

***Influence of Social Media on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Obudu Local Government Area, Cross River State***

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***Abstract***

*This study investigated the influence of social media on students' academic performance in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve this research objective, two research questions were raised and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The research adopted a descriptive survey research design. To obtain data for the study, a ten (10) item questionnaire on a four-point scale was used. The questionnaire was administered on one hundred (100) students randomly sampled from ten (10) secondary schools in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. The data obtained was statistically analyzed using independent t-test. The result revealed that students' addictiveness to social media, and students' usage of social media network have significant influence on students' academic performance in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State. Based on these findings, it was recommended, among others, that social networking sites should be expanded and new pages should be created to enhance academic activities and avoid setback in the students' academic performance; and that students should be monitored by teachers and parents on how they use these sites, if they must excel academically.*

**Keywords:** Social media, influence, students, Obudu, academic performance

## **Introduction**

Modern technology in communication has turned the entire world into a "global village". But as it is, technology, like two sides of a coin, brings with it both negative and positive sides. It helps people to be better informed, enlightened, and kept abreast with world's developments. Technology exposes mankind to a faster and easier way of doing things especially through social media Applications which include: Twitter, yahoo messenger, 2go messenger, facebook messenger, whatsapp messenger, skype, google talk, google messenger. These social media applications are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or online friends. The world has been changed rapidly by the evolution of technology; this has resulted to the use of technology as the best medium to explore wide area of knowledge.

The advent of internet technology has made it the best medium for communication. Two-third of the world's internet population visits social networking or blogging sites, thus serving as a communication and connection tool. Social networking sites (SNS) are online communities of internet users who want to communicate with other users about areas of mutual interest whether from a personal business or academic perspective (Renwick, 2015). Eyo (2016) described SNS as webpages that empowers the users to create their profiles within the pages and interacts with other users who have also successfully created their own profiles within the same pages. The millions of social networking sites have transformed the thought of global village into a reality whereby billions of people communicate through social networking sites. Numerous benefits have been obtained from distant communication through the use of social networking sites. It is important to point out the benefits of these websites as well. Many schools have started to use these sites to promote education, keep students up to date with assignments, and offer help to those in need (Oyedapo, 2019). Social networking sites provide an outlet for teens to express themselves in their own unique ways.

Academic performance is the outcome of education and the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic performance, which is measured through examination results, is one of the major goals of a school. Hoyle in Osharive, (2015) argued that schools are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills to those who go through them; and behind all these is the idea of enhancing good academic performance. Academic performance or excellence plays an important role in an individual's placement, be it in the academic institution or job placement such that, many people are concerned with the ways they can enhance their academic performance. The role of academic performance as one of the predictors of one's life

success and its usefulness in placement into higher institutions as well in career cannot be overemphasized. Academic performance is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important; procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts (Annie & Howard, 2019).

Researchers observed that there is direct relationship between social media usage and academic performance. However, the bad side within technological evolution has resulted in setback of real values of life, especially among students who form the majority of users interacting through the use of social networking sites. Online social networking sites focus on building and reflecting social associations among people who share interest and/or achievement. With so many social networking sites on the internet, students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends. Many students are now addictive to facebook, whatsapp, twitter, among others. From this background, the researchers intended to investigate the impact of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area.

On the internet, students engage in a variety of activities, some of which may be potentially addictive (Kuss & Griffiths, 2012). The mass appeal of social media on the internet could be a cause for concern; particularly when attending to the gradually increasing amount of time students spend online. Students spend more time on Facebook. Twitter and other social media through smart-phones that are now in abundance among these youths. Many students cannot go for two to three hours without checking and updating their profiles on these social networks even at the detriment of other activities such as educational and career pursuit.

Itodo (2011) posits that there seems to be an alarming rate of social networking obsession among students today; a trend that could affect their academic, social and spiritual lives negatively, if not properly controlled. Many concerned parents have expressed concern that they could hardly get the attention of their children and wards, as they seem to have been carried away by the fascinating world of social networks. Some youths are such social freaks that they have now carved out for themselves a world of fantasy and illusion far detached from reality.

Itodo further observes that if the dangerous trend of social media network "obsession" is left unchecked, it could further affect an already collapsing education system in Nigeria.

