

## Social Media as a form of Digital Tool(s) and Academic Performance of University Students in Nigeria

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### Abstract

*The purpose of this article is to access the use of social media as a form of digital tools on the academic performance of undergraduate students of the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The paper reviews the actual impact of the use of social media with student's classroom learning. The descriptive research design was utilized. Two hundred (200) undergraduate students purposively selected from eight faculties. The paper reveals that a great number of students are addicted to the use of social media and frequency use of social networks in digitalization tool becomes an integral part of the students' development which has resulted in improving students' academic performance. In conclusion, the paper reveals that the use of social media is part of digital tools that shaping and influencing how students lean and interact with their studies and also, with e-communication with peers this help a student to collaborate and discuss issues related to their academic studies. Social media have a dual impact on student achievement, and it is necessary to approach adolescents' use of social networks with ultimate positive responsibility. With the outcome of the findings, this paper recommends that the government and educational planners should improve the leisure, information exchange among learners, therefore, academic performance can be maintained. The researcher recommends that social media should be used for educational purposes as well, Social Networking Sites should be expanded and new pages should be created to enhance academic activities and avoid setbacks in the students' academic performance.*

**Keywords:** Social media, Academic performance, Digital tools, University students.

### Introduction

Advancement in Digitalization Technological tools has made education more flexible and changes to the ways and of teaching and learning in traditional classroom worldwide. Social Media platforms innovation has continued to remove communication difficulties and replace new digital tools in a way of connecting globally (Alonge, 2017).

The researchers, Govender and Kayode (2020) stressed out that the improvements in communication technology which has develop the scope of communication through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) which has turned the entire world into a global village. In particular, the internet has created a platform for millions of computers users who visited, on a daily basis, numerous

sites in various countries, belonging to thousands of businesses, governments, research institutions, educational institutions and other organizations. For instance, face-to-face communication is being reduced through the daily advancement of technology, innovative development of new technological devices and new mediums are being introduced to connect global audiences. In other words, social media serves as an effective medium of dissemination of information through its social networking sites – Twitter, Yahoo messenger, Facebook messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), WhatsApp messenger, 2go messenger, Skype, Google messenger, Instagram, iPhone and Androids. Asemah and Edegoh (2012) said that these networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet colleagues. It closes the gap of distance

and eliminates geographical limitation of space among individuals.

This technological advancement continues to break communication barriers and replacing them with new methods of connecting global audience. With the enablement of technology, anyone who has access to the Internet can be connected through numerous accessible social media platforms, and mobile telephony and be able to communicate video calls and electronic conferencing with peers regardless of distance.

Social media has, thus, become an international trend and has spread its influence to almost every part of the world. Studies indicated that social media networks usually displaying strong user engagement and making it possible for users to connect with people across geographical, economic or political span (Alonge, 2017; Ratzan, 2014). With these advancements in the global usage of Information Technology Communication, and through the huge technological development, social networking sites are becoming more and more popular among students especially in developing countries such as Nigeria (Adaja and Ayodele 2013; Kayode, 2020). The use of social media sites has exploded and evolved into an online platform where people create content, share it, bookmark it and network at a prodigious rate. Because of its ease of use, speed and reach, social media is fast changing the public discourse in society and setting trends and agenda in topics that range from the environment and politics to technology and the entertainment industry (Asur and Huberman, 2010; Kauser and Awan 2019; Aba and Makinde, 2020).

Academic performance of students is one of the vital factors for evaluating educational quality among undergraduate in Nigeria Universities. This is as outcome of the knowledge and skills developed by students in their different course of learning. Previous literature revealed that academic performance is calculated using assignments, tests, attendance and final examination results with the standards of various universities and present modern society expect every student to be a higher accomplishment in their performances (Pitan, 2015; Garner-O'Neale and Harrison, 2013). Moreover, student performance dealings the aspect of behavior that can be observed at a precise stage to establish performance in which a

performance test is conducted. The performance test will throw light on the capacity to deal with things rather than symbol.

