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Social Media and Academic Performance of Political Science Students in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT : Due to technological advancement in recent years, social media has become popular across the globe. This avails the students in higher educational institutions the opportunity to explore various branches of knowledge. Rather than utilize social networking sites to improve and broaden their academic horizons, a good number of students get addicted to Facebook and Whatsapp for pleasure. As a result of available opportunities to be harnessed from social media, students now have divided attention to their studies. The study therefore examines the influence of social media on academic performance of Political Science students of Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo. A sample of 100 students was randomly selected from different subject combinations in the Department. The use of descriptive survey guided this study. Relying on empirical method of analysis, a self-designed questionnaire was administered to collect data just as Chi-square test was used in testing the hypotheses. The findings indicate that exposure to social media adversely affects students' academic performance. The respondents affirmed that positive impacts of social media appear to be significantly low. Based on this, the paper recommends that students be encouraged to use social media for educational purposes; online pages be created by the College to enhance academic activities; and the need to minimize the time students spend engaging on social media activities for them to be productive.

KEY WORDS: *social media, academic performance, internet, education, computer.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The emergence and use of information technology in the twentieth century is the most significant development affecting scholarly communication. Social media, with its fast tracking means of sending and receiving information via internet, has gained popularity owing to its remarkable impact in the area of networking, entertainment and academics. Kietzmann (2012) affirms that social media employs mobile and web-based technology to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities interact, share, discuss and modify user-generated content.

Social networking sites have transformed the thought of 'global village' into a reality where billions of people communicate easily on a regular basis. Numerous benefits have been obtained through distant communication. The growing dimension of the utilization of social media among the youth of today cannot be over-emphasized. The most common users of social media are students in higher educational institutions. This usage exposed the potential for the sites to be a medium for online learning that would be more valuable than conventional method if the activities of e-learning could be closely integrated into the features of SNSs.

Rather than take advantage of opportunities available in social media with a view to adding value to academic pursuits, "students are so engrossed in social media that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in the classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been observed that some students are always busy Facebooking, 2going, pingping while lectures are on" (Melani & Andrew, 2017).

Precious times that ought to be channeled towards learning, academic research and innovating have been crushed by the passion for meeting new friends online, and most times students are busy discussing trivial issues. Hence, most students' academic performance suffers setback as a result of deviation, distraction and divided attention between social media activities and academic work. One may be tempted to ask: Is social media beneficial or detrimental to students' academic performance? Based on this, the paper attempts to explore the nexus between social media and academic performance with particular focus on Political Science students in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The advent of internet has created a platform which provides a very rich medium for information dissemination, exchange and collaborative interaction among individuals and computers regardless of geographical limitation of space. The advancement of media technology has had a great influence on the way people interact with one another. With the evolution of internet, it is assumed that academic performance is being neglected as students now have divided attention to learning. Due to its popularity, many students get addicted to the use of social media sites as they continue to engage in one activity or another on social media frequently. This unpleasant scenario created growing concern over the possible influence social media could have on students' academic performances. Given the rate at which students get obsessed in social networking sites to connect with friends and share information, could this affect their academic performance? It is on that basis that the paper attempts to assess the utilization of social media in relation to students' academic activities with particular focus on the Political Science students in Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo.

Conceptual Clarifications

Social media is a web-based mobile application that allows people or companies to make, interact with, and share new user-generated or current material, in digital environment (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media has become one of the major channels of chatting through platforms such as 2go, BB Chat etc. It is a form of electronic communication which facilitates interaction based on certain matters and created new opportunities for browsing.

Academic Performance is defined as how students deal with their studies and how they accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. It is the determinant of students' characteristics which include students' intelligence, personality and socio-economic status. Within the academic context, students' ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate their knowledge verbally or down on paper enhances academic performance. This is however dependent on teacher's competencies, requisite teaching aids and conducive academic environment.

Objectives

- i To identify how students' exposure to social media has influence on their academic performance.
- ii To examine how students' obsession with social media affects academic performance.
- iii To ascertain how the use of social media hinders with academic performance of students.

