Social Media Usage in Schools: Its Influence on Students' Academic Performance in Akoko North East, Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This research investigates the influence of social media usage on the academic performance of students in Akoko Northeast Local Government Area of Ondo state, Nigeria. With the pervasive growth of social media platforms, understanding how these digital interactions affect students' educational outcomes becomes imperative. The study employs descriptive survey research design, utilizing survey data collected from a representative sample of 560 senior secondary school students using a simple random sampling technique. The research instrument used was a structured questionnaire tagged Questionnaire on Influence of Social Media and Students' Academic Performance (QISMSAP) comprising three sections. Data analysis involves the application of frequency count, percentage, mean score, and standard deviation in answering the research questions. The findings of the study indicate pervasive influences of social media on senior secondary school students in Akoko North East LGA, it was revealed that social media creates collaborative learning (X=2.91), academic distraction (X=3.01), procrastination (X=2.97), time wastage (X=2.99), Cyberbullying (X=3.02), sexual pervasion, lack of concentration among others. There was also a diverse landscape of social media engagement among students with variations in usage patterns across different platforms, such as Facebook (57.7%, X=3.52), WhatsApp (50.4%, X=3.31), TikTok (40.6%, 3.00) frequently used respectively. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that there should be implementation of educational sensitization to leverage these platforms for educational purposes, turning them into tools for learning rather than distractions.

Introduction

Academic success is often positively influenced by education systems that prioritize quality teaching, create supportive learning environments, employ well-designed and relevant curricula, implement effective student assessment and grading systems, and integrate technology. Achieving the seamless integration of technology into education requires careful consideration of both its benefits and challenges. In the contemporary world, there is a notable celebration of advancements in communication technology, particularly in the widespread usage of web-based technology. This technological progress has effectively turned the world into a "Global village," fostering drastic transformation and modernization of various infrastructures and economic developments. Over the past few decades, the emergence of communication gadgets such as Android, iPhones, and other mobile phones has significantly improved information and communication activities.

The integral component of communication technology is social media which expanded its influence across various facets of human life. However, it is akin to web-based technology that brings forth double-sided consequences. Social media positively enhances access to information, fosters enlightenment, and promotes global awareness, offering more efficient ways of completing tasks. It has become commonplace for individuals to dedicate a substantial portion of their time to utilizing social networks due to their user-friendly nature, speed, and durability. Particularly, it also plays a pivotal role in connecting people, whether they have longstanding relationships or are forming new connections, whether their interactions are in person or through online platforms (Ahmad, 2021).

The rapid evolution of technology, particularly internet-based technology, is transformed into highly interactive platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, WhatsApp, YouTube, and others enables individuals and groups of people to communicate, share, discuss, co-create, and modify generated content. Most people actively engage with social interactive platforms, utilizing them for communication tools that are characterized and based on shared interests, whether personal, business, or academic (Bowen, 2018). The widespread presence of these sites has facilitated remote communication, yielding numerous advantages in terms of global connectivity and the exchange of information.

Achieving academic excellence is of paramount significance for individuals as it significantly influences their admission to academic institutions and subsequent job prospects. Consequently, many individuals are actively exploring avenues to accomplish good academic performance, globally prompting numerous research studies delving into the factors contributing to it. Academic achievement serves as a crucial predictor of success in various life domains, encompassing academic progression from schools to higher education institutions and employability in one's chosen career (Boyd, 2017).