According to Tess (2013), the researcher, supported that a direct relationship exists between social media and the academic performance of students in the Universities. On the other hand, technological evolution has resulted in dilemma has hindered of real values of life especially among students who form the majority of users interacting through the use of social networking sites. With so many social networking sites displayed on the internet, students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends. Previous studies report that many students are now addicted to the online rave of the moment, with facebook, twitter, whatsapp etc. and students are so engrossed in the social media that they are almost 24 hours online (Naveen and Nagesh, 2017; Camilia, Ibrahim, Dalhatu, 2013; Olubiyi, 2012).

Globally, the use of internet is the most important source of information. Since social media sites has been embraced in the 1990s, it seems that the academic performance of students is facing a lot of neglect and challenges in this digital age. The educational system is faced with so many challenges which have certainly brought about a rapidly decline in the quality of education in Nigeria, this has become source of be concerned to scholars, especially in the academic performance of students in the universities (Ebenywa-Okoh, 2010).

The use of the social media among the youths of today is growing exponentially and gaining great popularity among students. Many students get addicted to the use of social media site as they continue to engage in one activity or another on the social media sites very often. Due to this increased popularity, there are growing concerns over the possible influences the use of social media could have on students' academic performances, and to explore some of the trending issues facing student's academic performance as a result of social media. As several studies demonstrate, the use of social media could affect academic performance of students negatively (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2015) or could positively impact academic performance (Buhari & Ashara, 2014; Haseena & Rasith, 2016). In the light of the above, this study intends to investigate the impact of social

media networks on the academic performance of undergraduate students in faculties in the University of Ibadan.

The purpose of this study is to aims to question whether social media has any impact on student's academic performance.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for this work.

1. What are the available of social media platforms that students make use of?
2. What are the frequently used social media platforms among students?
3. What are the students' class activities on social media platforms?
4. What is the influence of social media platforms on student's academic performance.

### Methods

The research design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey. The respondents of the study were the students from the University of Ibadan who were taken from different faculties and departments across the University as samples from the thousands of students who were officially enrolled in the session of the school year 2018 – 2019 and with split over that will graduate in 2020. The faculties involved in gathering these respondents include; faculty of Education, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Public Health, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Agricultures.

A total of 200 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to elicit responses from the students and retrieved on the spot by the researcher. After the collection, the researcher retrieved a total of 200 valid questionnaires.

### Results

**Table 1.** Respondents' perception on availability of the Social Media Platforms for use in their Faculty

S/n	Items	Not Available	Fairly Available	Available
1	WhatsApp	2(1.0%)	14(7.0%)	184(92.0%)
2	Instagram	4(2.0%)	19(9.5%)	177(88.5%)
3	Google	6(3.0%)	24 (12.0%)	170(85.0%)
4	MySpace	155(77.5%)	29(14.5%)	16(8.0%)
5	Twitter	14(7.0%)	88(44.0%)	98(49.0%)
6	YouTube	15(7.5%)	57(28.5%)	128(64.0%)
7	Blogs	27(13.5%)	65(32.5%)	108(54.0%)
8	Forum group	34(17.0%)	63(31.5%)	103(51.5%)
9	Networking sites	43(21.5%)	46(23.0%)	111(55.5%)
10	Skype	54(27.0%)	52(26.0%)	94(47.0%)
11	Facebook	22(11.0%)	31(16.0%)	147(73.5%)

Source: fieldwork, 2019

The table above showed the level of respondents' perception on the availability of social media platforms for use in their respective faculties; 2(1.0%) of the respondents said WhatsApp is not available in their faculties, 14(7.0%) reported it to be fairly available and larger parts of them 184(92.0%) declared it available. Also, respondents proclaimed the availability of Instagram as follow: 4(2.0%) not available, 19(9.5%) fairly available and 177(88.5%) said it is available. Again, the majority 170(85.0%) declared that Google was available in their faculties, whereas just 24

