



Two sides of a coin: revisiting the influence of social networking sites among students' in higher educational settings

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Abstract

This paper examines the access, utilization and negative impact of social networking sites among students in the higher educational setting. The researcher adopted a questionnaire as the instrument for data collection and received two hundred and fifty valid responses from a sample of students in Nigerian higher institutions. The study found that the entire students in higher institutions make use of social networking sites and Facebook was ranked as the most utilized. However, only a few proportions of these students use it for academic purposes, they rather prefer to use it for chatting with friends and family. Results further demonstrated that the over-utilization of social networking sites affects students' spoken and written grammar. Receiving of unwanted comments, messages, as well as pictures and videos were found to be the leading problems encountered while using social networking sites. Conclusively, this study proposes that higher institutions should regularly organize seminars and workshops to educate students on the most appropriate way of adopting social networking sites for educational purposes.

Keywords: Adult learning; higher institutions; interactive learning environments; social networking sites; teaching/learning strategies.



Introduction and background

The world today is celebrating the advancements in information and communication technologies which have broadened the reach of communication (Peter, 2015). As such, technology has been documented as the key modifier of human behavior (Ogaji et al., 2017; Steyer, 2015; Greitemeyer and Osswald, 2011; Clarke and Schoech, 1995). Mcleod (2008) highlighted social norms to be the basic factors that influence human behavior. Indeed, socialisation, as documented in (Goodman and Jinks, 2004; Gecas, 1979), has a compelling influence on human behavior. As such, the advent of computer and internet has to a large degree changed human behavior (Roudbaraki and Esfidvajani, 2011; Weimann, 2006). The internet and its usage in higher education have revamped educational growth and research, as such, promoting virtual interactions for sharing research findings (Hussain, 2012). Social networking sites which are a component of the internet's creation have become more well-known and utilized for communication among students and younger population than any other sites (Hamade, 2013). It is a communication channel that allows users to generate and consume information simultaneously (Apuke, 2016a). This implies that through social media, individuals can share various information such as messages, pictures, and voice notes as well as receive feedback in split seconds. This has made social networking sites to be widely adopted and utilised among students (Tsai, 2017; Baruah, 2012; Gannod and Bachman, 2012; Roblyer et al., 2010). This situation has prompted several investigations to examine social networks and student engagement (Apuke, 2016b; Asemah et al., 2013; McLoughlin and Lee, 2010; Fisher and Baird, 2005) social learning resources (Nwangwa et al., 2014; Greenhow and Robelia, 2009) and online communal knowledge sharing (Majchrzak et al., 2013).



Despite words limitation and geographical distance, social network sites have been used to bridge communication and connections (Kehrwald, 2007) among teachers and students as well as build rapport through encouraging discussions (Buskist and Saville, 2001). Several studies have demonstrated that teachers/lecturers are now utilizing social networking technologies for teaching and learning, as such transforming informal learning into formal learning (Manan et al., 2012; Veletsianos and Navarrete, 2012; George, 2011; Junco et al., 2011; Brady et al., 2010; Deng and Yuen 2010; Deng and Yuen 2010; McCarthy, 2009). Similar investigations have also recognized four major advantages of social media employment in higher education to include, enhancing the relationship, improving learning motivation, offering personalized course material and developing collaborative abilities (Chugh and Ruhi 2017; Dumpit and Fernandez, 2017; Selwyn, 2012). Social networking activities have the possibility of enhancing student contact as well as improve their participation in class. Introverted students who are not able to raise questions before peers at school could engage themselves in online group learning with less or no anxiety attached (Wheeler et al., 2008). Indeed, integrating social media into the students' learning process provides them with an opportunity to take control of their learning activities, which in turn boost their confidence (Yunus, Salehi, and Chenzi, 2012). This student-centred learning approach is what is changing the culture of many of today's learning classrooms. Thus, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Youtube, and Skype have improved communication and learning process because a large number of social technologies provided on the internet are free or require a little accessing fee which has encouraged wider utilization and adoption (Apuke, 2016b; Brown, 2010). As such, through the internet, students can form their own page, access news, as well as lecture notes from an email sent by lecturers.



