

Use of Social Media Sites and their Effects on Secondary School Students in Akure South Local Government, Ondo State

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Abstract

A social media site is an internet platform that facilitates 24-hour communication/interaction around the globe. This media usage cuts across all ages including the older generation but it is predominately used by the youth. This study was conducted to inquire about the use of social media sites and their effects on selected secondary school students in Akure South Local Government Area, Ondo State. A descriptive survey was adopted for this study and a questionnaire was the instrument used in gathering the data. A total of four hundred and eighty (480) questionnaires were distributed and four hundred and seventy-four were retrieved and analyzed using frequency and percentage in presenting the results. The study revealed that Facebook, WhatsApp, and 2go were the most commonly used social media sites by the secondary school students under study, 231(48.7%) of the students visit these social media sites daily, 155(32.7%) agreed to the fact that they find it difficult to concentrate on their studies due to the use of social media. The study concluded that the negative sides of social media on secondary school students are of a greater proportion compared to its positive sides. The study recommends that there should be regular Orientation for students in secondary schools on the effective use of social media for academic purposes. School counselors need to step up their games in guiding the students on the use of social media among the youths.

Keywords: *Social media; social media sites; use of social media sites; secondary schools; students*

Introduction

Social media/websites came to light in the 21st century and it has gained its place as a forum for social interaction. Social media is a web-based platform that allows everyone and anyone to communicate through the internet. Baruah (2012) defines Social Networking as web-based application platforms for building social networks or social relationships between individuals who share interests or activities to interact through the internet or email and now even with the use of mobile phones. This shows the importance of social networks which are the medium for unlimited interaction all over the world. The social media site is one of the most important online tools for communication that connects people all over the world (Boyd, 2006; Akoh, 2017). Akoh (2017) is of the view that social network operates on the internet, it has brought a popular change to the communication sector, such people regardless of age and size have access to information and communication needed for business transactions, government services, educational institutions, family life, social organizations and society in general. Easily, people can access any kind of information and track friends and relatives accurately on social media.

A social media site is not restricted to who can access its content and who is eligible for its uses. Access can be granted through computer systems or mobile phones. It allows individuals to find and accept friendships from others on the Internet (Ibrahim, 2012). The main idea behind the creation of social networking sites is to increase interaction and information sharing/networking. The most commonly visited social media sites in Nigeria are; WhatsApp, Myspace, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, 2go, Friendster, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), Instagram, Youtube, Eskimi, and Snapchat (Embi, 2012).

Social interaction is good for pupils in secondary schools as it helps them develop themselves outside the four walls of the formal school system. This is in line with the view of Bolaji, Longe, and Odefunso (2016) who said that today's communication is instant and this has affected every aspect of our lives, particularly students, therefore it has been a traditional way to develop education, it has also led to reason that understanding can only be gained within school walls, modern technology has broken this idea and has presented us with a different model: that information is everywhere, online social networks provide teachers and students with a base in which they can interact beyond the confines of the school walls and with which teachers can provide personal feedback and support. This means that learning takes place online through the help of social networking sites such as Facebook, Yahoo Messenger, WhatsApp, and others. Brdolf (2007) states that students who may be reluctant to speak in class find blogs and other interactive internet tools beneficial.

On the other hand, social networking sites equally give students a negative impact on their behavior towards the world. Research shows that social networking sites influence secondary school students in their universities and also modify their behavior negatively as they spend hours surfing the internet chatting, sending pictures/videos, reading comments and posting comments on Facebook, and following actors and actresses (Gbadamosi, 2007; Love & Ochoa, 2010; Wang, Chen & Liang, 2011; Asemah, Okpanachi & Edegoh, 2013) Growing concerns in Nigeria appeared on the possible impact of the time of day and sometimes all night wandering on the student's reading time, many parents are worried. on the behavior of their children towards using Facebook and other social networking sites as it affects their reading

habits (Shehu & Shehu, 2014). 55% of online youth aged 12-17 have created a profile on a networking site such as Facebook or Myspace (Lenhart et al, 2007). Records available in September 2016, more than 1.79 billion monthly active facebook users, WhatsApp 500 million, Twitter 284 million, and Instagram 200 million active users worldwide. (SBT, 2016). Over 1.1 billion people access Facebook through their mobile devices/smartphones monthly (CNBC, 2017). All the above calls for a comprehensive study on research on the use of social media and its effects on selected secondary school students in Akure South Local Government Area of Ondo State.