There is a significant correlation between social media utilization and the academic performance of secondary school students. Badmus (2020) revealed in a study that students have a positive perceived influence of social media on their academic performance. However, technological advancement brought about pervasive challenges and degrading effects of life values which constitute a substantial majority of social media users. Social networking platforms are specifically designed to foster and showcase social connections among individuals with common interests or activities. The widespread availability of these platforms on the internet has tempted students to shift their focus away from academic responsibilities, prioritizing online interactions over homework and study sessions. Many students have become deeply involved in the latest online trends, with platforms like Facebook and Twitter taking precedence. A significant majority of today's youth and students maintain accounts on Facebook, and the reasons for their academic underperformance may extend beyond solely attributing it to the quality of teachers. The prevalence of the "Facebook frenzy" is a crucial factor that requires careful consideration (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). According to Englander, Terregrossa, and Wang (2020), contemporary students are virtually connected online 24/7, even during class time, engaging in activities such as messaging, using 2go, or browsing Facebook. The time that should be dedicated to learning, academic research, and innovation is often compromised due to the allure of forming new online connections and participating in discussions on trivial matters. Consequently, numerous students encounter setbacks in their academic performance due to distractions stemming from social media.

Based on the study conducted by Shambare, Rugimbana, and Sithole (2017), the usage of social media platforms has implications for students' language proficiency and grammar. The informal language and abbreviations commonly employed in chat rooms tend to spill over into the classroom, resulting in the use of short forms like "4" instead of "for" and "U" instead of "You," potentially affecting their academic assessments. While social networking platforms are acknowledged as valuable resources for educational purposes, research indicates that students primarily utilize platforms such as Facebook for entertainment, passing time, connecting with existing friends, or making acquaintances (Lenhart & Madden, 2017).

Despite dedicating a significant amount of time to social networking activities, many students attribute a decline in their academic performance to these platforms (Suleiman, 2017). Interestingly, very few students are aware of the academic and professional networking opportunities offered by these platforms. Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, and Zickuhr (2020) note that social networking platforms often capture students' attention, diverting it towards pervasive behaviours and immoral relationships.

The social information processing theory posits the formation of interpersonal relationships via web-based technology may necessitate more time compared to face-to-face relationships. However, once established, online relationships can wield a similar level of influence as those developed through in-person communication. Essentially, heightened social media usage among students can influence their attitude toward academics, as interactions with friends on social media platforms gradually begin to influence each other. Students across different educational levels now encounter difficulties in maintaining focused attention on their studies, often being lured by the various opportunities presented by social media. The extent to which these opportunities contribute positively to academic pursuits is a question that warrants exploration. Consequently, the research aims to investigate the influence of social media on senior secondary students' academic performance in Akoko North East Local Government Areas of Ondo state, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Based on a contemporary globalized era, where the internet has become the primary source of information, there is growing concern about social media's influence on students' educational outcomes since the advent of social networks in the 1990s. The educational system in Nigeria is confronted with numerous influences that led to a significant deterioration in the quality of education. One prominent challenge is the escalating tendency of students to divert, become distracted, and divide their attention, often prioritizing social networking activities over their academic obligations.

A noticeable pattern reveals that students are dedicating more time and focus to social platforms than to academic responsibilities. The addictive nature of students' frequent usage of these platforms and some specific networks they commonly utilize for student interactions have become frequent subjects of discussion. These factors are believed to exert a direct influence on students' academic performance. Instead of concentrating on academic pursuits, students are frequently found engrossed in chatting and making connections through social media platforms, potentially undermining their academic

accomplishments. This shift from studying to online socializing is evident in various settings, including places of worship, lecture venues, and even while walking along the highway.

The widespread exploration of the potential of smart technologies such as mobile phones has further complicated the situation. The government and parents are not found to look critically in this area and their negligence has contributed to the adverse effects of social media usage in schools like continuous student decline in academic performance, the surge in dropout rates, and the increase in various unacceptable, immoral, and antisocial behaviors exhibited by students today. These behaviors encompass truancy, substantial academic failures, engagement in examination malpractices, violations of proper dress codes, involvement in sexual pervasion and immoral relationships with both opposite and same-sex partners, and the manifestation of inordinate behaviors, including incidents of rape. The primary attribution for these concerning trends is often linked to the influence of social media. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of social media on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Akoko North East Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of social media on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Akoko North East Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aimed at:

1. Investigate the influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in Akoko North East LGA.
2. Ascertain the social media platforms commonly utilized by secondary school students in Akoko North East LGA.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and guided by the study.