Results and limitations of the previous investigation

The benefits of utilising social media in the academic environment have attracted an array of investigations. For example, Akpan et al. (2013) reported that most social networking sites do not only allow students to have a profile and a friend's list but also allows them to send e-mail, messages, share videos, as well as photos in split seconds. Due to these benefits, a growing body of literature has examined the effect of social media on students and the result of such studies are varying (Liengpradit, et al., 2014; Helou and Zairah, 2014; Anurit et al., 2011; Junco et al., 2010). Some investigators demonstrated that social media utilization affects students' academic skills as they waste too much time on them (Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010, Yoo and Kim, 2013; Musa, et al. 2015). However, other studies indicated that the academic performance of the students were not affected by the use of social media (Alwagait et al., 2015; Mbodila et al., 2014; Tamirat and Molly, 2014; Negussie and Ketema, 2014; Choi and Kang, 2014; Hodgson and Wong, 2011). Thus, this study is an extension of the body of knowledge that suggests that social networking site affect students' academic performance. Furthermore, this study is of significance because the influence of social media has been ascertained in various institutional settings and little has been done in the Northeastern institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, this study will fill this gap by examining the influence of social media on the academic development and growth of students in the northeastern region of Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In many parts of the world today, students' academic performance is facing neglect and challenges since the advent of social networking sites because they dedicate more attention to social media than they do to their studies (Apuke, 2016b; Peter, 2015). According to Olubiya's (2012) observations, students are so engrossed in the social media that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been



observed that some students are always busy ping, Facebooking, while lectures are on. Additional, Asemah et al. (2013) reported that it is a common sight to see a youth, chatting at sensitive and highly organised places like church, mosque and lecture venues. Some are so carried away that even as they are walking along the highway, they keep chatting. Hence, most students' academics suffer a setback as a result of distraction from social media. Furthermore, the use of these sites also affects students' use of English and Grammar; students are now used to short forms of writing rather than the conventional one (Obi et al., 2012).

Aim, objectives and article structure

The thrust of this study is to examine the access, utilization, and influence of social networking sites among students'. The study is guided by the following objectives:

- To determine whether undergraduate students are exposed to social networking sites.
- To find out the most preferred and utilised social networking sites among the students.'
- To examine the purpose of utilising social networking sites by undergraduate students.'
- To identify the problems confronting undergraduate students' use of social networking sites.
- To demonstrate if overexposure to social networking sites has a negative influence on the educational growth and performance of students.'

1.4 Hypothesis

- H₀: The overexposure to social networking sites has no negative influence on students' educational growth and performance.

As set out in (Fig. 1), this paper is categorised into five main sections describing the Introduction and background, literature review and theoretical framework, methods, data

presentation, analysis, and discussion as well as the conclusion, recommendations, limitations and suggestions for further research.

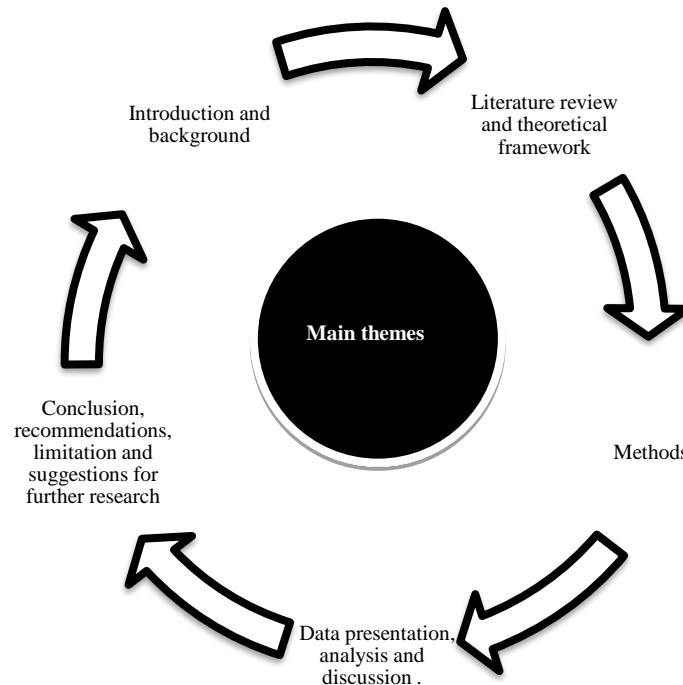


Figure 1: Article structure

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The utilization of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube is now common among students' in higher education. An array of studies conducted on the impact of social media on research demonstrated that social media contributed significantly to the ease of research through materials online (Ezeah et al., 2013; Ifeanyi-obi, 2014; Rithika and Selvaraj, 2013; Ekeet al., 2014; Choi and Kang, 2014; Apuke, 2016b; Fasae and Adegbilero-Iwari, 2016; Aligwe et al., 2017). For example, Sofela (2012) submits that through social media, events, and news, are now known within split seconds after they are shared. It offers youths a channel for entertainment, communication, and meeting friends and those they have not seen for a long period of



