



Social Media Usage and English Language Performance of Secondary Students in Ilorin, Kwara State

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Abstract

The pervasive use of social media among students, facilitated by easy access to various devices connected to the internet, has led to concerns about its potential negative impact on the mental health of students and its implications on their academic performance. This study investigated the relationship between social media usage and academic performance among secondary school students in the English language, with implications for counselling among students in Ilorin, Kwara State. This study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the effect of social media usage on the academic performance of secondary school students in the English language. The study population included four hundred and twelve (412) private Senior Secondary School 2 students in Asa Local Government Area, Ilorin. A purposive, simple random and convenience sampling technique was utilized to select 210 samples from six (6) private schools in Asa Local Government Area in Ilorin. Two (2) research hypotheses were tested. The research instrument consists of a questionnaire adapted from the Social Media Usage and its effect on Youth Questionnaire developed by Bashir (2021). Analysis was done using multiple regression and two-way ANOVA at a 0.05 level of significance. The instrument went through a reliability test using Cronbach's alpha coefficient yielding a value of $r = 0.87$. The findings revealed no significant relationship between social media usage and academic performance; among male and female secondary school secondary school 2 students in English Language. It was recommended that students should be encouraged to use phones for academics, not just chatting, limit social media and expand academic social networking.

Keywords: Academic performance, Media, Social, Students, Usage

Introduction

In contemporary society, the advent of social media has revolutionized communication and interaction, significantly impacting various aspects of human life. Among its diverse effects, the influence of social media on academic performance has become a subject of considerable interest and concern, particularly among secondary students. The rate of failure in the 2013 SSCE examinations was 24.2%. This decreased to 17.1%, 14.9%, 12.1% and 11.8% in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 respectively. This implies that the rate of failure of students in SSCE examinations is a challenge in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State from 2013-2017 (Oniye et al., 2019). The proliferation of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp has profoundly transformed how individuals engage with information, peers, and society at large. In Nigeria, where internet penetration has rapidly expanded in recent years, adolescents and young adults constitute a significant portion of social media users. According to Akinyemi and Adejumo (2019), Nigeria ranks among the top countries in Africa with the highest number of social media users, with platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook being particularly popular among secondary school students.

It has become a category of social media, where people can create, share, save for later, and network at an exponential rate. The ease, speed and reach of social media are already rapidly changing social discourse, setting agendas in public topics such as the environment and politics, technology and entertainment (Asur & Huberman, 2010). During the last 10 years, the new world of the internet has changed a lot because of social media. Nowadays young men and women communicate with each other, sharing thoughts and feelings, personal information, photos and videos at an unbelievable speed. Sixty-three percent of online U.S. teens use social networking sites (Owusu-Acheaw, 2015).

Martin (2008) and Lusk (2010) have the same idea of what social media is. According to them, social media is the use of Facebook, blogs, Twitter, my space and LinkedIn all to communicate and share pictures and videos. However, by the purpose of studying this, social media is captured as the use of the internet with Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Skype, MySpace and Yahoo Messenger to communicate and share ideas, pictures and videos. What started off as just a hobby for some computer-literate individuals has become a social lifestyle and norm among people all over the world (Boyd, 2007). Teens and young adults especially flocked to these sites to keep in touch with their friends, swap information, re-invent their own identities and show off their social lives (Boyd, 2007). Several types of research have been done to find the impact of social media on users, for instance, a study in 2011 on impact of Facebook on undergraduate academic performance" by Moon(2011) averred that social media affects students negatively, the more students use Facebook the more the academic work is been affected by them. Similarly, Madge et al., (2009), noted that most of the younger students use social networking sites mainly for socialising activities, rather than for academic purposes. However, what Madge et al., (2009) found was that the majority of the students themselves did feel that social networking sites were having more impact on their academic life positively. In another study conducted by Shana (2012), it was reported that students' main use of social networking sites is to make friends and chat in all types of social network sites, whilst only 26% of the respondents expressed that they use social media for their academic purpose.

