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**Use of Social Media and its Perceived Implications on the Social Life of Students: A Case Study of the Students of Joseph Ayo Babalola University Ikeji – Arakeji, Nigeria**

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**Abstract**

*The uses of social media have developed into a universal and virtually inevitable phenomenon that has transformed the method by which students communicate, interrelate, mingle and socialize, and have become an integral portion of students' social and cultural lifestyle. Subsequently, students use a considerable measure of their time on social media. University students and adolescence are viewed as the prevalent users of this contemporary technology. Notwithstanding the mounting quantity of literature on the uses of social media around the globe, there is a drought of investigation on how the uses of social media affect students' social life. This evocative, investigative study scrutinized the kinds of social media platforms that students generally use, the aggregate time students spend on social media, the reasons why students use the social media and the effects of the use of social media on students' social life. The sample population of the study consisted of students in Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji-Arakeji, Nigeria. A well-structured questionnaire was administered to the students to gather their responses. This was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23. The findings of the study showed that the most frequently used social media platform was WhatsApp. The study also revealed that the majority of the sampled students testified to be actively engaging in the use of social media platforms between thirty minutes to one hour daily. The study additionally found that majority of the students were always excited and wound up saying "only a couple of more minutes" whenever they were using the social media platforms and checked their social media sites to make updates before embarking on any other task daily. The study also identified that the students knew that their academic performance endured on account of their` social media life and also that it stressed them. Despite the students understanding of these facts, the study found that students flunked to reduce the time used on social media. The study also found that 22.4% of the students were dependent on social media and that they used social media more for socialization than for academic purposes. Consequently, fruitful uses of social media for academic purposes were prescribed so as to reduce the adverse effect of the uses of social media.*

**Keywords**

Social media, Social life, Academic performance, University students, Internet use

## **Introduction**

Social media is defined as web-based platforms that permit users to interrelate among each other in several ways by sharing information, thoughts, and knowledge and interests online (Ford & Ravansari, 2017). Social Media is modeling human interactions in various ways. It has been assessed that 94% of adults globally possess a social media site account and have visited or used one in the last month (Chaffey, 2016). About 73% of adolescents use social media (Lenhart et al., 2010). The use of social media by university students in Nigeria is also increasing rapidly. Out of the 98.39 million Nigerian internet users, 54% access the internet on a daily basis while only 12% (24 million) have active social media accounts. The study discovered that 3 hours 17 minutes is the average amount of time Nigerians spend on social media. The period is greater than the global average which is 3 hours 14 minutes. WhatsApp is the most widely and actively used social media platform in the country with 85% of users. The second is Facebook at 78%. Instagram is third at 57%, followed by Facebook Messenger at 54% and YouTube at 53%. The growth of internet use in Nigeria currently estimated at 63% from 13.47% in 2012, quite double the estimate for 2009 has been attributed to widespread use of private mobile devices and adequate internet service provision which has covered most areas of the country.

## **Kinds of Social Media**

As described above social media are websites and applications that allow users to generate and share content and to participate in social networking. Social media open up the possibilities of discovering and learning new information, sharing ideas and interacting with others. There are different kinds of the social media platforms. These include social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google+). Microblogging (Twitter, Tumblr) .Photo sharing (Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest). Video sharing (YouTube, Facebook Live, Periscope, Vimeo). Social media allow users to remain in contact with others. They accelerate communication among students as they can express themselves by posting status updates, links, videos and photos. They also permit users to follow others' online presence by keeping track of regular updates about their family, friends, classmates, and acquaintances (Smock et al., 2011). Studies on the favorite social media platform have made known that WhatsApp remains the most widespread social media platform. Studies have shown that the largest percentage of students use WhatsApp as the most extensively used social media platform followed by Facebook and twitter (Mingle & Adams, 2015).. More than half of the sampled students at the Joseph Ayo Babalola University stated that they would still continue to use WhatsApp even if it was no longer freely available. However, other studies have identified that the use of Facebook is more common among university students (Eke & Odoh, 2014; Lenhart et al., 2010).