time. However, the author revealed that most students abandoned their homework to chat with friends. Ezeah et al. (2013) found that students use social media for entertainment, education/information, discussing national issues, engaging in cybercrimes and pornography, resulting in the reduction of time devoted to study and research. Congruently, Seyi (2012) stressed that the rate at which youths devote their quality time in chit-chatting, calls for urgent attention. Students are always busy ping-pong and Facebooking while lectures are on and the time ought to be channelled towards learning, academic research and innovation are being wasted by the passion of meeting friends and discussing trivial issues, hence, most students' academic suffer setbacks as a result of this distraction. Conversely, Asogwa et al. (2012) discovered that most students of tertiary institutions do not visit Facebook during the class period and studying hours and Facebook utilization does not have a negative effect on their academic performance except for their spoken and written communication. The study also found that students use Facebook primarily to escape from boredom as well as for communication purposes such as updating status, chatting, posting/commenting on photos and making friends online. Additionally, investigations have documented that most students use social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter for reaching out to close/distance friends and general information about life, but not for academic melioration (Ogaji et al., 2017; Okereke and Lucky 2014). Nwangwa et al. (2014) found that Wikipedia was the major source of information for undergraduate students, while Facebook was used to generate ideas from colleagues about their research focus, Wordpress or Blogger was used to develop their creative writing skills. However, students' reliance on social media tools alone has affected their skills to produce quality research works. Fasae and Adegbilero-Iwari (2016) discovered that Facebook, Google, and Twitter were the most used and recognized among students of public universities. However, poor internet connectivity, receiving of



unwanted messages/pictures and electricity failure was considered as the leading problems encountered while using social media. Similar studies have identified privacy and security as some of the challenges encountered in the use of social media (Brady et al., 2010; Barnard, 2008; George, 2006; and Hodge, 2006). Supporting this notion, Ngonidzashe (2013) results reported that the major challenges faced in the utilization of social media by students in higher education were security and promotion of antisocial behavior, exposure to inappropriate material, unwanted adult interactions as well as bullying from peers.

An investigation has established that the students of Kogi State University had access to social media and Facebook was found to be the most utilized, however, exposure to social media had a negative effect on them (Asemah et al., 2013). Contrasting this result, Ifeanyi-obi (2014) noted that Facebook positively affected the academic activities of agricultural students at the University of Port Harcourt. The study also found that the students' utilize Facebook, blackberry messenger, and Whatsapp for chatting more than any other social media. According to Eke et al. (2014), most students use the social networking sites in interacting with friends, connecting with their classmates for online study, discussing serious national issues as well as watching movies. Similarly, Musa et al. (2015) discovered that the majority of the students' of Mass Communication use social media for communication, collaboration, news sharing, research, expression of opinion, maintaining a connection, and making friends from other countries. Facebook and WhatsApp were the most preferred social networks among them. Furthermore, Ndaku (2013) reported that a large number of students in the University of Abuja had access to the internet. However, the study suggested that sites should be created for educational purposes to create a balance between social networking and academic activities of students in order to avoid setbacks in the academic performance of the students. An



investigation that examined students' preparedness towards utilization of e-learning through learning management system demonstrated that students are not well prepared, but rather moderately ready to utilize e-learning tools activities such as reading and writing, clarity and conciseness in responses, combining of ideas, planning strategies, making arguments and working with others (Parkes, Stein, and Reading 2015).

From the above literature reviewed, it can be deduced that the utilization of social networking sites has both the negative and positive sides. If used appropriately, it can improve the educational growth of students. However, overexposure and use of these networks affect academic output.

Theoretical framework

Uses and gratification theory

Katz, et al. propounded the use and gratification theory in 1974 (Wimmer and Dominick, 2013). Basically, the theory places more vehemence on the utilization and satisfaction derived from a certain media rather the effect the media exert on an individual (Idakwo, 2011). This theory focuses on the gratification or benefits that attract and hold an individual to a particular media base on social, psychological, cognitive, effectiveness as well as personal and entertainment needs (Grant, 2005; Rubin, 2002). Due to its interactive nature, social networking sites lend itself to uses and gratifications approach. The theory argues that power is conferred to the hands of the audience. Thus, instead of expecting media messages to have immediate, uniform impacts on the individuals who consume them, users make plan purposeful selections about the media messages they expose themselves to regularly or at intervals based on their needs and cravings not minding the positive or negative influence on them.