While Junco (2015) defines social media as a group of internet websites, services, and practices that facilitate participation, collaboration, and sharing, the dimension of using social media amongst the youth of today's generation can never be overemphasised. Many researchers such as Owusu-Acheaw; and Larson (2015), Rafiu (2017) and Sivakumar (2020) have studied students' use of social media sites. The study of the use of social media sites by students has a negative impact of students' academic performance. Also, Nielsen media research determined by a study conducted in June 2010 that about a quarter of the time of the internet spent by students on Social networking sites (Jacobsen & Forste 2011). American Educational Research Association conducted research and expressed at her annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association at San Diego California in 2009 that the social media users study less and make lower grades (Abaleta 2014). Focusing too much on online socialisation rather than concentrating on academics affects the performance of students. The 21st century came with the beginning of the new media with the fast-tracking means of sending and receiving of information via the internet. In our contemporary society, the new media has been trending as it has been used for entertainment, networking and academics. The study pointed out that the social media was given a boost by the idea of the youth (Aniagolu 2023).

Despite the potential benefits of social media for communication, networking, and information sharing, concerns have been raised regarding its impact on academic performance. Several studies conducted in Nigeria have highlighted the prevalence of excessive social media use among students and its association with distractions from academic responsibilities (Aremu & Akin-Aina, 2020; Ajiboye & Ogunleye, 2018). Moreover, Oluwatoyin and Olorunsola (2017) found that secondary school students in Nigeria spend a significant amount of time on social media platforms, often at the expense of study time, which may adversely affect their academic achievements. This study explored the effect of social media usage on the academic performance of secondary students in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. By investigating this relationship, the study seeks to provide insights into the implications of social media engagement for educational outcomes among secondary school students in the English language: implication for counselling.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant impact of social media usage on the academic performance of students in the English Language.
2. There is no significant impact of social media usage on the academic performance of male and female secondary school students in the English Language.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of secondary school students in the English language. The study population included private secondary school students in the Asa Local Government Area (LGA) of Kwara state. Out of the four (4) Local Government Areas (Asa, Ilorin East, Ilorin South and Ilorin West) in Kwara Central, Asa LGA was randomly selected using the fish bowl method without replacement. Ilorin was purposively selected as Ilorin is the capital city of Kwara State and the most developed in the state. It has students with higher chances of making use of smartphones and social media platforms while private secondary schools were selected as they have a higher tendency to have access to Smartphones

(Oyekola, 2021; Shittu, 2024). Asa Local Government Area consists of ten (10) private schools with a population of four hundred and twelve (412) Senior Secondary School 2 students (Kwara State Ministry of Education and Human Capital Development, 2015). Senior Secondary School 2 students were used as Senior Secondary School 1 and 3 students are entry and terminal classes respectively; it is envisaged that SSS 1 students may not have settled due to registration procedures for entry while SSS 3 students may be preparing to write examinations. Out of the ten (10) Private Schools in the Local Government six (6) schools were selected using the fish bowl method of simple random sampling technique without replacement. A convenience sampling technique was utilized to select 35 respondents in each school to make a total of 210 samples.

The research instrument used for this study consists of a questionnaire adapted from the Social Media Usage and its effect on Youth Questionnaire developed by Bashir (2021). The questionnaire comprises five sections: socio-demographic characteristics and time spent on social media, frequency of social media use, preference for social media platforms for academic exercises, frequency of engaging in activities on social media, and academic performance. The instrument contains 35 items which is divided into five sections, namely section A,B,C, D and E. Section A is made up of five items measuring the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent and time spent on social media. Section B is made up of five items 1-5 measuring the frequency of the use of Social Media. Section C is made up of five items 6-10 measuring the type of social media which students prefer to use for academic exercises. Section D is made up of ten items 11-20 measuring the social media usage on the academic performance of students in English Language and Section E is made up ten items 21-30 measuring the social media usage on the academic performance of students due to gender. Participants were asked to respond to items using a Likert scale ranging from "Agree" to "Disagree," "Frequently" to "Rarely," and "Yes" or "No." The instrument was validated by experts in the field and to ascertain the internal consistency the instrument went through a reliability test using Cronbach's alpha coefficient yielding a value of $r = 0.87$. This indicates a high level of internal consistency, suggesting that the questionnaire items reliably measure the intended constructs. Before the administration of the instrument, a Letter of Introduction was taken to the respective Schools for acknowledgement and approval by the Principal of the School. Assent and consent of the students were sought before the administration of the Instrument. Data was collected anonymously to enhance response rates and objectivity. Statistical techniques for analysis were Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. This was employed to analyze the data and determine the relationship between social media usage and academic performance, as well as any gender differences in performance. Ethical considerations were adhered to throughout the research process, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation. The findings of this study provided valuable insights into the impact of social media on academic performance and informed counselling strategies aimed at mitigating negative effects.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	90	42.9
Female	120	57.1
Total	210	100.0