1. To what extent does social media influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Akoko North East LGA?
2. What are the social media platforms commonly utilized by secondary school students in Akoko North East LGA?

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research that allows the usage of questionnaires in obtaining data from students at Senior Secondary Schools in Akoko North East LGA of Ondo State. The population of this study comprises all senior secondary school students in Ondo State particularly Akoko North East Local Government Areas of Ondo State, Nigeria. A simple sampling technique was used to select ten (10) secondary schools. In each of the selected schools, 60 senior secondary school students in Class 2 (SS2) were also selected utilizing a simple random sampling technique. In all, 600 respondents participated from the ten (10) selected secondary schools, and the SS2 students were purposefully used for this study because SS1 students are new incoming senior students and SS3 students are preparing for their final senior secondary examinations. This set of students would have time for this study and be exposed to different platforms on social media.

The research instrument used was a questionnaire tagged as Questionnaire on Influence of Social Media and Students' Academic Performance (QISMSAP). The instrument consisted of three sections; Section A sought information on the biodata of the respondents. Section B consists of items that elicit information on the influence of social media on the academic performance of senior secondary school students. This section utilized a Likert scale point scale classified as strongly agree (SA) rated at 4 points, Agree (A) rated at 3 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) rated at 2 points, and Disagree (D) rated at 1 point. Section C includes common types of social media used by students and the degree of usage, using 5 Likert scales rated from Mostly, Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely, to Never. For Section B, the mid-point of the mean score is 2.5. (4+3+2+1/4). This implies that any mean score in Section B of the instrument, which is between 2.5 and above will be adjudged as the influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in Akoko North East Local Government of Ondo state and vice versa. The instrument used was shown to five experts, two experts from the field of educational technology, two experts from information technology, and one expert in educational evaluation for face and content validity. The expert's judgment and criticism were used to modify the instrument. The research instrument was tested for consistency through the test-retest method and Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability with coefficient index $r = 0.71$ obtained.

The research data collected for the study was analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

Results

Demographic Analysis

Data collected on the Demographic information of the students was investigated on four characteristics: gender, age, use of social media, and length of usage.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	242	43.2
Female	318	56.8
Total	**560**	**100.0**
Age *(Years)*	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 16years	97	17.3
16-20 years	372	66.4
21 years and above	91	16.3
Total	**560**	**100.0**

Table 1 showed that 242(43.2%) male and 318(56.8%) female SS2 students were used for this study. In all 560 secondary school students were available and used as indicated in Table 1. The result shows that female respondents had the highest frequency of social media usage. Based on age indicates that 97(17.3%) of the respondents were below 16 years, 372(66.4%) of the respondents were between the age limit of 16 to 20years and 91(16.3%) of the respondents were between the ages of 21years and above. The result shows that 16-year to 20-year respondents had the highest frequency of 66.4%, being the average range of SS2 senior secondary school students.

Research Question One: To what extent does social media influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Akoko North East LGA?

Table 2: Influences of Social Media on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary School

S/N	Items		SA	A	D	SD	X	SDD
						Response		
1	Social media helps me stay updated on educational content	F	135	188	150	87	2.66	1.01
		%	24.1	33.6	26.8	15.5		
2	I use social media as a tool for	F	153	258	76	73	2.91	0.84

	collaborative learning with classmates.	%	27.3	46.1	13.6	13.0		
3	Social media negatively impacts my ability to concentrate on academic tasks	F	163	265	74	58	3.01	0.76
		%	29.1	47.3	13.2	10.4		
4	Social media use leads to procrastination, affecting my study habits and mental health.	F	183	234	86	57	2.97	0.94
		%	32.7	41.8	15.4	10.2		
5	I can balance my time effectively between social media and academic responsibilities	F	177	279	47	57	3.03	0.90
		%	31.6	49.8	8.4	10.2		
6	Social media harms the time I dedicate to homework and study.	F	146	303	68	43	2.99	0.83
		%	26.1	54.1	12.1	7.7		
7	I am conscious of the amount of time I spend on social media during the school week	F	165	214	99	82	2.83	1.01
		%	29.5	38.2	17.7	14.6		
8	I prefer visual content (images and video) on social media utilization.	F	108	114	191	147	2.42	0.84
		%	19.2	20.4	34.1	26.3		
9	I present my pictures, idealized version of myself, and personal information on social media.	F	180	261	69	50	2.30	0.90
		%	32.1	46.6	12.4	8.9		
10	Excessive use of social media negatively makes me experience violent behaviours and Cyberbullying	F	163	270	58	69	3.02	0.94
		%	29.1	48.2	10.4	12.3		
	Grand Mean						**2.81**	