Colligating this theory to the current study, university students' use social networking sites for various reasons such as physical and psychological, depending on the



gratification derived from it. Some may use it for chatting while others to retrieve educational information. These students chose and utilize a particular social media (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Snap chat, etc.) based on how well each one helps them meet specific needs or goals.

Research Methodology

Research design and instrument

A quantitative design approach was adopted in this study with a questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consists of 6 sections, section 1 examined the demography of respondents, section 2 determines whether students are exposed to social networking sites, section 3 enquired on the most preferred and utilised social networking sites, section 4 examines the purpose of utilising social networking sites, section 5 enquired on the problems confronting students' use of social networking sites and section 6 try to find out if the overexposure to social networking sites have any negative influence on the educational growth and performance of students.'

Participants

The targeted participants were 300 undergraduate social sciences/humanities (Mass Communication, Languages and Linguistics, Sociology, Political Science/International relations, Philosophy of religion and Geography) students from four universities in Nigeria. However, only 250 participants correctly filled the questionnaires administered to them. Therefore, out of the 250 participants, 120 were male and 130 were female. This implies that they were more female respondents than the male, but this margin is minimal. Additionally, 140 of the students were between the ages of 16-22, 80 were between the ages of 23-29 and only 30 were 29 and above. This means that the majority of the participants were between the ages of 16-22 who are youths with a great penchant for social networking sites. Furthermore, 50 of them were second-year students, 110 were in



their third year, while 90 were in their final year. However, the researcher of this study decided to exclude students who are in their first year, it is believed that they are still new in their studies and might not give an accurate response.

Sampling procedure

The participants were selected using a simple random sampling technique because it provides an equal opportunity for selection. On the other hand, the institutions were chosen via convenient sampling. The selected institutions include Taraba State University, Jalingo; Adamawa State University, Mubi, Gombe State University, Gombe and the University of Maiduguri, Borno. The choice of selection was based on proximity and to ensure effective distribution and collection of data through the use of a questionnaire.

Data collection procedure

Three hundred copies of structured questionnaires were randomly distributed to the students in their lecture Halls and Library during the 2014/2015 academic session with the permission and assistance of their lecturers and Library staff. In each of the universities under investigation, 75 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. To facilitate this process, three research assistants were also utilized. The data were gathered within a period of eight weeks. Out of the administered questionnaires, a total of 250 copies were discovered usable, given a response and a return rate of 83.3 percent.

Data analysis

The data extracted were entered into the 2016 Microsoft excel statistical package and analyzed using descriptive statistics, which includes frequencies and percentages presented in tables and graphs. The only generated hypothesis of this study was analyzed using inferential Chi-square contingency analysis table tested at 0.05 significance level.



Data presentation, analysis, and discussions

Students' exposure to social networking sites

Table 1 seeks to determine whether undergraduate students are exposed to social networking sites. The study demonstrated that the entire students (n=250) 100% make use of social network sites.

Table 1: Students' exposure to social networking sites

Item (questions)	Responses	Frequency	Percentages
Do you use social media networks?	Yes	250	100%
	No	0	0%
Which of the following medium do you use to access social networking sites?	Computer	10	4%
	Smart Phones	200	80%
	Tablet	40	10%
How often do you access and utilize social networking sites?	Daily	240	96%
	Weekly	10	4%
	Twice a Month	-	-
	Monthly	-	-
How much time do you spend online daily?	6 hours and above	20	8%
	4-5 hours	180	72%
	3-4 hours	30	12%
	2-3 hours	15	6%
	1 hour or less	5	2%

This implies that most of the students have access to social networking sites. This result is in line with Ndaku (2013) who found that the majority of the students in tertiary institutions have access to social media. Table 1 also revealed that the majority of the students' (n=200) 80% use smartphones to access social networking sites. While (n=40) 10% of the students affirmed that they use the tablet to access social networking sites. However, the study indicated that only (n=10) 4% the students make use of their computers to access social networking sites.

In ascertaining the frequency of students' accessing and utilization of social networking sites, the study demonstrates that almost the entire students (n=240) 96%

agreed that they use social networking sites on a daily basis. However, only a few of them (n=10) 4% use it on a weekly basis and non-use it twice a month or monthly basis (See Table 1 and Figure 2).