Table 1 showed that 90 (42.9%) of the respondents are males and 120 (57.1%) are females.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
10-14 years	27	12.9
15-18 years	138	65.7
Above 18	45	21.4
Total	210	100.0

Table 2 showed that 27 (12.9 %) of the respondents are age 10-14 years. 138 (65.7%) age 15-18 years and 45 (21.4%) above age 18 years respectively.

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents by Class

Class	Frequency	Percentage
Science	70	33.3
Commercial	80	38.1
Arts	60	28.6
Total	210	100.0

Table 3 showed that 70 (33.3 %) of the respondents are in Science class. 80 (38.1%) are in Commercial class and 60 (28.6%) are in Arts class

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christianity	118	56.2
Muslims.	92	43.8
Total	210	100.0

Table 4 shows that 118 (56.2 %) of the respondents are Christians and 92 (43.8%) are Muslims.

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents by time spent on social media

Time	Frequency	Percentage
0-2 hours per day	43	20.4
3-5 hours per day	105	50.0
6-10 hours per day	52	24.8
Above 10 hours per day	10	4.8
Total	210	100.0

Table 5 showed that 43 (20.4 %) of the respondents spend 0 – 2 hours per day on social media, 105 (50.0%) of the respondents spend 3 – 5 hours per day on social media, 52 (24.8%) of the respondents spend 6 – 10 hours per day on social media and 10 (4.8 %) of the respondents spend above 10 hours per day on social media.

Testing of Research Questions and Hypotheses:

Table 6: Types of Social Media used by the students

S/N	ITEMS	Frequently(%)	Rarely(%)	Mean	S.D
1	Facebook	186	24	3.13	.714
		88.6	11.4		
2	WhatsApp	190	20	3.10	.857
		90.5	9.5		
3	2go	163	47	3.03	.753
		77.6	22.4		
4	Twitter	186	24	2.82	.923
		88.6	11.4		

5		179	56	2.76	.930
	Google	73.3	26.7		

Table 6 highlights the responses on the frequent use of social media. Facebook (mean=3.13) ranked highest by the mean score rating, followed by Whatsapp (mean=3.10), 2go (mean=3.03), Twitter (mean=2.82), and Google (mean=2.76) indicating the wide usage of social media platforms.

Ho1: There is no significant impact of social media usage on the academic performance of students in the English Language.

Table 7: Regression summary showing the impact of social media usage on academic performance of students in the English Language.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
				R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
.114 ^a	.013	-.011	1.337	.013	.540	5	204	.746

p > 0.05; F_{0.05} (5, 204) = 2.258342

From Table 7, the adjusted R² = 0.011 value showed a poor level of fit at (P = 0.746 > 0.05). This suggests an unwell model. Furthermore, it suggests that social media (i.e., Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, 2go and Google) accounted for 1.1% of academic performance. Similarly, the F-value (F = 0.540) of the model was also not found to be significant.

Table 8: ANOVA table showing the impact of social media usage on academic performance of students in English Language.

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.822	5	.964	.540	.746 ^b
Residual	364.493	204	1.787		
Total	369.314	209			

p > 0.05; F(5, 205) = 2.258342

Table 8 shows that the social media usage did not impact the academic performance of students, because (F = 0.540 and p-value = 0.746 > 0.05). The result shows that there is no significant impact of social media usage on academic performance of student in the English Language because null hypothesis failed to be rejected.