Statement of the Problem

The rate at which students especially secondary school students use cell phones/mobile phones is quite surprising. The deterioration in the education system is due to the student's unwillingness to read and this is reflected in their academic performance. The poor performance of pupils in school, examinations and the general low reading culture of students could be perhaps a result of the advent of social media network sites because many believe that concentration of students in using social media for a variety of tasks could take away precious time students are supposed to spend on fruitful academic activities. Arising from the foregoing, this study aims to investigate the use of social media and its impact on selected secondary school students in Akure South Local Government in Ondo State.

Objectives of the study

Specific objectives are to:

1. determine the effects of social media on students of secondary schools
2. identify the kinds of social networking sites students use
3. ascertain the frequency of students' use of social networking sites
4. determine the reasons for using social media

Literature Review

Social communication is virtual communication between individuals through the help of the Internet. This interaction can be through text messages, voice calls, and video calls. Shrestha et al. (2013), refer to social networks as a form of connection between people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual and network environments. Asia (2010) also described social media as a virtual space where people find each other and share important information. The social learning theoretical framework is also based on constructivism among all participants over a social system or social network. The overall development moves towards the active learning and social application of the acquired knowledge for better social wellbeing (Almogren & Aljammaz, 2022). Karakoyun and Lindberg (2021) found that pre-service teachers perceived social media mostly as a tool for communication and access to information.

Marchant and Hawton et al. (2021) conducted a meta-analysis exploring that viewing images as an alternative to self-harm and pictorial pictures-based posts boost self-harm among young social media users. Self-harm and suicide are correlated with disorders of the self and reestablish the borderline between mind and body, and communicate and tenacity childhood

trauma (Yakeley & Burbridge-James, 2018). Past studies proved that the Internet and social media can stimulate suicide-related behavior in vulnerable groups belonging to virtual communities.

Obscene images or clips are associated with vanity, bent of self-harm, and getting the attention of others. Moreover, fierce images are mostly posted because of vengeance, low moral values, and the outcome of pleasure in mocking or defaming another person in Pakistan (Butt, 2020). Baruah (2012) defines Social Networking as web-based application platforms for building social networks or social relationships between individuals who share interests or activities to interact through the internet or email and now even with the use of mobile phones. This shows the importance of social networks which are the medium for unlimited interaction all over the world. The social media site is one of the most important online tools for communication that connects people all over the world (Boyd, 2006; Akoh, 2017). Murthy (2013) concluded that social media is inexpensive and widely accessible through electronic tools that enable anyone to publish and access information, collaborate on a common cause, or build relationships social media use has become especially prevalent among college students. According to a Pew Research Center survey, the highest percentage of adults reporting they ever use social media (84%) are aged 18 to 29. This percentage is followed by adults aged 30 to 49 (81%), aged 50 to 64 (73%), and 65 and older (45%) (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). Awake (2012) also concluded that social media as a new communication technology is used to disseminate information to various audiences without time constraints.

A study by Romero et al. (2020) investigated levels of active participation in participants' preferred social media sites or applications. Active participation was defined as the self-reported frequency of sharing views or opinions, requesting information or social engagement, or interacting with others via social media. Statistically significant differences were found between freshmen and sophomores in this study in that sophomores reported greater levels of active participation with their most used social media site or application.

Thomas et al (2016) in a related development opined that some social media websites used by secondary school students mostly use Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Adomi & Ejirefe (2012) said in their research that many students use Facebook. A study conducted by Shehu & Shehu (2014) showed that most of the respondents prefer Facebook with 47% responses followed by YouTube and Twitter with 20% & 30% respectively. Facebook has over 500 million members and still counting. Roughly 85% of elementary school students are Facebook users (Schneider, 2009). These numbers are expected to grow because Facebook users will continue to grow. And this is not only true for Facebook; numbers for YouTube users also follow closely (University of New Hampshire, 2009; Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2015). Igwela and Nsirim (2018) confirmed Facebook as the most used social media site. Similarly, a survey of 3000 secondary school students found that 90% used Facebook (Dahlstrom, Grunwald, de Boor, & Vockley, 2011).