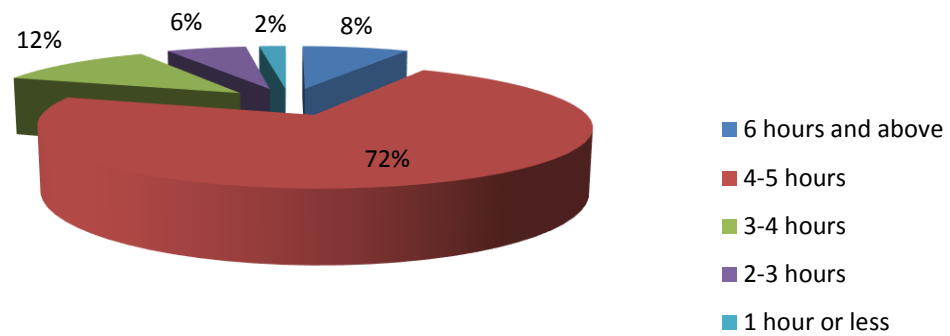


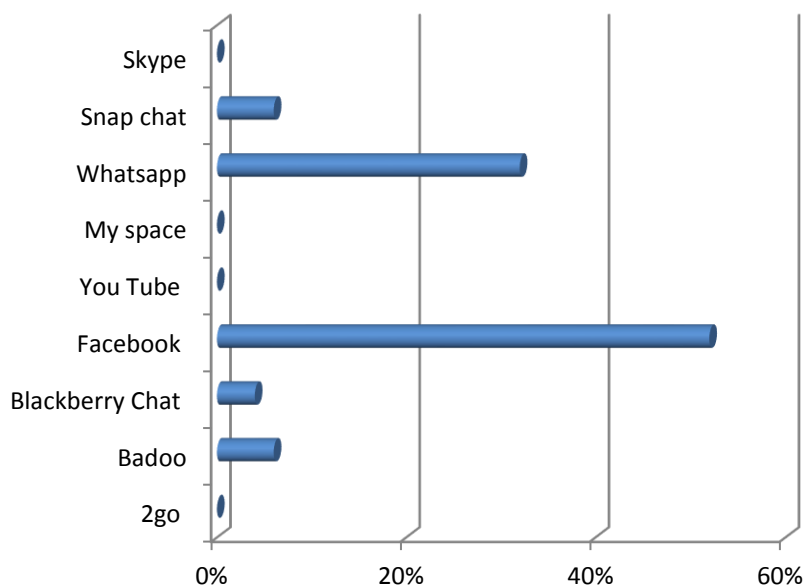
Figure 2: The time spent online daily by the students'

Furthermore, the study indicates that a large proportion of the students (n=180) 72% spend 4-5 hours daily on social media, (n=20) 8% spend 6 hours and above, (n=30) 12% spent 3-4 hours, (n=12) 6% spend 2-3 hours. As demonstrated in this study, only a few students (n=5) 2% spend 1 hour or less online. These findings indicate that social science students spend a lot of time on social media. This result is in accordance with Seyi (2012) observation which remarked that students are always busy ping-pong and Facebooking while lectures are on, devoting quality time in chitchatting rather than channelling it towards learning and academic research. Hence, as a result of this distraction, their academics suffer setbacks. Similarly, Sofela (2012) observed that most students abandoned their homework to chat with friends. Additionally, Olubiyi (2012) noted that students are so addicted to social media that they are almost 24 hours online.

4.2. The most preferred and utilised social networking sites among students'

To ascertain the most preferred and utilised social networking sites among social science students, Figure 3 demonstrate that majority of the students use Facebook

(n=200) 80%, (n=80) 32% use Whatsapp, (n=15) 6% use Snap chat, (n=15) 6% use of Badoo, (n=10) 4% utilize Blackberry. However, the study demonstrated that no student use Myspace and 2go. This implies that Facebook is the most preferred and utilized by students in public universities. This result is consistent with Rambe (2012) and Famutimi (2013) findings that indicated that Facebook enhances educational activities such as teaching and learning. Additionally, Asemah and Edegoh (2013) found that Facebook was the most used social media among undergraduate students at Kogi State University. Sumitha (2011) observed that a large proportion of undergraduate students' use Facebook more than any other social networking sites.



■ Fig 3: Types of Social media used by the students

The purpose of applying social networking sites by undergraduate students'

Table 2 depicts the purpose for which social science students 'utilize social networking sites.