Table 9: Coefficients results of the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of students in English Language.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	10.188	.619			16.462	.000
Facebook	.549	.922	.132		.596	.552
WhatsApp	-1.140	.737	-.252		-1.546	.124
Twitter	.264	.576	.063		.458	.647
2go	.008	.303	.003		.027	.979
Google	.204	.529	.054		.385	.701

P > 0.05

From Table 9, the coefficient estimates of ($\beta = 0.549, P = .552 > 0.05, \beta = -1.140, p = 0.124 > 0.05, \beta = 0.264, p = .647 > 0.05, \beta = 0.008, p = 0.979 > 0.05$ and $\beta = 0.204, P = 0.701 > 0.05$) respectively showed that the Facebook usage is positively, but not significantly correlated with academic performance of students, WhatsApp usage is negatively, but not significantly related to academic performance of students, Twitter usage is positively, but not significantly correlated with academic performance of students, 2go usage is positively, but not significantly correlated with academic performance of students, and also Google usage is positively, but not significantly related to academic performance of students. Furthermore, it showed that a unit increase in the Facebook usage increased academic performance by a magnitude of 0.549, a unit increase in the WhatsApp usage reduced academic performance by a magnitude of 1.14, a unit increase in the Twitter usage increased academic performance by a magnitude of 0.264, a unit increase in the 2go usage enhanced academic performance by a magnitude of 0.008, while a unit increase in the Google usage increased academic performance by a magnitude of 0.204

H02: There is no significant impact of social media usage on the academic performance among male and female secondary school students in the English Language.

Table 10: Descriptive analysis of the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of students due to gender

Gender	Social media usage	Mean	SD	N
Male	Low usage	9.92	1.222	25
	Moderate usage	9.79	1.188	14
	High usage	10.45	1.286	51
	Total	10.20	1.274	90
Female	Moderate usage	9.86	1.292	14
	High usage	9.74	1.354	106
	Total	9.75	1.343	120
Total	Low usage level	9.92	1.222	25
	Moderate usage	9.82	1.219	28
	High usage	9.97	1.370	157
	Total	9.94	1.329	210

With respect to social media usage, Table 10 revealed that male students with low usage have (Mean=9.92, SD =1.222), those with moderate usage have (Mean=9.79, SD =1.188), while those with high usage have (Mean=10.45, SD =1.286). Similarly, female students with moderate usage have (Mean=9.86, SD =1.292), while those with high usage have (Mean=9.74, SD =1.354).

Table 11: Two-way ANOVA of the impact of social media usage on the academic performance of students due to gender.

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	2.410	1	2.410	1.407	.237
Social media usage	3.057	2	1.528	.892	.411
Interaction	3.599	1	3.599	2.101	.149
Error	351.143	205	1.713		
Total	369.314	209			

$p < 0.05; F(1, 205) = 3.88722; F(2, 205) = 3.03994$

Given that $F(1, 205) = 1.407$; $p=0.237 > 0.05$) indicates no significant impact of gender on the academic performance of students. Similarly, $F((2, 205) = 0.892$; $p=0.411 > 0.05$) indicates no significant impact of social media usage on the academic performance of students. Also, $F(1, 205) = 2.101$; $p=0.149 > 0.05$) indicates no significant interaction impact of gender and social media usage on the academic performance of students. Therefore, it was concluded that there is no significant impact of social media usage on academic performance among males and female secondary school 2 students in the English Language.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 showed that there is no significant relationship between social media usage and academic performance among male and female secondary school 2 students in English Language. The findings of this study contradict the common assumption that excessive social media usage inherently leads to poorer academic performance among secondary school students. These results align with some previous research conducted both in Nigeria and internationally. A study by Emeri (2019) found no significant correlation between social media use and academic performance among secondary school students in Lagos, Nigeria. The report of these findings is also at variance with Mehmood and Taswir (2013) who stated that the use of technology such as the Internet is one of the most influential factors that can impact the student's academic performance. The more the use of social media, the less the student's academic performance. This means that the student who uses social media sites more frequently tends to perform poorly academically. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) concluded that while there is a negative correlation between academic performance and time spent on social media, the effect size is relatively small and may not be practically significant. However, it is essential to interpret these findings cautiously, considering the complex nature of the relationship between social media usage and academic performance. Factors such as the type of social media activities engaged in, the frequency and duration of usage, and individual differences among students may moderate this relationship (Koç & Turan, 2021). Additionally, cultural and contextual factors specific to Nigeria, such as socioeconomic status and access to educational resources, may influence how social media impacts academic outcomes (Kim et al., 2019).