## **Frequency of Social Media Use**

Globally, internet users spend an average of 1 hour and 58 minutes per day on social media and messaging. This number has doubled by over 20 minutes since 2012 (Chaffey, 2016). Studies examining use of media among university students suggest that students spend between 30 to 60 minutes on social media (Jacobsen & Forste, 2010; Pempek, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 2009). The assessed everyday average time spent on social media by older adolescents was 28 minutes (Jelenchick, Eickhoff & Moreno, 2013).

### **Why Students Use Social Media**

The ensuing reasons are some of the impetuses for using social media among students. First, students use social media to share information, discussion of study material and connect to sort out homework and term projects. Social media also provides suitable ways of peer-to-peer interchange of knowledge and collaboration (Eid & Al-Jabri, 2016), allows students enthusiastically use social media to foster closeness, intimacy and happiness (Valkenburg, Peter, & Schouten, 2006). Consequently, students with social problems engage in the use of social media to improve their personal social well-being (Ellison et al., 2007). In addition students use social media to keep in contact with old acquaintances and to reinforce ties with colleagues. By using social media, students maintain and improve their social links (Ellison et al., 2007). Lastly, students use social media for erotic exploration purposes. For instance, a study revealed that although students do not search for sexual materials like sex clips and nude pictures from porn sites, they encountered these contents mostly through social media platforms (Adu-Kumi, 2016). Sharma & Shukla (2016) argue that adolescents are strongly involved in the use social media as this dynamic and busy world does not allow people to physically stay in touch. Ajayi (1995) further maintain that, for many people, social media use is a way of dealing with a society where spending time with humans is less valued than time with technology. Others have supported the opinion that for students, campus life can be stressful due to the challenging academic work and examinations. (Tandoc, Ferrucci & Duffy, 2015) thus the use of social media helps to shrink strain. It is anticipated that university students would be substantial social media users as they are far away from their homes and free from parental control (Arnett, 2007). Furthermore, adolescents often use social media because they have reached a stage in life when they spend most of their leisure time alone (Larson, 1990) and they are also at the period in their life when they are trying to develop their identity (Arnett, 2007). All the details reviewed above are consistent with the uses and gratifications paradigm which explains the reasons for people's preference for a specific communication media over the other as proposed by Katz (1959).

### **Effects of Social Media**

Though there have been an increasing number of current literatures that reflected on the use of social media among university students, there is a drought of research on the impact of social media on social consequences among university students. While some studies on social media posited that engagement in the use of social media improves individual social development, other studies have an opposing view to this. Yeboah & Ewur (2014) establish in their study that social media like WhatsApp sidetracked students from doing their homework, dented their language skills like spellings and grammar and upset their concentration while in class. In addition, Sharma & Shukla (2016) also posit that students' academic performance was negatively affected by the use of social media. Some studies that agree with the use of social media indicate that social media boosts effective communication by giving real-time messaging, enablement, sense of belonging and companionship, enjoyment and a cheaper and quick knowledge distribution (Bere, 2012; Plana et al., 2013; Devi & Tevera, 2014; O'Hara et al., 2014).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Subsequent to the initiation of social media sites in the 1990s, there has been a divergence, interruption and alienated attention between social networking activities and undergraduate students academic work. The situation has also altered the social traits and development among them. It is pragmatic that students dedicate a lot of attention to social media than they are doing to their studies. Describing the proportion,

Asemah, Okpanachi and Edegoh, (2013) said ‘it is a common sight to see a youth chatting in sensitive and highly organized places like church, mosque and lecture venues’

### **Objective of Study**

The main objective of the study was to investigate the implication of the use of social media on students’ social life. The specific objectives of the study were:

- ❖ To discover the perceived impact of social media use on students social life
- ❖ To look at the types of social media platforms commonly used by students
- ❖ To find out the measure of time students use on social media
- ❖ To consider the purposes for which students use social media

### **Significance of the Study**

Despite the increased use of social media use among university students in Nigeria, researchers have paid little or no attention to understanding the effect of social media on the students’ social development. Social media use has become a popular and fundamental aspect of the social lives of many Nigerian students today and hence investigation of its outcomes deserves attention. The increase in the use of smartphones in the Nigerian society is expected to correspond to increased use of more affordable and convenient computer-mediated communication (Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2012). Though students are involved in different uses of the internet, the engagement in social media looks to be the most widespread.

### **Methodology**

The survey method was used to solicit data and information from a sample of students studying in Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji – Arakeji, Nigeria. A sample of 480 respondents was randomly selected during lecture sessions in the second semester of 2018/19 academic year. A questionnaire was designed and distributed to the students to gather and collect data. The data obtained was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science, Version 23.

### **Results**

#### **Respondents’ demographic characteristics**

The total number of 480 questionnaires was distributed among students in Joseph Ayo Babalola University Ikeji-Arakeji. A total number of 454 questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 94.6%. Table1 shows that 53.3% of the respondents were females while 46.7% were males. Furthermore, 33.9% were aged between 16-19 years, 59.5% were aged between 20-22 years, and 6.6% were aged between 23-25 years. The composition of respondents with regard to years of study was: 33.5% were first years, 18.9% were second years, 23.3% were third years, and 24.2% were fourth years.

**Table 1: Demographic features of Respondents**

Variable	Values	N = 454	Percent
Gender	Males	212	46.7%
	Females	242	53.3%
Age	16-19	154	33.9%
	20-22	270	59.5%
	23-25	30	6.6%
Year of study	1st year	152	33.5%
	2nd year	86	18.9%
	3rd year	106	23.3%
	4th year	110	24.2%

**Kinds of social media frequently used by students**

The first goal of the study was to investigate the kinds of social media platforms frequently used by students. Table 2 shows that the most prevalent social media platform was WhatsApp (83.3%), followed by Facebook (78.0%), Twitter (12.8%), LinkedIn (7.9%), Instagram (7.5%), Live (2.6%), Snapchat (1.8%), Myspace (1.3%), and Skype (0.9%). Other social media platforms used include Badoo (0.4%), GOAT (0.4%), YouTube (0.4%) and WebChat (0.4%).

**Table 2: Kinds of social media frequently used**

Social media Platform	N = 454	Percent
WhatsApp	378	83.3%
Facebook	354	78.0%
Twitter	58	12.8%
LinkedIn	36	7.9%
Instagram	34	7.5%
Live	12	2.6%
Snapchat	8	1.8%
MySpace	6	1.3%
Skype	4	0.9%
GOAT	2	0.4%
Badoo	2	0.4%
YouTube	2	0.4%
WeChat	2	0.4%
Total	454	100%

**Aggregate time students' use on social media**

The second goal of the study was to investigate the aggregate time students used on social media. Table 3 shows that 22.0% of the respondents used half an hour or less per day on social media; 37.9% of the

respondents stayed between 31-60 minutes per day on social media; 21.1% of the respondents used 61-90 minutes per day on social media; 6.6% used 91-120 minutes per day on social media; and 12.3% stayed more than 120 minutes per day on social media.

Fishers' Exact Test results showed that there was no association between

- a) Sex and time expended on social media platforms ( $\chi^2 = 2.583$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $p = 0.630$ );
- b) Age and time used on social media ( $\chi^2 = 13.795$ ;  $df = 8$ ;  $p = 0.66$ );
- c) Year of study and time used on social media ( $\chi^2 = 19.856$ ;  $df = 12$ ;  $p = 0.070$ ); and
- d) Course of study and time used on social media ( $\chi^2 = 5.975$ ;  $df = 4$ ;  $p = 0.199$ ).