Purposes of using social networking sites

Item (questions)	Responses	Frequency	Percentages
The purpose of using social media	For chatting, communicating and interacting with friends and families.	140	60%
	For educational activities such as online learning, carrying out research and submission of assignments.	10	4%
	To remain updated about trending events/news.	15	6%
	For watching movies and soap operas online.	50	20%
	For professional activities such as searching for a job.	5	2%
	To occupy free time when bored as well as personal socialization	30	12%

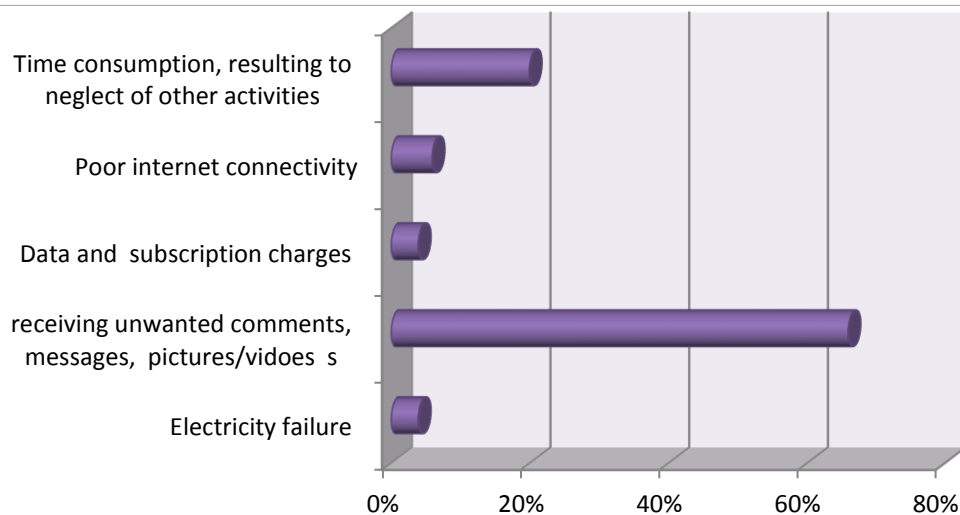
As demonstrated in in Table 2, for “chatting, communicating and interacting with friends and families” ranked first among the respondents (n=140) 60%, for “watching movies and soap operas online” ranked second (n=50)20%, occupying free time when bored as well as personal socialization ranked third among students (n=30) 12%, while to remain updated about trending events/news ranked fourth (n=15) 6% of the respondents. However, for educational activities such as online learning, conducting research and submission of assignments was the least ranked by the students (n=10) 4%. This implies that only a little proportion of social science students utilize social networking sites for academic purposes. They prefer to use it to chat with friends and families, occupy free time when bored as well as watch different movies and soap operas online. Accordingly, Okereke and Lucky (2014) reported that most of the students in Nigeria do not utilize social media for academic purposes, but rather for reaching out to close/distance friends and general information about life. Similarly, Eke et al. (2014) revealed that University undergraduate student’ use social networking sites to communicate with friends as well as



watch movies. Furthermore, Fasae and Adegbilero-Iwari (2016) discovered that science students utilize social media to remain up-to-date with events and to occupy free time when they are bored. Sofela (2012) similarly reported that social media offer students a channel for entertainment, communication, and meeting friends and those they have not seen for a long period of time. In contrast, Musa et al. (2015) found that students use social media for academic activities such as research. Additionally, Ezeah et al. (2013) discovered that students utilize social media for education/information purposes among other things.

Identifying the problems confronting undergraduate students' use of social networking sites.

Figure 4 depicts the problems confronting undergraduate students' as regards to the use of social networking sites. (n=10) 4% students alleged that data and internet subscription charges affect their use of social media. Additionally, a large number of the students (n=165) 66% highlighted the issue of receiving unwanted comments, messages, pictures as well as videos as the major problems they encounter while using social networking sites. There are instances whereby students will be in class and unwanted pictures, messages; videos would pop up requiring them to check, resulting in distraction. Other students, (n=50) 20% believed that social networking sites consume their time, resulting in them overlooking other educational activities. (n=10) 4% of the student ranked electricity failure as a factor impeding the effective utilization of social networking sites. Furthermore, (n=15) 6% affirmed that poor and slow internet connectivity affects their proper utilization and adoption of social networking sites.