Hypothesis 2 posited that there is no significant effect of social media on secondary school students between male and female in the academic in English Language in Nigeria. Social media has been researched by other studies to see its relationship with the academic performance of students, yielding mixed results. In a study carried out on the influence of Facebook on students, Haq and Chand (2012) concluded that Facebook had an adverse effect on students' academic performance. The research observed that males and females are spending the same time on the internet, where females frequently use Facebook; while males have more friends than females. The main difference is Facebook has a worse effect on male performance than females. They are spending a lot of time in all practicals to do sports and games activities and they are not working hard as a female to do their work and studies so they are losing their valuable time as well as they have a bad effect on their performance as well. Contrary to these findings, Saliu et al. (2017) reported no significant relationship between social media usage and academic performance in their study of 500 senior secondary school students. They hypothesised that any effect of social media might be modulated by other variables, including time management and the quality of interactions on social media. Their research also indicated no significant gender differences in the impact of social media on academic performance. In a more pronounced study, Alnjadat et al. (2019) examined the role of social media usage on academic performance with a specific focus on gender. They found that while males tended to use social media more for entertainment purposes, females were more likely to use it for educational purposes. The gender difference was confirmed (higher use of social media for girls). Differences were also confirmed to have an impact on academic performance. For boys, higher use of social media was negatively correlated with academic performance (leading to poor performance), but in the case of girls, moderate usage was positively correlated with academic performance (leading to better performance).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study on the effect of social media usage on the academic performance of secondary students in Ilorin, Kwara State, challenge the commonly held assumption that excessive social media use inevitably leads to poorer academic performance. Contrary to this belief, the research revealed no significant relationship between social media usage and academic performance among both male and female students in English Language, as well as the relations to the gender of secondary school students. These results align with previous research both nationally and internationally, indicating that while there may be a negative correlation between academic performance and time spent on social media, the effect size is relatively small and may not be practically significant. However, it is crucial to interpret these findings with caution, recognizing the complex nature of the relationship between social media usage and academic performance. Factors such as the type, frequency, and duration of social

media activities, as well as individual differences among students, may moderate this relationship. Additionally, cultural and contextual factors specific to Nigeria, such as socioeconomic status and access to educational resources, could influence how social media impacts academic outcomes. The absence of a significant impact of social media usage on academic performance among both male and female secondary school students underscores the need to consider disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity between these settings. Socio-cultural differences may also play a role in shaping students' attitudes towards education and technology use, further influencing the relationship between social media and academic outcomes. While social media may compete for students' time and attention, its direct impact on academic achievement appears to be less pronounced than commonly assumed. Further research is warranted to better understand the interactions between social media usage and academic performance, taking into account the various contextual factors at play.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researchers made some recommendations as follows;

1. Digital literacy programs should be implemented in schools focusing on responsible social media use, time management, and discerning credible information.
2. Active engagement between parents, educators, and students should be encouraged in order to understand and establish healthy social media boundaries.
3. There should be integration of social media into education for collaborative learning experiences aligned with academic goals.
4. Resources should be provided for students so as to develop effective time management skills and balance academic responsibilities and social media usage.
5. Community-wide initiatives with stakeholders with an emphasis on IT experts and health educators should be developed by the school management to promote positive and healthy social media habits among students through tailored workshops and campaigns.
6. There is a need for ongoing monitoring and evaluation to assess the impact of interventions, informing adjustments based on student feedback and outcomes.

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