**Table 3: How many minutes per day do you spend on social media?**

	N = 454	Percentage
≤30 min	100	22.0%
31-60 min	172	37.9%
61-90 min	96	21.1%
91-120 min	30	6.6%
>120 min	56	12.3%

Further investigation uncovered that 12.8% of the respondents regularly composed their updates; 19.8% every now and again composed their announcements; 41.9% once in a while composed their updates; and 2.1% never composed their updates; 23.3% of respondents were unbiased on this inquiry.

**Table 4: How often do you write a status update?**

	N = 454	Percentage
very often	58	12.8%
frequently	90	19.8%
neutral	106	23.3%
rarely	190	41.9%
never	10	2.1%
Total	454	100%

**Reasons students used social media**

The third objective of this examination was to discover the reasons why students use social media platforms. Table 5 uncovers that 79.7% of the respondents utilized social media to acquire new knowledge; 74.0% utilized the social media to stay in contact with companions; 55.1% utilized social media to assist them in their school work; 47.1% utilized online networking to stay in contact with their families; 43.6% utilized social media to talk with others; 37.0% utilized social media to share "beneficial things", 15.0% utilized social media to discover new companions; and 10.1% utilized social media to share "awful things"

**Table 5: Reasons for using social media**

Reasons for using social media	N= 454	Percentage
To obtain new information	362	79.7%
To keep in touch with friends	336	74.0%
Facilitating schoolwork	250	55.1%
Keeping in touch with family	214	47.1%
Chatting with others	198	43.6%
To share good news with friends	168	37.0%
To find new friends	68	15.0%
To share bad news with friends	46	10.1%
Total	454	100%

**Perceived implication of social media use on students' social life**

The first goal of this study was to observe the perceived effects of the use of social media on students' social life. Respondents were asked whether they felt dependent to social media. Table 6 below reveals that 4.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that they are dependent to social media; 17.6% agreed that they are dependent to social media; 34.4% were neutral; 29.5% disagreed that they were dependent to social media and 13.7% strongly disagreed.

**Table 6: Do you feel that you are dependent to Social Media?**

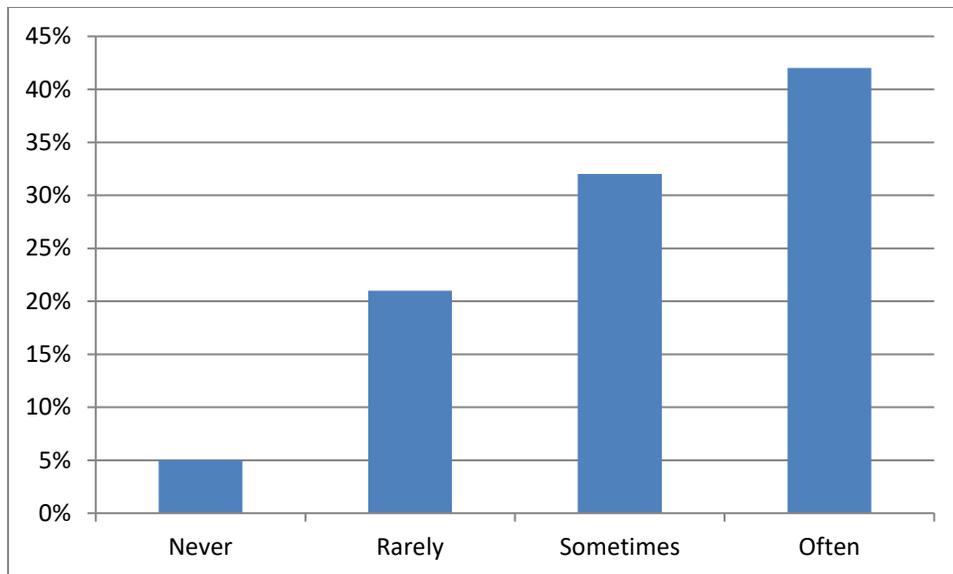
	N= 454	Percentage
Strongly agree	22	4.8%
Agree	80	17.6%
Neutral	156	34.4%
Disagree	134	29.5%
Strongly disagree	62	13.7%
Total	454	100%