■ Fig 4: Problems face by students in the utilization of social media

This implies that the major hindrance to the effective utilization of social networking sites among students is as receiving of unwanted comments, messages, pictures, and videos as well as the time consumption. This result is consistent with Fasae and Adegbilero-Iwari (2016) investigation that discovered poor internet connectivity, receiving of unwanted messages/pictures and electricity failure to be the leading problems encountered by science students in public universities using social networking sites. Accordingly, early studies identified privacy and security as some of the challenges encountered in the use of social media among students (Brady et al., 2010; Barnard, 2008; George, 2006; and Hodge, 2006). Furthermore, Ngonidzashe (2013) results suggest that the major challenges faced in the utilization of social media by students in higher education in Zimbabwe were security and promotion of antisocial behaviour, exposure to inappropriate material, unwanted adult interactions as well as bullying from peers.

Demonstrating the influence of social networking sites the educational growth and performance of students.

Table 3 demonstrates the influence of social networking utilization among the students.

Table 3: Influence of social networking sites on students' educational growth and performance



Items	Responses	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	I spend more time on social media than reading my books	190 (72%)	45 (18%)	-	10 (4%)	5 (2%)
2	I rely on social networking to do my assignments without consulting other sources.	20 (8%)	5 (2%)	-	170 (68%)	45 (18%)
3	My exposure to social media has turned me into an internet addict, thereby, affecting my academic performance and growth.	175 (70%)	50 (20%)	5(2%)	15 (6%)	5 (2%)
4	The utilization of social network has negative influence on students' educational growth and performance.	185 (74%)	40 (16%)	5 (2%)	15 (6%)	5 (2%)
5	The over utilization of social networking sites have affected my grammar and spelling.	195 (78%)	35 (14%)	5 (4%)	5 (4%)	10 (4%)
6	The utilization of social media has greatly improved my academic growth and performance.	20 (8%)	10 (4%)	-	175 (70%)	45 (18%)

Note: SA = Strong Agree; A= Agree; U= Undecided; D= Disagree; SD= Strongly disagree

As demonstrated in Table 3, a large proportion of the students (n=190) 72% strongly agreed that they spend more time on social networking sites than reading their books, (n=45) 18% agreed, while, only a few numbers of the students (n=10) 4% disagreed and (n = 5) 2% strongly disagreed as to spending more time on social networking sites than reading their books. This implies that the majority of students in public universities spends more time on social networking sites than reading their books. However, only a few of them, (n=20) 8% strongly agreed and (n=5) 2% agreed that they rely on social networking sites to do their assignments without consulting other sources. On the other hand, a large number of the respondents (n= 170) 68% disagreed and (n =45) 18% strongly disagreed as to relying on social networking sites to do their assignments but rather the students affirmed that they consult other material and sources.



As shown in Table 3, most of the students (n= 175) 70% strongly agreed that their exposure to social networking sites have made them become an internet addict which in turn affectstheir academic performance and growth. (n= 50) 20% agreed that their exposure to social networking sites have madethem become an internet addict, which in turn affectstheir academic performance and growth. On the other hand, a few numbers of the students (n=15) 6% disagreed and (n= 5) 2% strongly disagreed that the exposure to social networking sites have made them become internet addict. These students believe that social media exposure has not affected their academic performance and growth. From this result, it can be inferred that the exposure to social networking sites hastransubstantiated students to internet addict and as such affects their academic performance and growth. Consequently, (n= 185) 74% affirmed that there is a negative influence of social media on their academic performance, while, (n= 15) 6% disagreed.

Furthermore, as demonstrated in Table 3, a large number of the students (n= 195) 78% strongly agreed that the overutilization of social networking sites has affected their grammar and spelling, (n= 35) 14% agreed, however, (n=10) 4% strongly disagreed, (n=5) 4% disagreed and another (n=5) 4% respondents remained undecided. Additionally, it was discovered as depicted in Table 3 that the utilization of social media has not improvedthe academic growth and performance of students. This was affirmed by (n=175) 70% of the students. On the other hand, (n=20) 8% strongly agreed and (n=10) 8% agreed that the utilization of social media has improvedtheir academic growth and performance.

