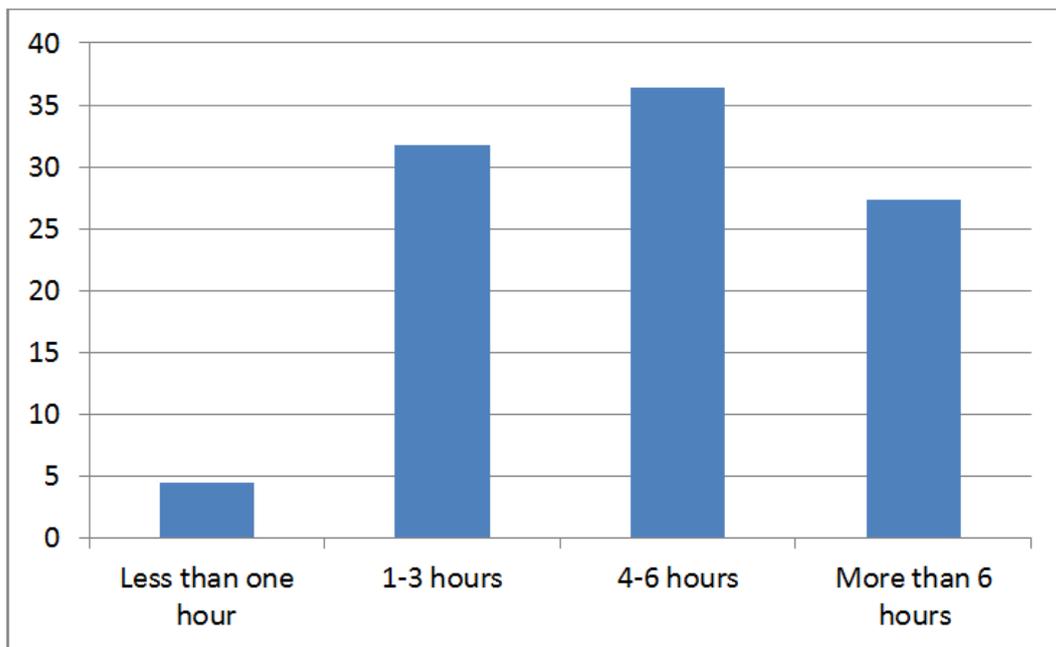
(31.8%), and ‘make fan account’ (9.1%), respectively. However, 22.7 percent of respondents reported that they had done all these three activities as the purpose of using social media.



**Fig-5: Percentage for Purpose of Using Social Media**

More than one-third of respondents in this study reported that they spent approximately 4-6 hours a day for the use of social media (36.4%). In addition, 31.8 percent of respondents disclosed that they spent about 1-3 hours a day on social media and 27.3 percent

spent time more than 6 hours a day in using social media while 4.5 percent of students used the length of time for social media usage less than one hour a day (Figure-6).



**Fig-6: Percentage for Length of Time in Using Social Media on a Daily Basis**

Chi-square statistics with Cramer's V technique was appropriate to be conducted when unequal rows and columns occurred. In this analysis, nationality consisted of three variables (3 rows) and

length of time in using social media comprised of four variables (4 columns). Table 1 showed a statistically significant association between nationality and length of time in using social media within a day ( $p = .007$ ).

**Table-1: Chi-square Correlation between Nationality and Length of Time in Using Social Media**

Nationality	Frequency of Using Social Media				Total
	Less than one hour	1-3 hours	4-6 hours	More than 6 hours	
Bhutanese	0	7	2	6	15
Chinese	1	0	3	0	4
Thai	0	0	3	0	3
Total	1	7	8	6	22
Nominal by Nominal					
Cramer's V		Value	.635	Approx. Sig.	.007

### CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of this research was to explore social media network behaviors of international students in BBA program at a selected government university. Results found that Instagram was the most frequently used social media application among this group of students. In addition, respondents also reported that the major purpose of using social media was "stalk people", and they approximately spent 4-6 hours a day in using social media. Chi-square correlation with Cramer's V technique indicated a statistically significant relationship between nationality and length of time in using social media within a day at a significant level of 0.05. Bhutanese students as a majority of students in this course spent time on social media more than other students who were from different nationalities. This can be described that Bhutanese students who have received a full-time scholarship from this government university to study in international business program (English program) may feel very stressful and fed up when they lived in their residence or dormitory so that they tried to kill their time by using social media. Also, when Bhutanese students lived in their home country, it was quite difficult for them to get access to the Internet or social media freely compared to their living in Thailand. Thus, they tried to accumulate this experience and take this opportunity as much as they could. This partially supported the previous findings of Rahman [2]. However, findings of this present study were inconsistent with prior research as the sample sizes were massively different.

Limitations of this study was a sample size, which respondents were confined only a group of students who registered in "principles of management" course. Thus, an expansion of sample size should be conducted in the next study. Also, the questions used to ask social media networking behaviors in this study were limited to three questions, which may not describe a complete social media networking behaviors effectively. Hence, the further study should add more questions relating to social media networking behaviors. As this study focused on social media networking behaviors solely, the future research should add other variables such as academic performance and students' behaviors to examine the influence of social media behaviors on these variables.

For research implication, it is appropriate for instructors to use social media as a platform to connect to students as they spent a lot of time on social media to follow people, share their and their friends' pictures, and make fan accounts. Instructors in this business program can subscribe Instagram and Facebook accounts to connect with these students and to build a chance to communicate with them informally. Also, instructors can use social media as a platform to deliver course lectures and activities to increase knowledge in related subjects and fields.

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