Table 2 revealed that nearly all the respondents (57.7%) opined that social media helps them stay updated on educational content, although 42.3% of them were of a contrary opinion (mean score 2.66). In a similar trend, 73.4% of the respondents affirmed that social media as a tool for collaborative learning with classmates, however, 26.6% of them report differently (mean value 2.91).

A higher percentage of the respondents (76.4%) affirmed that social media negatively impacts the ability to concentrate on academic tasks, meanwhile, 23.6% of them refuted it (mean value 3.01). The statement that social media use leads to procrastination, affecting their study habits was certified by 74.5% of the respondents, meanwhile 25.5% of them report contrarily (mean value 2.97). Some of the

respondents (81.4%) opined that they believed that they could balance their time effectively between social media and academic responsibilities, although 18.6% of them were of a contrary opinion mean value 3.03). In a similar trend, 80.2% of respondents affirmed that social media usage harms homework and study schedules, however, 19.8% of them report differently (mean value 2.99). A higher percentage (67.7%) of respondents were conscious of the amount of time spent on social media during the school week (mean value 2.83), meanwhile, 32.3% of them refuted. The statement that excessive use of social media negatively leads to violent behaviours and Cyberbullying was certified by 77.3% of the respondents, meanwhile 22.6% of them reported contrarily (mean value 2.94).

Some of the respondents (39.4%) opined that they prefer visual content (images and videos) on social media utilization, although 60.6% of them were of a contrary opinion (mean value 2.42). In a similar trend, 78.7% of the respondents affirmed that they could present their pictures, idealized version of themself, and personal information on social media, however, 21.3% of them reported differently (mean value 3.02).

On average, it was observed that nearly all the respondents (70.7%) consenting to these statements had certified that social media influences the academic performance of secondary school students. This was such that 28.2% of the respondents strongly agreed with these statements, and 42.5% of them agreed, though 16.4% of them disagreed and 12.9% strongly disagreed. To further confirm this result is the grand mean value of 2.81 which ascertained that the majority agreed that social media influences the academic performance of secondary school students.

Research Question Two: What are the social media platforms commonly utilized by secondary school students in Akoko North East LGA?

Table 3: Frequency and percentage summary of the social media platforms commonly utilized by secondary school students

Items		Never Use	Rarely Use	Occasionally Use	Frequently Use	Always Use	X
				Response			
Facebook	F.	76	62	65	207	150	3.52
	%	13.6	11.1	11.6	37.0	20.7	
Instagram	F.	141	243	87	69	20	2.26
	%	25.2	43.4	15.5	12.3	3.6	
Snapchat	F.	165	220	92	83	-	2.17

	%	29.5	39.3	16.4	14.8	-	
Twitter	F.	179	206	69	86	20	2.22
	%	32.0	36.8	12.3	15.4	3.6	
TikTok	F.	91	71	171	203	24	3.00
	%	16.3	12.7	30.5	36.3	4.3	
WhatsApp	F.	54	77	147	204	78	3.31
	%	9.5	13.8	26.3	36.4	14.0	
YouTube	F.	169	104	163	114	10	2.45
	%	30.2	18.6	29.2	20.4	1.6	
Pinterest	F.	315	179	55	11	-	1.56
	%	56.3	32.0	9.8	1.9	-	
Telegram	F.	121	95	155	114	75	2.87
	%	21.6	17.0	27.7	20.4	13.4	
LinkedIn	F.	229	210	119	02		1.81
	%	40.9	37.5	21.3	0.3	-	
Reddit	F.	301	231	22	6		1.52
	%	53.8	41.3	3.9	1.1	-	
Quora	F.	233	185	108	34		1.90
	%	41.6	33.0	19.3	6.1	-	