The responses shown in Table 3 likewise demonstrate that the overutilization of social networking sites among social science students' has a negative influence on their academic growth and development. This result corroborates with Seyi (2012) findings, which reported that the time ought to be channelled towards learning, academic research,



and innovation by students is being wasted by the passion of meeting friends and discussing trivial issues, hence, most students' academics suffer setbacks as a result of distraction. Similarly, Asogwa et al. (2012) investigation discovered that the utilization of Facebook among students of Tertiary Institutions have a negative effect on their academic performance except for their spoken and written communication. Okereke and Lucky (2014) likewise found that social media utilization cause low performance among students. Accordingly, Asemah et al. (2013) reported that students' exposure to social media had a negative effect on them. On the other hand, Ifeanyi-obi (2014) discovered that Facebook positively affected the academic activities of agricultural students at the University of Port Harcourt.

Hypothesis testing

The hypothesis will be tested with chi-square (χ^2) contingency table analysis at 5% = 0.05 level of significance and 4 degrees of freedom.

H_0 : The overexposure to social networking sites has no negative influence on students' educational growth and performance.

Table 3: The overexposure to social networking sites has negative influence on students' educational growth and performance.

Response	O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Strongly Agree	185	50	135	18225	364.5
Agree	40	50	-10	100	2
Undecided	5	50	-45	2025	40.5
Disagree	15	50	-35	1225	24.5
Strongly disagree	5	50	-45	2025	40.5
Total	250	250	0	23600	472

Decision rule: if the computed value is less than the critical value obtained from chi-square distribution table the null hypothesis is not rejected, whereas, if the calculated value is greater than the critical value the null hypothesis is rejected.



Using $X^2 = \sum = \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$

E

Where, O = Observed frequencies, E = Expected frequencies and \sum = Summation.

Given a level of significance of 5% = 0.05 and 4 degrees of freedom the Chi-square distribution table consulted revealed a critical value of 9.488 while the calculated value as demonstrated in Table 3 is 472. Therefore, since the calculated value 472 is greater than the critical value of 9.488 we reject the null hypothesis that states “the utilization of social network has no negative influence on students’ educational growth and performance”. Thus, it is inferred that the utilization of social networking sites has a negative influence on students’ educational growth and performance.

Conclusion, recommendations, limitations, and suggestions for further research

This study was conducted to examine the access, utilization, and influence of social networking sites among students’. The results of this study demonstrated that the entire students make use of social networking sites and Facebook was ranked as the most utilized. Additionally, the study found that these students preferred using their smartphones to access social networking sites and a large proportion of them spend about four to five hours daily chatting with friends and families. However, only a few proportions of these students utilize social networking sites for academic purposes. Receiving of unwanted comments, messages, and pictures/videos were identified as the leading problems encountered while using social networking sites.

Moreover, this study also found that there is a negative influence of social networking sites on students’ educational growth and performance. The students are affected by grammar and spelling due to the informal use of language on social media. Additionally, the utilization of social media has metamorphosed them into internet addicts resulting in



academic set back. In view of this deleterious effect of the overutilization of social networking sites among students, this study suggests the following:

- A solid policy framework should be set up by the government to tackle and put an end to poor internet connectivity in Nigeria.
- Charity begins at home; parents are advised to checkmate their children's exposure and utilization of social media. As demonstrated in this paper, students utilize social networking sites for about four to five hours daily chatting with friends and families.
- Regulatory measures should be enacted by the Federal Ministry of Information and the National Orientation Agency to control the accessibility and utilization of social networking sites among Nigeria students.
- Service providers in Nigeria should upgrade their network performance and speed as well as reduce the cost of subscription in order to allow students effectively use social media. As shown in this study, there are still students who use social media for educational activities, such students will be motivated.
- Higher institutions should adopt and incorporate social media into their course delivery system. The Lecturers should engage students on social media platforms, using it for communication as well as submission of assignments. This will encourage students to utilize social media for educational purposes rather than chatting alone.
- Higher institutions should regularly organize seminars and workshops to educate students on the most appropriate way of adopting social networking sites for educational purposes. The positive and negative effects of social networking sites on academic practices should be the major theme in such seminar as well as enumerating ways students can minimize distraction received from social networking sites.
- The utilization and applications of social networking sites in connecting and communicating with students that are library users should be encouraged by Libraries



and library professionals in order to assist students to make gainful use of social networking sites.

- Students in higher education should decrease their overexposure and utilization of social networking sites for chit chatting and watching movies. They should use it more for educational development and growth.

5.1 Limitation and suggestions for further research

In order to have a more balanced and generalizable result, it is pertinent for further research to include both private and public institutions in Nigeria, as well as include other Universities outside Nigeria. Additionally, a combination of interview/focus group will provide a more in-depth understanding of the approach, utilization and negative influence of social media among university students.



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