Research questions

- i Does students' exposure to social media affect their academic performance?
- ii How has students' addiction to social media influenced their academic performance?
- iii To what extent would the use of social media shaped academic performance of students?

Research Hypotheses

H0₁: Students' exposure to social media negatively affects academic performance.

H0₂: There is no relationship between students' addiction with social media and learning.

H0₃: Social media does not enhance academic performance of students.

Review of Related Work

Internet has attracted considerable attention among scholars and educators due to the increasing popularity among students and its potential effects on academic performance. The use of social media among the youth of today is growing by the day and gaining more and more popularity among learners. Numerous users are linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless and optical networking technologies.

The advancement of technology has had a great influence on the way people now communicate on a daily basis (Celestine & Nonyelum, 2018). With social media sites, it became easier for people and organization to explore different areas of human endeavours. As Ellison & Boyd (2007) put it, social media entail web-based services that allow individuals to construct profiles, display user connections, and search and traverse within that list of connections.

Several studies have been carried out by different researchers to examine the linkage between social media and academic performance. Ellison (2007), Miguel (2009), Choney (2010), Sivakumar, (2011) Melani & Andrew (2017) and Mustaqh & Benraghda (2018) are of the view that social media can influence academic performance of students positively or negatively. Whereas proponents of social networking site argue that it supports collaboration, community building, participation and sharing of information (Mustaqh & Benraghda, 2018; Adegboji & Toyo 2006; Sivakumar, 2020), opponents claim that excessive use of these sites affect the social, mental and physical health of the users (Englander et al (2010), Salvation & Adzharuddin (2014), Das & Sahoo (2010), Okereke & Oghenetega (2014).

In a study conducted by Mustaqh & Benraghda (2018), it was observed that despite public views concerning the misuse of social media, most of the students were interested in using social media positively for their educational activities. They stressed that instant messaging can complement what is taught in traditional classroom setting. In Western contexts, social media are mostly used by students to communicate and exchange ideas with lecturers. Social networking sites are considered as hubs and platforms that many people rely on for interaction on a daily basis.

Helou & Ab. Rahim (2014) carried out a study on the relationship between the use of social media and students' academic performance. The results suggest, social media used in positive manner can help students in effective communication with lecturers, group discussion and improvement in learning activities. By contrast, if not well utilized, social media could distract students from their studies and result in poor academic performance as it requires spending money and a waste of time.

A direct relationship exists between social media and learning. Social media enhances relationship, improves learning motivation, offering personalized course material and developing collaborative abilities. However, the other side within technology evolution has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback of real values of life especially among students who form the majority of users interacting through the use of social networking site mainly for socializing purposes instead of learning purposes. Too much involvement with social media adversely affects students' performance in school.

Academic achievement plays an important role not only in individual placement but in academic institution or organization set up. Academic performance is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessments but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important, procedural knowledge (i.e. skills) or declarative knowledge (i.e. facts). Social media create distraction within the school especially during teaching-learning periods (Ahmad, 2019). There is a deviation, distraction and divided attention between social media activities and academic work (Melani & Andrew, 2017). At present, students become addicted to social networking sites (Google, Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter, 2go, LinkedIn etc) which grab their attention towards non-educational issues.

While some students blame the sites for their steady decrease in grade point averages, it also shows that only few students are aware of the academic and professional networking opportunities the sites offered. At this juncture, teachers are required to motivate students to make good use of the social networking sites to improve their learning experiences. Based on this, the role of the teacher should change from the "sage on the stage" to a "guide on the side", assisting the students in the construction of knowledge (Etim & Ubasil, 2016).

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey. The design is considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to generate data through the standardized collection procedures based on highly structured research instrument.

Population

The population in this research is all NCE students in the School of Secondary Education, Arts and Social Science Programmes, Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo.

Sample and Sampling Technique

One hundred (100) students formed the sample of the study. In line with the nature of the subject combinations, twenty (20) respondents each were randomly selected across POL/SOS, ECO/POL, ISS/POL, CRS/POL, and HIS/POL with a view to investigating the level at which students get involved in social media in the College.