(12.0%) reported it to be fairly available while 6(3.0%) said they don't have it. Research also confirmed that the larger proportion 155(77.5%) of the respondents asserted that MySpace was not available in their faculties while 29(14.5%) and 16(8.0%) of them alleged its availability in the faculties of their studies. From respondents' point of view, 98(49.0%) agreed that Twitter as social media devices was available in their faculties, 88(44.0%) of them also said its availability was fair on the other hand, 14(7.0%) affirmed its unavailability. Results further revealed that 128(64.0%) of the respondents

approved the availability of YouTube in their faculties while 15(7.5%) said they did not have this social media device in their faculties. Still, information gathered show that 108(54.0%) of the respondents established Blogs device present in their faculties but 27(13.5%) denied its presence in faculties. More so, appreciable number 103(51.5%) of the respondents affirmed the existence of forum group in their faculties in contrast, 34(17.0%) of them declared it not available. Moreover, results show that 111(55.5%) of the respondents ascertained the

existence of networking sites in their faculties, whereas 43(21.5%) of them disapproved this claim.

In addition, 94(47.0%) of the respondents claimed that they have Skype in their faculties to work with, while 54(27.0%) of them maintained that such social media device did not available for them. In conclusion,147(73.5%) of respondents asserted that Facebook was available for them in their various faculties while 22(11.0%) of them denied the claim.

**Table 2.** Frequently used of social media platform by respondents

S/n.	Items	Frequently	Percentage (%)
1	WhatsApp	126	63.0
2	Face book	17	8.5
3	Instagram	32	16.0
4	Twitter	14	7.0
5	E-mail	1	.5
6	You Tube	10	5.0

**Source:** Fieldwork, 2019.

From the table above respondents indicated social media platforms which is 126(63.0%) of the respondents that used WhatsApp, 17(8.5%)

used Face book, 32(16.0%) make use of Instagram, 14(7.0%) used Twitter, 1(.5%) used e-mail and 10(5.0%) used YouTube.

**Table 3.** Students' Class Activities on Social Media Platforms

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I make use of social media platforms to share information with my classmates	66(33.0%)	87(43.5%)	21(10.5%)	21(10.5%)	5(2.5%)
2	I follow latest developments and trends in my course through social media	47(23.5%)	76(38.0%)	42(21.0%)	30(15.0%)	5(2.5%)
3	The usage of social media has helped improve my grades	30(15.0%)	65(32.5%)	63(31.5%)	35(17.5%)	8(4.0%)
4	Social Media has negatively impacted my writing skills	15(7.5%)	45(22.5%)	48(24.0%)	58(29.0%)	34(17.0%)
5	Engaging in academic forums on social media is not smooth for me	22(11.0%)	65(32.5%)	66(33.0%)	31(15.5%)	16(8.0%)
6	I prefer using social media to chat than for academic purposes	19(9.5%)	89(44.5%)	48(24.0%)	30(15.0%)	14(7.0%)
7	We have a social media group for some of my courses	48(24.0%)	109(54.5%)	22(11.0%)	15(7.5%)	6(3.0%)
8	Social media has improved my communication skills	43(21.5%)	66(33.0%)	52(26.0%)	31(15.5%)	8(4.0%)
9	I communicate with my lecturers through social media	45(22.5%)	74(37.0%)	42(21.0%)	24(12.0%)	15(7.5%)

Source: fieldwork, 2019

The Table above, discusses some respondents' activities on Social Media and their academic achievement. It is vividly indicated from the responses of the respondents as follow: 66(33.0%)/87(43.5%) strongly agreed/ agreed that they make use of social media platforms to share information with their classmates, while 21(10.5%)/ 5(2.5%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed over the statement. Once more, 47(23.5%)/ 76(38.0%) strongly agreed/ agreed that they follow latest developments and trends in their course through social media while 30(15.0%)/ 5(2.5%) of them disagreed/ strongly disagreed on the allegation. Moreover 30(15.0%)/ 65(32.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed that the usage of social media has helped improve their grades on the other hand, 35(17.5%)/ 8(4.0%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed over the declaration.