Table 3 revealed that Facebook, WhatsApp, and TikTok have a mean rating of 3.52, 3.31, and 3.00 respectively, which indicates that these social networks have a high frequency of usage by students. About (13.6%) have never used Facebook, 11.1% rarely use Facebook, 11.6% occasionally use Facebook, 37.0% frequently use Facebook and 26.7% always use Facebook. This implies that 63.7% of students are frequently and always using Facebook social media networks among the senior secondary schools in Akoko North East LGA of Ondo State.

Similarly, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, and Telegram have mean ratings of 2.26, 2.17, 2.22, 2.45, 2.87 respectively, this implies that the usage of these social media networks by the students is in moderation, while Pinterest, LinkedIn, Reddit, and Quora with a mean rating of 1.56, 1.81, 1.52, 1.90 respectively are in a low or rarely used by the students, which can be supported by percentage summary; 56.3% never use Pinterest, 40.9% never use LinkedIn, 53.8% use Reddit and 41.6% never use Quora.

Discussion of Finding

The result from research question one revealed that about (70.7%) consenting that social media influences the academic performance of secondary school students. This was shown in the result that the majority agreed that social media influences the academic performance of secondary school students tremendously in distracting them from studies, spending too much time online, presenting their pictures and personal information on social media, sexual pervasion, cyberbullying, and others. This implies that students are making use of social media in a way that affects their education negatively at the expense of benefits that could be derived from its usage. The result agreed with the findings of Otaru & Nwankwo (2021), highlighting changing behaviours of students and negative perspectives of social media. The result agreed with the findings of Rouis, Limayem, & Salehi-Sangari (2021) conducted a study examining the influence of Facebook usage on the academic performance of undergraduate students at Lulea University of Technology in Sweden, focusing on their personality traits. It also agrees with the Social Cognitive Theory as outlined by Fahim and Mehrgan (2022), which delves into how individuals' thoughts influence their behavior and performance within their social milieu.

The results from research question two agreed that 57.7% frequently use Facebook, 40.5% frequently use TikTok and 50.4% frequently use WhatsApp. This implies that the majority supported those social media platforms commonly utilized by secondary school students are Facebook, WhatsApp, and TikTok. The result agreed with the finding of Shambare et al. (2017), that social media commonly used (Facebook, WhatsApp, and tik-top) by young students have multiple effects on their lives. Conversely, Ahmad (2021) highlighted the numerous advantages of social networking sites for users, emphasizing their role in facilitating communication within communities, enabling individuals to stay connected with peers, and old friends and make connections of shared interest groups from around the world. This results in the formation of large networks as individuals link with each other.

Conclusion

The findings of the study highlighted the pervasive influence of social media on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Akoko North East Local Government Area of Ondo

State, Nigeria. Most respondents acknowledged the high utilization of social media among secondary school students, with platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp being frequently used. Furthermore, a significant number of respondents recognized a substantial relationship between social media usage and academic performance. Statistical analysis affirmed a noteworthy influence of social media on students' academic performance and emphasized that these platforms are used for collaborative learning, their usage takes a lot of time which causes distractions and creates violent behaviour and cyberbullying.

Recommendations

1. Implementation of educational awareness programmes to educate students about the pervasive influence of excessive social media usage on their academic responsibilities.
2. Collaboration between schools and parents is essential to strike a balance between social media engagement and academic responsibilities.
3. Students should be advised to explore the positive aspects of social media by integrating it into the educational system. Teachers can leverage these platforms for educational purposes, turning them into tools for learning rather than distractions.

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