Research instrument

A self-designed questionnaire known as "Social media and Academic performance of students" was adopted. The instrument contained two parts. The first part of the instrument was designed to elicit relevant information on the bio-data of the students while the second part is made up of items relating to the views of the respondents on how social media affect students' academic performance.

Validity and Reliability of the instrument

The questionnaire was given to experts in the department of Political Science for scrutiny. Their various suggestions were taken into consideration in the final compilation of this study. This ensures the face validity of the instrument. Meanwhile, Chi-square test was applied to determine the reliability of the test instrument.

Table 1

Exposure to social media influences students' academic performance

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D
1	Facebook affords me the opportunity to interact freely with people	29	58	8	5
2	Google enables me to have access to open knowledge	26	49	8	17
3	I got information to do my assignment from Wikipedia	16	30	51	3
4	I engage in academic discussions with friends on twitter	9	18	66	7
5	I receive announcement of lectures on Whatsapp	4	20	36	40

Source: Author's field work, 2021

Table 2

S/N	fo	fe	fo-fe	(fo-fe) ²	$\frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$
1	87	51.8	35.2	1239.04	23.92
2	75	51.8	23.2	538.24	10.39
3	46	51.8	-5.8	33.64	0.65
4	27	51.8	-24.8	615.04	11.87
5	24	51.8	-27.8	772.84	14.92
6	13	48.2	-35.2	1239.04	25.71
7	25	48.2	-23.2	538.24	11.17
8	54	48.2	5.8	33.64	0.70
9	73	48.2	24.8	615.04	12.76
10	76	48.2	27.8	772.84	16.03
Sum	500				128.12

$X^2_{cal} = 128.12$, $X^2_{tab} = 9.49$ at 5% sig level

Degree of freedom = (r-1) (c-1)

(5-1)(2-1)

(4)(1)=4

Since the value of X^2_{cal} which is 128.12 is greater than X^2_{tab} i.e. 9.49 at 5 % level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that students' exposure to social media negatively affects academic performance is accepted.

Table 3

Students' obsession with social media affects their academic performance

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D
1	I cannot concentrate on my studies owing to frequent internet surfing	26	67	4	3
2	Social networking sites help me connect with friends	35	54	7	4
3	I waste precious time engaging in social network sites	41	49	7	3
4	I perform abysmally because of my addiction to online media	13	59	18	10
5	It worsens my grammatical constructions	22	46	14	18

Source: Author's field work, 2021

Table 4

S/N	Fo	fe	fo-fe	(fo-fe) ²	$\frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$
1	93	82.4	10.6	112.36	1.36
2	89	82.4	6.6	43.56	0.53
3	90	82.4	7.6	57.76	0.70
4	72	82.4	-10.4	108.16	1.31
5	68	82.4	-14.4	207.36	2.52
6	7	17.6	-10.6	112.36	6.38
7	11	17.6	-6.6	43.56	2.48
8	10	17.6	-7.6	57.76	3.28
9	28	17.6	10.4	108.16	6.15
10	32	17.6	14.4	207.36	11.78
Sum	500				36.49

$X^2_{cal} = 36.49$, $X^2_{tab} = 9.49$ at 5% sig level

Degree of freedom $= (r-1)(c-1)$

$(5-1)(2-1)$

$(4)(1) = 4$

Since the value of X^2_{cal} which is 36.49 is greater than X^2_{tab} i.e. 9.49 at 5 % level of significance, the null hypothesis which states there is no correlation between students' addition with social media and academic performance is accepted.