Mohammed & Suleiaman's (2013) research shows that the majority (39.91%) use social media for academic, socialization (19.89%), networking, and friendship purposes (2.13%). Studies have shown that the popularity of blogs among teenagers and young adults has dropped, but usage among older adults shows an increasing trend. However, the use of social networking

sites among young and old has increased, and Facebook has been reported as the most commonly used online social network compared to other social media sites such as MySpace and LinkedIn, Twitter has the other side is less used. A study conducted on the adoption of social networking sites in Pakistan revealed an increasing reliance on media among secondary school students (Shaheen, 2008). Of the 295 respondents, 71% access the sites daily, and 85% trust the information posted on their preferred websites. Akakandelwa and Walubita (2017) stated that worldwide, digital consumers spend an average of 1 hour and 58 minutes per day on social networks and messaging. This number has increased by over 20% since 2012 (Chaffey, 2016). However, the use of social media is not always without its drawbacks. Özsat et al. (2022) found that university students who used social media for a long time had higher levels of social media addiction than other participants. Another research has found that daily adolescent use of social media for greater than 3 hours is, when compared to no use, significantly associated with internalizing problems and comorbid internalizing and externalizing problems (Riehm et al., 2019). Social media use has more specifically been associated with depression, even when accounting for environmental and personal factors that might indirectly influence the onset of depressive symptoms (Lin et al., 2016). Research by Coyne et al. (2020) set out to examine if time spent on social media might cause mental health concerns and found no causal relationships. Perhaps no direct relationship was found in this research, but some studies have pointed to a relationship between decreased life satisfaction and social media use. In another study, seniors reported significantly more positive views of social media compared with sophomores (Lewis & Nichols, 2016).

Social media addiction has been gaining increasing attention in the literature. Previous studies indicated that social media addiction was negatively associated with college students' mental health and academic performance (Hou et al., 2019; Yilmazsoy et al., 2020). In another study, Błachnio et al. (2016) found that social media addiction was positively related to lower self-esteem. Although not explicitly focused on social media addiction, another study found a strong correlation between internet addiction and academic procrastination (Aznar-Díaz et al., 2020). Other studies found that social media addiction was positively associated with social interaction, social recognition, and social connectedness (Andreassen et al., 2016; Karayigit et al., 2021). These studies also found that females were more likely to experience social media addiction than males. The study of Shehu & Shehu (2014) shows that students use social networks for different purposes which shows that it is not important for academic purposes. The findings of the study are as follows; 60 (30%) respondents indicated that they use social media sites to chat with friends, 30 (15%) use it to share photos and create similar groups and 30 (15%) use it for educational purposes. Students often use social media for social interactions with friends and loved ones (Anyanwu, Ossai-Onah & Iroeze, 2013; Adomi & Ejirefe, 2012; Abdulkadir & Alex, 2016)

Wang, Chen & Liang (2011) in their study showed the effect of social media on college students, it revealed that the use of social media is negatively associated with academic performance; they report that about two-thirds of students are seen using social media while studying or doing homework. Schill (2011) said that social networking sites encourage bad behavior among students such as drinking with unknown friends and any other. In a study

conducted by Abdukadri & Alex (2016) revealed that both teachers and students agree 100% that social media has a positive impact on their educational outcomes.

Methodology

The design adopted for this study is descriptive research. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The data generated from this study were analyzed using frequency tables and percentages. The population of the study consists of S.S 1- S.S 3 in three (3) secondary schools in Akure viz: Fiwasaye Girls' Grammar School, St. Thomas Aquinas College Akure (boys only) and Omolorogbo Grammar School Akure, of which 160 respondents were selected from each school and a total 480 respondents were selected across the three schools. The selected schools are among the most popular in Akure South. A sample is the segment of the population selected for investigation. Sampling is the process of selecting units, subsets, or parts (e.g. people, organization) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample, we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen. The sample was selected using a simple random sampling technique. The appropriate instrument adopted for this study was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was deemed appropriate because it helped the researcher to reach out to a large sample within a short time and quicker to administer and was convenient for respondents. The questionnaires were distributed from class to class in the three schools under study during their break period and it took three days for the data collection.

Findings

Table 1: Distribution of the questionnaires

SCHOOL		Number of questionnaires distributed	Response Rate	Percentage %
Fiwasaye	Girls	160	160	33.75
Grammar School				
St. Thomas	Aquinas	160	160	33.75
College Akure				
Omoluorogbo	Grammar	160	154	32.48
School Akure				
TOTAL		480	474	99.98

Table 1 shows the response rate of the students according to the schools under study. It revealed that the response rate is high 99.98%.

Table 2: Gender distribution of respondents

GENDER	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	237	50
Female	237	50
Total	474	100

Table 2 shows the gender distribution of respondents. The total number of respondents involved is 474, in which 237(50%) were male and 237(50%) were female students.