Respondents were additionally solicited to rate how the utilization of social media had affected their social lives by reacting to 7 explanations on a four point Likert Scale (0-5 = never; 6-10 = rarely; 11-15 = sometimes; 16-21 = often) as shown on Table 7 beneath. These discoveries show that 70.9% got themselves either often or sometimes investing more time on social media; 75.8% got themselves often or sometimes checking social media before embarking on anything else, 59.3% sometimes or often felt their academics endured as a result of their utilization of social media; 62.3% had at times or regularly attempted to eliminate time spent on social media yet have fizzled; 76.2% had often or sometimes ended up saying "only a couple of more minutes" when using social media ; 60.8% had often or sometimes heard others negative remark on their use of social media ; and 55.9% had often or sometimes felt stressed out due to their use of social media.

**Table 7: Perceived impact of social media on students’ social life**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>Aggregate</b>
I use more time on social media	26.9%	33.2%	37.7%	70.9%
I read through my social media sites before attending to other tasks	22.5%	27.3%	48.5%	75.8%
I have the sensation that my academic performances is affected negatively as a result of social media use	33.2%	31.4%	27.9%	59.3%
I tried to reduce time used on social media but not successful	26.5%	26.5%	35.8%	62.3%
I found myself saying “only a couple of more minutes’ when using social media	17.6%	29.5%	46.7%	76.2%
Adverse comment from people on my social media usage	30.4%	20.3%	40.5%	60.8%
I feel strained out owing to the use of social media	26.9%	27.3%	28.6%	55.9%

Figure 1 below recapitulates the perceived effect of the use of social media on the respondents’ social life. The outcomes show that 42.0% of the respondents assessed themselves depressingly affected most often by the use of social media, 32.0% assessed themselves as sometimes being negatively affected by the use of social media; 21.0% assessed themselves that they were hardly negatively affected by the use of social media; and only 5.0% of the respondents evaluated themselves as never being contrarily influenced by the utilization of social media.



**Figure 1: Perceived effect of social media on students' social life**

### **Discussion**

Social media has altered the method of students' interaction, but hitherto the perceived effect on the social life of students has been left inadequately unattended to among Nigerian University students. This work therefore looked into this concern by investigating the kinds of frequently used social media platforms, the rate of social media use from data gathered from students of the Joseph Ayo Babalola University. The study also considered the reasons why students use social media and the perceived effects of social media use on student's social life.

### **Kinds of social media use**

In agreement with the studies carried out by Mingle & Adams (2015) and also established by Ogaji et al. (2017) and Ahad & Lim (2014), this study identified that the majority of the students utilize WhatsApp as the most favorite and widely used social media platform. This is followed by Facebook and Twitter. In their own submission, Ahad & Lim (2014) gives the stirring factor students use WhatsApp. They identified WhatsApp as an alternative to short messaging service (SMS) and argue that WhatsApp offers instantaneous texting, communication, and sharing of information like contact, media content including, audio, videos and images. Though WhatsApp appears to be prevalent, Young and Rogers (1998) argue that collaborating facilities of the internet like chat rooms are the most addictive.

### **Time use on social media**

In parallel to other studies by (Budden et al., (2007), Jacobsen & Forste (2010) and Pempek, Yermolayeva & Calvert, (2009), this study discovered that the majority of sampled students expended between half an hour to an hour daily on social media. According to O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson (2011), The American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) grouped time used on social media into three categories; high use (more than 2 hours), average use (30 minutes to 2 hours) and low use (less than 30 minutes). Therefore this study posited that the majority of the students were average users of social media. Several factors are accountable for finding students estimated daily average time used on social media to be more than 30 minutes. These students have got to a phase in their lives when they use most of their free time

alone, independent from parental monitoring and individualistically explore the world which allows them to settle on media decisions that are not obliged by others (Larson, 1990).

