



A Comparative Study on the Use of Social Media, Reading Habits and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author PTN designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors VNO and EM managed the analyses of the study. All authors managed the literature searches, read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aim: A comparative study was conducted on how the use of social media affects the reading habit and academic performance of secondary school students.

Study Design: The study adopted the descriptive survey research design to help elicit data from the target population through questionnaire, observations and interview instruments.

Methodology: The questionnaires were randomly administered to both male and female students.

Results: Social media is a great digital platform for learning and obtaining current information. There are consequences attached to the proper use and misuse among adolescent students. More than 50% of social media operators in secondary schools are users of Facebook. 58 out of 75 students who scored "A" grade in their favourite subject operated social media. 67.23% of the total respondents who use the social media didn't score an "A" grade in their favourite subject. Students who operated more than one social media network scarcely scored an "A" grade. Only 3.5% of students spent up to 4 hours of reading every day. 46.5% read for 2-3 hours and 36.5% read for an hour. 11.5% read for 30 minutes while 2% read for less than 30 minutes.

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Conclusion: Students should be properly guided and given an adequate orientation before providing them with electronic devices like smart phones. Teachers should be encouraged to join large student groups. Off-topics and non-academic discussions should be curtailed.

Keywords: Social media; academic; performance; subject; school; adolescent; students.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this era of networking, the Internet has a tremendous influence on the social life of students [1,2]. The need for and role of social media in the life of adolescent students cannot be overemphasized. As much as they enhance good relationships and communication among users, research has shown that there are high-risk factors in the usage among various categories of students [3,4]. The Internet offers a wide variety of communication tools. Billions of people use facilities like search engines, web pages, e-mails, Really Simple Syndication (RSS), e-journals, e-newspapers, Internet banking, Internet telephony, conferencing, multi-media sharing, online newsroom, social networking, etc [5,2].

According to Syed [6] Social media can be defined and refer to all inexpensive and widely accessible electronic tools that enable anyone to publish and access information, collaborate on a common effort, or build relationships. Challenges tend to arise when social media are incorporated into an academic course despite the increase in learning that occurs through student interactions. Most educators do inadvertently fail to provide the resources or encouragement necessary to support student due to the assumption that students are familiar with using certain types of social media. These often results in a learning problem [5]. It has been found that even when social media is used for an educational purpose, students incorporate the technology into their lives in a way that may differ from the intentions of the course instructor. For example, off-topic or non-academic discussions occur on social media because of its primary design as a social networking tool [7,8]. This experience, however, is not always the case among tertiary students as Mahdiun et al. [9] discovered that the use of telegram by tertiary university students contributed positively to their education and learning.

It is obvious that communication among millennial adolescents is technologically driven. Classes are attended and messages are sent online chatting on social networks and view of

YouTube videos via phone and other electronic devices. Due to mismanagement of time and poor moderation attitude adolescents tend to tilt to bullying, click-forming, sexting, Facebook depression, anxiety, severe isolation and self-destructive behaviours [10,11,12,13]. There is usually, increased aggressive behavior and violence in adolescents due to the playing of video games, overconsumption of media violence through movies and television on several social media platforms. In addition, adolescents also develop a wrong image of sex, love and affection due to media influence [10,11,12,13]. The habit of quality reading time should be encouraged in secondary school as there is a high chance of losing quality reading habit due to distractions associated with advancement in technology. In addition, academic performance largely depends on the reading ability of a student [14,15].

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Introduction

This section entails the techniques adopted in the sampling and analysis of the data collated.

2.2 Design of the Study

This research study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The essence of adopting this research design was to elicit data from the target population through questionnaire, observations, and interview instruments. The data generated therefore were subjected to statistical analysis for the purpose of drawing necessary conclusions.

2.3 Population of the Study

The population of the study was made up of senior secondary school students in two Local Government areas (Uvwie and Warri south Local government Area) of Delta State, Nigeria.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample was drawn from students in five secondary schools in Uvwie and Warri south

LGA. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the five schools. The choice sampling technique was because various schools from different communities have different characteristics and each of them needed to be adequately represented to increase the generalization of the findings of the study. The sampled schools are in Table 1.

2.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used for data collection in the study was the questionnaire.

2.6 Reliability of the Instrument and Methods of Data Collection

The test retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instruments. The questionnaires were randomly administered to both male and female students. Afterwards the questionnaires were collected from them by the researcher.