Table 5

Use of social media hinders academic performance

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D
1	The use of Google scholar for research has improved my grades	12	17	63	8
2	Sharing files from yahoo mail enhances my level of comprehension	19	25	36	20
3	Social media adversely affect literacy	32	28	16	24
4	I make use of Whatsapp to compare notes with my classmates	9	19	52	20
5	Social media is beneficial to my academic progress	11	15	57	17

Source: Author's field work, 2021

Table 6

S/N	Fo	fe	fo-fe	$(fo-fe)^2$	$\frac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$
1	29	37.4	-8.4	70.56	1.87
2	44	37.4	6.6	43.56	1.16
3	60	37.4	22.6	510.76	13.66
4	28	37.4	-9.4	88.36	0.22
5	26	37.4	-11.4	129.96	3.47
6	71	62.6	8.4	70.56	1.13
7	56a	62.6	-6.6	43.56	0.70
8	40	62.6	-22.6	510.76	8.16
9	72	62.6	9.4	88.36	1.41
10	74	62.6	11.4	129.96	2.08
Sum	500				33.86

$X^2_{cal} = 33.86$, $X^2_{tab} = 9.49$ at 5% sig level

Degree of freedom $= (r-1)(c-1)$

$(5-1)(2-1)$

$(4)(1) = 4$

Since the value of X^2_{cal} which is 33.86 is greater than X^2_{tab} i.e. 9.49 at 5 % level of significance, the hypothesis which states that social media does not enhance academic performance of students is accepted.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding of this study indicates that students' exposure to social media has influence on their academic performance. In Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo, students use Facebook and Whatsapp more than any other networking sites to share information with one another. This is in line with survey conducted by Okereke & Oghenetega (2014) that youth prefer to surf the internet for developing connections on a regular basis. In a similar vein, Helou & Ab.Rahim (2014) submits that most students abandoned their home work to chat with friends. Rather than use social media for research, it has been observed that students spent much time on Facebook and Whatsapp in lecture halls and classrooms. To Melani & Andrew (2017), times that ought to be channeled towards learning and research have been crushed by the passion for meeting new friends online.

Table 4 was used to test hypothesis on the significant relationship between students' obsession and learning. The finding of this study reveals that the use of smart phones has increased the usage of social media to the extent that "when students go on social network, they lose their mind" (Awake, 2012). Social media has become a major part of life of students. This was buttressed by Englander *et al* (2010) that many students cannot go for two-three hours without checking and updating their profiles on social networking sites even at the detriment of their educational pursuit. Little wonder, youths are variously described as 'the connected generation' net generation' and digital natives' in human history.

Besides, Table 6 tests the hypothesis which states that social media does not enhance academic performance. The result points to the excessive use of the internet by students at the expense of their academics. Among the prominent users of social media are students. This corresponds to Khan (2009) that social media users often experience low study habit pattern and by extension, poor academic performance. The use of these social

networking sites affects students' use of English and grammar. As the students are used to short forms of writing words in their chat rooms, they forget and use the same in classrooms. They use things like '2' in place of 'to', 'n' instead of 'and' 'D' in lieu of 'The', and this is a consequence of their access to social media.

V. CONCLUSION

The rapid growth in modern technology, especially the internet has great impacts on the users. It has created a new dimension where individual can increase their social awareness by keeping in touch with old friends, making new friends, dispensing new data or products and gathering information in other aspects of human endeavours. The development has improved collaborative learning activities especially with its high level of interactivity, accessibility and affordability (Apuke, 2016) but the current generation of youth failed to maximize these opportunities to broaden their academic horizons. As students no longer need to visit a cybercafé before they get any information, they have unlimited access, with the use of smart phones and tablets, to watch pornography and learnt the rudiments of cyber crime. When students get preoccupied with browsing on internet for frivolities, and explore social networking sites to socialize with friends all of which add no value to educational activities adversely affect their academic performance.

Recommendations

In view of the above findings, the researchers would like to recommend as follows:

- Students need to create a balance between social media and their academics to prevent setbacks.
- Social media should be used for educational purposes as well. Social networking sites should be expanded and new pages created to enhance academic activities.
- For students to be more productive, they need to minimize the time they spend engaging on social media activities.
- Academic institutions could take advantage of the positive impact of social networking sites to formally incorporate their use in the teaching and learning process.
- Students should be monitored by both teachers and parents on how to use social media

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