### **Why students use social media**

This study discovered that the majority of the student respondents engaged in the use of social media for acquiring current information, staying in contact with peers, friends, and colleagues and for their academics. This discovery is unswerving with what Sharma & Shukla (2016) established among Indian College students that social media was used as an inexpensive online avenue for chatting with peers, friends, and staying in contact with family and for sharing pictures, documents and videos. In supporting the current finding, social media also offers suitable ways of peer-to-peer interchange of knowledge and cooperation (Eid& Al-Jabri, 2016). Therefore, students with poor social altitudes of life satisfaction can employ the use of social media to upturn their personal well-being, to stay in contact with old friends and to reinforce ties with colleagues, in order to maintain and increase the level of their social life experiences and connections. (Ellison et al., 2007.)

### **Effect of social media use**

The study discovered that majority of the students are always saying “only a couple of more minutes” whenever they are using social media, checked their social media platforms before attending to other issues, have the sensation that their academic performance suffered as a result of social media use, failed to reduce the time used on social media, get adverse remarks from people on their use of social media and felt strained out as a result of social media use. Though just 22.4% of the sampled students were sensed addicted to social media, these observations among students were reminiscent of internet addiction-related behaviors (Sultan, 2014). Therefore the students in this study were addicted to social media. The outcomes of this study validated the conclusions of Ahad& Lim (2014). Other scholars have established facts indicating that addiction to the use of social media has adverse effects on students (Griffiths,1998; Shotton,1989). Unregulated pathological) Internet usage among students undermined self-regulation (LaRose, Lin & Eastin,2003) and was associated with depression (Young and Rogers,1998;Lee et al.,2009).The uses of different kinds of social media have also been identified to have some positive implications like improved communication, social linking and practical skills. Ito et al., (2009) users of Social media stay online longer at reasonable charges (Sultan, 2014). Subsequently social media users are cognizant of all that is happening in the lives of their friends and members of their family. The students are also capable of making new friends and interchange ideas through social media (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Social media promotes technical skills like the capability to create online groups, exchange videos, documents, images, podcasts and blogs, developing artistic and musical endeavours (O’Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011). Sultan (2014) argues that social media interactions spawn a context that engenders less anxious than face-to-face meetings do and are therefore useful for socially anxious individuals who is inclined to be jittery in face-to-face relationships.

### **Conclusion**

The results of this study have validated that the sampled students of Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji – Arakeji frequently use WhatsApp as their favorite and commonly used social media for getting new information, contacting old friends, family and for strengthening relationship than for academic motives. The majority of the students are involved in the use of social media for more than half an hour daily. The outcomes also revealed that majority of the sampled students are irresistible to the use of social

media to the magnitude that they always checked their social media platforms before attending to other daily activities, have the sensation that their academic performance is negatively affected as a result of social media use, flunked to reduce the time used on social media, got negative and adverse remarks from people on their use of social media and sensed strained out due to social media use. The revelations in this study have social media addiction problems which create damaging implications like low-grade performance among students. Second, appreciating the implications of social media on student's social changes allows the academic staff of (JABU) to design learning content that fit the social and personal requirements of students. This study has proved that students are inclined to use WhatsApp for not less than half an hour daily. Therefore lecturers can utilize social media to distribute course materials to their students. Third, since students use social media for non-academic purposes, lecturers can develop teaching strategies that utilize social media for teaching and learning, which in turn increases lecturer-student interaction for better academic achievement. Lastly, by studying the adverse implications of social media like depression and addiction, students are invigorated to control their heavy use of social media.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the outcomes of this study, it is hereby recommended that the University management should advance policies that will boost groundbreaking uses of social media for academic activities like group discussions and group research projects. This will reduce the negative implications of the use of social media on the students.

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