2.7 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents with the use of the questionnaires were rated by the answers provided. Each student was given the opportunity to feel the questionnaire in a condition that will eliminate any biases. The information provided was considered independently of the other and afterward compared with other information provided by the student. Measures of central tendencies, Tables and graphs were used to analyze, and represent the data generated.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A comparative analysis of those who operate social media and those who do not operate any social media was conducted from the data collated in the questionnaire. Facebook was found to be the most preferred social media platform for secondary school students. The result of this analysis indicated that more than 50% of social media operators in secondary schools are users of Facebook (Table 2). This finding is however not different from what is obtainable in many countries including the United States of America as stated in Pooja [16].

The performance of students in their best subject was used to rate the academic performance of

the student in this work. The best subject of the students in this work is referred to as the favourite subject in the last terms examination. This is the subject that a student easily understands and has earned his/her highest scores overtime. It was also discovered that 58 out of 75 students who scored "A" grade in their favourite subject operated the social media. However, 67.23% of the total sample of the social media users didn't scored an "A" grade in their best subject. Many adolescents in secondary school spend a reasonable amount of time on social media platforms especially Facebook. This finding as well, also agrees with [17,16] as most students users go online to meet with friends within and outside their localities. The high level of mobile advertisement of activities of various celebrities, features like live videos, picture posts, engagement ratings of viewers, comments on individual posts, likes on posts etc have contributed to the high influx of many students to using Facebook as their most preferred social media platform. Thom [17] stated that most individuals, who have the application on their smart phones, spend 4-5 hours/daily whereas not up to 5% of the sampled students spent up to four hours reading their books during and after school hours daily (Fig. 2). It is therefore plausible to say that most students who use social media spend more time on the media platform than they do in reading.

It was also observed that students who operated more than one social media scarcely scored an "A" grade even in their favourite subject. Four out of every six students that operated more than one social media, never scored an "A" grade in their best subject. Three out of every six students who do not operate any social media had an "A" in their best subject. More than 50% of students who operate social media had a "C" grade in their best subject (Table 1).

The data collated from the questionnaire also showed the relationship between social media operators, non-social media operators and the amount of time that they spent reading (Table 2). Research over time has shown that there is a correlation between times spent reading and the academic performance of students [18]. It was observed that 46.5% of the social media operators spent an average of 1-3 hours reading every day, 36.5% spent 1-hour reading every day, 11.5% spent 30 minutes reading and 2% spend less than 30 minutes reading (Fig. 2).

Table 1. List of sampled secondary schools

s/n	Name of school	Local government area (L.G.A.)	No. of respondents	Category
1	Uwangué College	Warri south	40	Secondary
2	Ogbe Secondary school Effurun	Uvwie	40	Secondary
3	Regend secondary school Jedo	Warri South	40	Secondary
4	Redeemer Academy	Uvwie	40	Secondary
5	Word of Faith group of Schools	Uvwie	40	Secondary