Table 3: Age distribution of respondents

AGE	Frequency	Percentage %
13-15	71	15
16-18	238	50
19-23	165	35
Total	474	100

Table 3 shows the age distribution of the respondents, of which the pupils between the ages 13-15 have the lowest frequency with 71 which represents 15% followed by the pupils between the ages 19-23 which is 165 represents 35% of the total population while the pupils between the ages 16-18 has the highest population with 238 which represent 50% of the total population.

Table 4: Class distribution of respondents

class	Frequency	Percentage %
SS1	140	29
SS2	166	35
SS3	168	36
Total	474	100

Table 4 shows the class distribution of the respondents where the SS1 students have the lowest number with 140 students which represents 29% of the population while SS2 and SS3 are 166 and 168 respondents respectively.

Research question 1. What are the effects of social media sites on students?

Table 5 effects of social media use on the students.

EFFECT	S.A	A	S.D	D
Finding it hard to concentrate on my studies	155 (32.7%)	119 (25.1%)	113 (23.8%)	87 (18.4%)
These social media sites influence my academic performance negatively because they distract me from my studies	117 (24.7%)	158 (33.3%)	113 (23.8%)	86 (18.2%)
Social media use has affected my spelling and usage of words	126 (26.6%)	114 (24.1%)	130 (27.4%)	104 (21.9%)
Reduce the time spent in physical interaction with a friend	126 (26.6%)	149 (31.2%)	99 (20.7%)	100 (20.5%)

Table 5 shows the effects of social media sites on the students. 155(32.7%) and 119(25%) respondents agreed to the fact that social media makes it hard for them to concentrate on their studies, also 117(24.7%) and 158(33.3%) said it has negative effects on them academically while 113(23.8%) disagreed that social media sites make them to concentrate on their studies. 130(27.4%) respondents strongly disagreed that social media use has affected their spelling and usage of words while 126(26.6%) respondents strongly agreed that social media use has affected their spelling and usage of words. 148(31.2%) agreed that social media sites reduce the time spent in physical interaction with friends while 98(20.7%) strongly disagreed that social media site reduce the time spent in physical interaction with friend.

Research question 2: What are the kinds of social networking sites do students use?

Table 6 Types of Social Media site use by Students

Social Media	Frequency	Percentage %
Facebook	413	87.1
Instagram	73	15.4
Twitter	37	7.8
YouTube	52	11.0
WhatsApp	260	54.9
2go	260	54.9
Google+	85	18
Snapchat	17	3.6
Myspace	5	1.1
Eskimi	26	5.5

Table 6 shows the types of social media sites used by the respondents. The majority of the respondents make use of Facebook with 413(87.1%) followed by WhatsApp and 2go with 260(54.9%) each respectively. Snapchat is lowly used with 17(3.6%) respondents while

Myspace is the least used social media site by the secondary school students under study with 5(1.1%)

Research question 3: How often do respondents use social media?

Table 7: How often respondents use social media

Frequency of use	No. of Students	Percentage %
Daily	231	48.7
Twice a week	78	16.5
Weekly	33	7
Twice a month	36	7.6
Monthly	37	7.8
Occasionally	59	12.4
Total	474	100

The table revealed that the use of social media daily recorded the highest with 231 students, representing 48.7%. Followed by twice a week with 78, which represents 16.5% of the total population, while weekly recorded the lowest among all the respondents with 33, which represents 7% of the total population.

Research Question 4: What are the reasons for using the social media site?

Table 8: Reasons for using social media

Purpose	Agree	Disagree
To share photos and videos with others	435 (91.8%)	39(8.2%)
To get news updates on national and global issues	318 (67.1%)	156(32.9%)
For academic work	227 (47.9%)	209(44.1%)
For entertainment/leisure	411 (86.7%)	63(13.3%)
To follow fashion trends and celebrities	328(69.2%)	146(30.8%)
For communication with family and friends	431(91%)	43(9%)
To make new friends	410(86.5%)	64(13.5%)

Table 8 shows the purposes while the respondents make use of social media sites. 435(91.8%) respondents agreed to use social media sites to share and upload photos and videos with others, 431(91%) use it for communication with families and friends, 411(86.7%) use it for entertainment/leisure purposes, while 227(47.9%) uses it for academic work while on the other hand, 328 which represent 69.2% use it to follow fashion trends and celebrities and 410 which represent 86.5% of the total population uses it to make new friends.

