

Adolescents' Use of Social Networking Sites (SNS): Links to Academic Performance and Collaborative Problem-Solving Performance in Advanced and Developing Economies

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ABSTRACT

In this era of ICT-rich environments, the number of students using social networking sites (SNS) for educational and non-educational purposes has increased manifold. However, there is a scarcity of research examining the links between the frequency of use of SNS outside of school for educational as well as non-educational purposes and performance on standardized reading, mathematics, and science assessments among adolescents employing nationally representative samples of adolescent students. This study, therefore, examined the relations of social networking sites (SNS) usage to academic achievement and collaborative problem-solving skills among nationally representative samples of adolescent students drawn from 29 advanced economies and 15 developing economies across the globe. Results of multigroup multilevel path analyses, after accounting for student- and school-level demographic and socio-economic factors, indicated that adolescent students' use of SNS for communication with other students about schoolwork was significantly negatively related to their reading, mathematics, and science achievement and collaborative problem-solving skills in most of the advanced and developing economies. In contrast, adolescent students' general SNS usage was significantly positively

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associated with their reading, mathematics, and science achievement and collaborative problem-solving skills in developing economies. However, adolescent students' general SNS usage in advanced economies yielded a mixed bag of results.

Keywords: academic achievement, social networking sites (SNS) usage, collaborative problem-solving skills, adolescents, connectivism