The reason students are performing poorly in school these days might not be far-fetched. While poor quality lecturers can quickly take the blame, one might think harder if the phrase "Facebook frenzy" has not been heard of. It is a common sight to see a youth chatting in sensitive and highly organized places like church, mosque and lecture venues. Some are so carried away that even as they are walking along the highway, they keep chatting. Attention has been shifted from visible to invisible friends, while important ventures like study and writing are affected in the process. This phenomenon has become a source of worry to many who believe in knowledge and skill acquisition. Olubiyi (2021) noted that internet addiction is significantly and negatively related to students' academic performance, as well as emotional attributes.

In a study of 884 students of different universities in Nigeria, Olowu and Seri (2018) found that students in Nigeria are spending too much time on social networking sites at the detriment of other necessary things such as their studies. They explained that the use of these social networking sites by the youth even point towards obsession. The youths have made the social media their top priority and continue to need more usage in order to feel satisfied. In a study on Facebook and academic performance in Nigerian universities carried out by Ogedebe et al. (2021), a sample of 122 university students was used; six hypotheses were tested to know the effect of Facebook on the academic performance of students in the selected universities. The study reported, among other findings, that the more time a student spends on Facebook, the lower his or her grade point average will be.

Olubiyi (2021) observed that the bone of contention of the social media is the obsessive attitude of Nigerian youths towards its use. He pointed out that students waste their time through idle chats and even immoral acts. Students get so engrossed in the social media networks that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been observed that students are always busy pinging, 2going or Facebooking, while lectures are on. The result is that quality time that ought to be spent on academic research and other productive networking is lost.

The interactive character of online conditions has extended with social networking. Hooking up through social networking began as being a niche activity; through time it has become a phenomenon. The web sites are employed in many ways like developing metropolitan areas, speaking, blogging, among others. Additionally, different institutions are developing groups on several websites (Mehmood, 2013). The improved usage of websites has become a worldwide phenomenon for quite sometimes. What started out as a hobby for several computer literate people has converted to a social norm and existence-

style for individuals from around the globe (Nicole, 2017). Teens and teenagers have especially utilized these internet sites to be able to contact their peers, share information, reinvent their personas, and showcase their social lives. While the use of this increased technology is helpful for getting together with others, along with the recognition on the internet, Internet sites are now being abused through most activities that are done on the web, with websites (Nicole, 2017).

According to Khan (2019), social media users often experience poor performance academically. Similarly, Englander et al. (2019) posit that social media is negatively associated with academic performance of students, and is a lot more momentous than its advantages. Internet usage consequently gave rise to internet addiction within the last couple of decades. Nalwa and Anand (2023) recommended that addicted users prefer using internet in setting back their personal and professional responsibilities which ultimately leads to poor academic performance. In the same vein, Karpinski (2009) pointed out that social media users devoted lesser time to their studies in comparison to non-users and subsequently had lower GPAs. Karpinski (2009) mentioned further that among various unique distractions of every single generation, social media remains a major distraction of the current generation.

It is against this background that the researchers seek to study the influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State.

### **Statement of the problem**

Since the advent of social media sites in the 1990s, it is assumed in some quarters that the academic performance of students has been facing a lot of neglect and challenges. It is common knowledge that there is a drop in students' grades and academics with lack of time for studies as a consequence of social media network participation. On the other hand, it has impacted positively on students' academic performance.

A number of studies in relation to social media have been conducted the world over and even in some parts of Nigeria, but none has been conducted among secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area. It is on this ground that this study seeks to investigate the impact of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study generally was to examine the influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area. Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1) Examine the level of student's addictiveness to social media and the influence on their academic performance.
- 2) Determine if the use of social media has influence on the academic performance of the secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How does students' addictiveness to social media network influence their academic performance?
2. How has the use of social media influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**Ho1:** Students' addictiveness to social media has no significant influence on their academic performance in Obudu Local Government Area.

**Ho2:** Use of social media has no significant influence on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area.

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for the study was a survey. This design is considered apt because it enables the researchers to generate data through the standardized collection procedures based on highly structured research instrument(s) and well-defined study concepts and related variables. The area of this study is Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State.

The population of this research is all secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area in 2023/2024 academic session. The total population comprised 1,075 secondary school students from 36 secondary schools in Obudu (Education Authority records, 2024).

The study adopted a simple random sampling technique. The technique employed by the researchers is the hat and draw method. Ten secondary schools were selected from ten

political wards in Obudu Local Government Area, and ten students from each school were sampled for the study. The researchers wrote the numbers on slips of paper, rolled each slip into a paper ball, mixed the paper balls well in a container (hat) and blindly drew the required number of students. The study sample consisted of one hundred (100) students selected from among SS II students in Obudu Local Government Area.