Discussion of the Findings

The study found that Facebook is mostly used by secondary school students with 413 respondents (87.1%) followed by WhatsApp 260 (54.9%) and 2go 260 (54.9%). This is consistent with the findings of Yoon (2000) who stated that the types of social media/networks that mostly engage the youth are Facebook, WhatsApp, 2go, and Myspace. Similarly, Thomas et al (2016) support this by saying that Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter are the websites visited by secondary school students. Shehu and Shehu's (2014) study is in line with these findings which found that students preferred Facebook with 47% among the social media networks. The study revealed that the majority of secondary school students visit SMS daily. This is consistent with the findings of Shaheen (2008) and Akankadelwa and Walubia (2017) who observed that secondary school students visit social media daily and that an average student spends 2 hours on social media daily.

The study discovered that the main reason for using social media sites among secondary school students is to share photos and videos for communication and entertainment/ leisure with others with 435 responses (91.8%) followed by 431 (91%) who use it. for communication with family and friends, 411 (86.7%) use it for entertainment/leisure, while 410 (86.5%) use it to make new friends. This contradicts the research conducted by Mohammed and Suleiman (2013) which showed that the majority (39.91%) use social media for education, followed by (19.89%) for socializing and (2.13%) for networking and friendship purposes which is in line with the study of Shehu & Shehu (2014) which shows that students use social network for different purposes which shows that it is not important for academic purposes. The findings of the study are as follows; 60 (30%) respondents indicated that they use social media sites to chat with friends, 30 (15%) use it to share photos and create similar groups while 30 (15%) use it for educational purposes, which is in line with the study of Romero et al. (2020) which investigated levels of active participation in participants' preferred social media sites or applications. Active participation was defined as the self-reported frequency of sharing views or opinions, requesting information or social engagement, or interacting with others via social media.

It was also discovered during the study that the effects of social networking sites used on secondary school students under study showed that students find it difficult to concentrate on their studies 155 (32.7%), 158 (33.3 %) agree that the site's social media affects their academic performance negatively because of its disruption to studies. Wang, Chen, and Liang (2011) support this view by stating that the effect of social media on college students shows that the use of social media is negatively associated with academic performance; they report that about two-thirds of students are seen using social media while studying or doing homework. Schill (2011) said that social networking sites encourage bad behavior among students such as drinking with unknown friends and any other Abdukadri and Alex (2016) are of the opposite view, they noted that both teachers and students agreed that social media affects their educational productivity positively.

Conclusion

The world is now a global village where individuals interact through various means which includes social media networks. The advantages of social media are numerous, too many to mention, students of all categories including, secondary school pupils use social media sites to

perform numerous tasks which have assisted them in diverse ways, especially for educational purposes. Nevertheless, if left uncontrolled in the hands of young students in secondary schools could adversely impact their academic performances. In light of this, orientation should be organized periodically in secondary schools for students on the effects of social media use. Also, guardians and counselors should be encouraged to perform their tasks to this effect, especially on how students should use social media sites for educational purposes. Despite the luxury of opportunities offered by social media for the improvement of academic activities, it could also serve as a detractor, which could amount to mismanagement of time, divert students' attention from reading, source of distraction, constitute a stressor, divert concentration, dissuade students from reading, it provides an avenue for watching movies and thereby creating unnecessary entertainment opportunities which are inimical to the overall performance and hinders concentration of students in school academic activities.

Recommendations

Given the findings, this study presents the following recommendations that could help in mitigating the influence of electronic media on students' reading culture;

1. There should be controlled access to social media, especially those that constitute a source of distraction to students.
2. There should be regular user education and sensitization programmes emphasizing the negative influences of social media use.
3. Based on the fact that as a student knowledge can only be obtained through reading. Students should imbibe good time management.
4. It is the view of this study that reading should be integrated into the school curriculum to familiarize students with the significance of reading.
5. The school authority should encourage the formation of reading clubs and occasional organization of reading competitions.
6. The study recommends the engagement of students' leisure time with assignments to forestall using free time for fruitless electronic activities.
7. To complement the forgoing, the school timetable should be tightly knit with academic activities; this will reduce the time students have to embark on non-academic electronic media activities.

Limitations of the study

The study was undertaken at Akure South Local Government, the students were always engaged in one activity or the other which made it very difficult to have free access to them on time coupled with the rules and regulations that did not allow the students to interact with strangers until a teacher voluntarily helped in the distribution. However, to achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher had to visit the school severally which is a bit far from my place of residence.

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