In addition, results show that 15(7.5%)/ 45(22.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed that Social Media has negatively impacted their writing skills but 58(29.0%)/ 34(17.0%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed on the matter. Results further show that

22(11.0%)/65(32.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed that engaging in academic forums on social media is not smooth for them while 31(15.5%)/ 16(8.0%) disagreed/strongly disagreed about the proclamation. The larger proportion 89(44.5%)/ 19(9.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed that they prefer using social media to chat than for academic purposes in contrary,30(15.0%)/ 14(7.0%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed about the issue. From the responses of the respondents, 48(24.0%)/ 109(54.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed that they have a social media group for some of my courses15(7.5%)/ 6(3.0%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed on the topic of their discussion. 43(21.5%)/ 66(33.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed, 31(15.5%)/ 8(4.0%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed that Social media has improved their communication skills. In conclusion, 45(22.5%)/74(37.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed that they communicate with my lecturers through social media whereas 24(12.0%)/ 15(7.5%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed about this issue.

**Table 4.** Social Media Platforms and Students' Academic Performance

S/n	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	The use of Social Media has helped me to increase my CGPA	17(8.5%)	50(25.0%)	95(47.5%)	28(14.0%)	10(5.0%)
2	The use of social media has affected my CGPA negatively	9(4.5%)	36(18.0%)	71(35.5%)	54(27.0%)	30(15.0%)
3	Social Media is encouraged by lecturers as part of class engagements and assignments	22(11.0%)	94(47.0%)	58(29.0%)	17(8.5%)	9(4.5%)
4	I make use of social media to make new friends and for socializing more than I use it for academic purposes	42(21.0%)	86(43.0%)	45(22.5%)	19(9.5%)	8(4.0%)

Source: fieldwork, 2019

Reports from research revealed that 17(8.5%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 50(25.0%) that the use of Social Media has helped them to increase their CGPA, on the hand, 28(14.0%) of them disagreed and 10(5.0%) strongly disagreed to this claim. From the responses of the respondents, 9(4.5%) strongly agreed, 36(18.0%) agreed, 54(27.0%)/30(15.0%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed that the use of social media has affected their CGPA negatively. Information gathered show that

22(11.0%)/ 94(47.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed/ agreed, 17(8.5%)/ 9(4.5%) disagreed/ strongly disagreed that Social Media is encouraged by lecturers as part of class engagements and assignments. Concisely, 42(21.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 86(43.0%) agreed that they make use of social media to make new friends and for socializing more than they use it for academic purposes while 19(9.5%) disagreed, 8(4.0%) strongly disagreed over this prove.

## Conclusion

As the results of finding of this research work, the researchers concluded that Social Media Network tools can enhance and improve the teaching and learning in this digitalization with positive use among students to enhance their class activities and academic performance. This applies to all faculties in the university that have been studied.

## Discussion

The result from the findings of this study showed that, though social media platforms have both and negative and positive effects on students such as lack of privacy, distracting students from their academic work, taking most of their productive time, and such like, they also have benefits and can be used appropriately if well managed. For instance, students can create online communities where they can plan for a project, have group discussions about class materials or assignments, or make use of the Social networking sites (SNS) as a way to keep in contact when a student who has been absent needs to be updated on current academic information. The results of this study suggest that lecturers should come up with a template on how their students can maximize the benefits of social media platform, that faculty management should incorporate rules and regulations on the use of the social media in the lecture rooms and, that the government should put in place adequate operational measures to regulate their use among students. This paper concluded that the use of social media platforms must be guided by the educator to students.

## Conclusion/ Future Steps

Findings and results of this paper, the researcher concluded that use of social media must be guided by the educator to students in order to improve the academic performance of students in teaching and learning in traditional method. The first independent variable influencing the academic performance of students, that is, social media participation was negatively related with students' outcome, while the other independent variables were positively related with students' outcome. The results of this study suggest that lecturers should come up with a template on how their students can maximize the benefits of Social media and also faculty management should incorporate rules

and regulations on the use of the social media in the lecture rooms and, that the government should put in place adequate operational measures to regulate their use among students during class lecture. And this applies to all the faculties in the University of Ibadan that have been researched.

The management of the university should encourage teaching and learning in the area of digitalization tools to influence the use of social media platforms on the students' academic performance especially those in traditional classroom learning.

Also, social media platform devices should serve as blended learning in the teaching and learning in this digital age and new normal.

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