A well-constructed and self-developed questionnaire titled “Social Media Related Questionnaire (SMRQ)” was used to get the desired information from the students. The questionnaire was divided into two sections (A and B). Section A was for demographic data of the respondents while Section B consisted of questions that elicited responses with options of completely True (CT), True (T), Somehow True (T) and Not True (NT), while respondent's second term results were used to gather data for academic performance.

To ensure the validity of the study instrument, the questionnaire was given to two test experts to critique the items; and a reliability index of 0.75 through split half reliability test was established. The researchers collected the needed data through the use of questionnaire and its administration to the selected students. The administration of the questionnaire was carried out by the researchers and his assistants. A total of one hundred (100) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to gather responses from the students and retrieved on the spot by the researchers and their assistants.

In scoring the responses from the instruments, a value of four (4) points was assigned to Completely True, Three (3) points to True, Two (2) points to Somehow True and One(1) Point to Not True, for positive statement; the reverse was the case for negatively worded items. Responses from the questionnaire were used to test the two hypotheses using independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

### **Presentation of results**

**Ho1:** Students' addictiveness to social media has no significant influence on their academic performance.

This hypothesis is tested using independent t-test analysis as presented in table 1. Here, students' addictiveness is categorized into high and low.

**Table 1:** Independent t-test analysis of the influence of students' addictiveness to social media on their academic performance.

Students' addictiveness to social media	Academic performance			
	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t
High students' addictiveness to social media	61	14.20		
Low students' addictiveness to social media	39	12.75	1.698	2.869

Level of significance = 0.05; df=98; critical t=1.987

Result of the analysis as presented in table 1 indicates that a calculated t-value of 2.869 was obtained. This value when compared to the critical t-value of 1.987 at 0.05 level of significance and 98 degree of freedom was found to be higher. On the basis of this observation, the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that students' addictiveness to social media has significant influence on students' academic performance.

**Ho2:** Social media usage does not have significant influence on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area.

This hypothesis is tested using independent t-test analysis as presented in table 2. Here, use of social media by students is categorized into frequent use and non-frequent use.

**Table 2:** Independent t-test analysis of the influence of student's usage of social media on their academic performance

Students' use of social media	Academic performance			
	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t
Students' frequent use of social media	61	17.54	1.83	
Students' non-frequent use of social media	39	16.10	1.64	3.44

Level of significance = 0.05; df=98; critical t=1.987

Result of the analysis as presented in table 2 indicates that a calculated t-value of 3.44 was obtained. This value when compared to the critical t-value of 1.987 at 0.05 level of significance and 98 degree of freedom was found to be higher. On the basis of this observation, the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that use of social media does have significant influence on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area.



### **Discussion of the findings**

The result of the findings as presented for hypothesis one in table I revealed that students' addictiveness to social media has significant influence on their academic performance. This fact is in line with the finding of Ogedebe et al. (2021). A study on facebook and academic performance in Nigerian universities was carried out to know the effect of Facebook on the academic performance of students in selected universities. The finding of the study revealed that the more time a student spends on facebook, the lower his or her grade point average will be.

The result of the finding as presented for hypothesis two on table II revealed that the use of social media does have significant influence on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obudu Local Government Area. This finding is in agreement with the view of Englander et al. (2019) that social media is negatively associated with academic performance of students and is a lot more momentous than its advantages. Olowu and Seri (2018) also supported that among various unique distractions of every single generation, social media remains a major distraction of the current generation.

### **Conclusion**

The result from the findings of this study showed that social media have negative effects on students' academic performance. Excessive use of social media often leads to distractions, reducing the time and focus students devote to their studies. It can also contribute to poor time management, procrastination, and a decline in the quality of academic work. Furthermore, the overconsumption of social media content may negatively affect students' mental health, leading to stress, anxiety, and reduced motivation for academic pursuits. While social media has its benefits, such as fostering communication and access to information, it is crucial for students to strike a balance and use these platforms responsibly to ensure that their academic goals are not compromised. Parents, educators, and students themselves must work together to promote healthy social media habits and prioritize educational success.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Social networking sites should be expanded and new pages should be created to enhance academic activities and research purposes and avoid setback in the students' academic performance.

2. Students should be monitored by teachers and parents on how they use these sites to ensure that they use the social media as a tool to improve their academic performance, manage their study time and prevent distractions that are posed by social media.

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