A total of Two hundred (200) respondents were used for the study

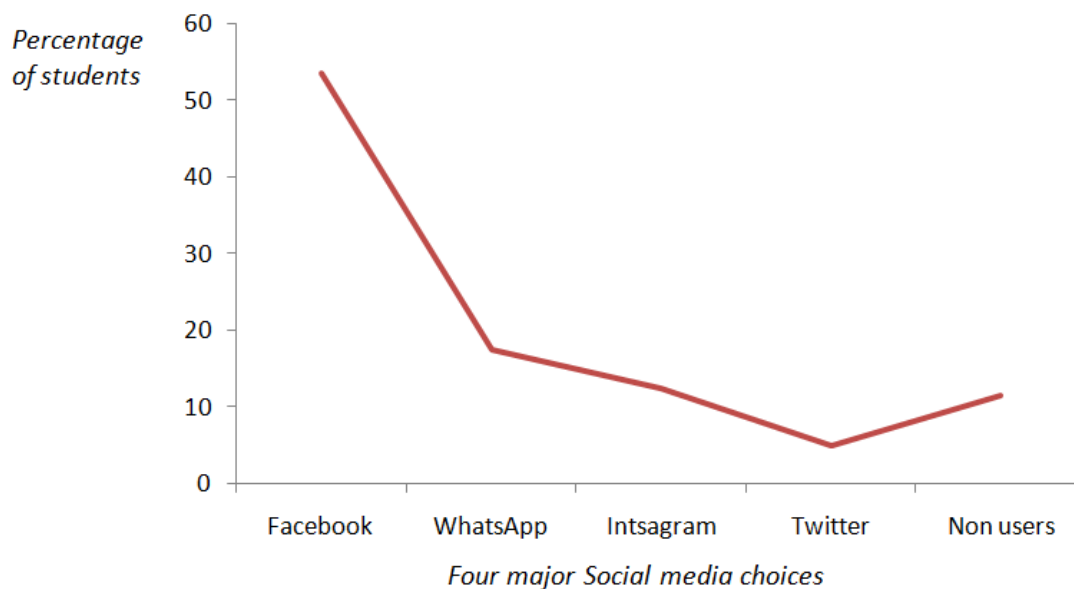


Fig. 1. Graphical representation of the percentage of students who operate social media

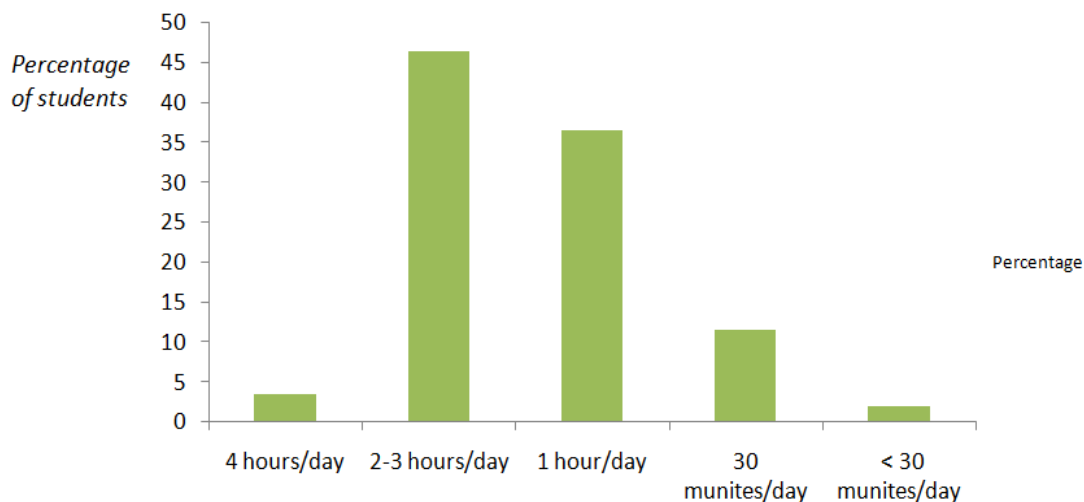


Fig. 2. Graphical representation of the percentage of the reading hours of students who operate social media and those who don't operate social media

Table 2. Comparative analysis of the academic performance of students who operate some social media in their favourite subjects

Grades	Number of students					
	Major social media platforms used by students					
	Facebook	WhatsApp	Instagram	Twitter	Non-users	Total
A	38	13	7	0	17	75
'B	20	11	11	7	3	52
C	49	11	7	3	3	73
D	-	-	-	-	-	-
E	-	-	-	-	-	-
F	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	107	35	25	10	23	200

Table 3. Comparative analysis of the reading hours of students who operate social media and those who don't operate social media

Social media	4- Hours daily reading	2- 3 hours daily reading	Hour daily reading	30 minutes daily reading	<30 minutes daily reading	total
Facebook	4	46	46	11	4	111
Watsap	0	23	8	4	0	35
Instagram	3	8	8	0	0	19
Twitter	0	8	0	0	0	8
Non users	0	8	11	8	0	27
Total	7	93	73	23	4	200

From the analysis, it obvious that time spent reading is not only influenced by the use of social media by students in a secondary school within the area. Other factors like personal discipline, interest, parental care, etc have a major role to play in influencing student attitude towards reading as there really does not exist any significant margin in reading hours of students who operate social media and the percentage of those who do not operate any. It is however plausible to say that operating more than one social media network can consequently result to poor attention to reading as it was observed that nearly all students who operated more than one social media network never scored an "A" grade even in their favourite subject.

4. CONCLUSION

Social media constitutes a great source of learning and obtaining current information among University and secondary school students. It can enhance learning if used appropriately and as well constitute a great deal of distraction if misused by the students. Against this backdrop, secondary school students should be properly guided and given an adequate orientation before providing them with electronic devices like smart phones as a majority of students use a

smartphone to access social media [19]. Intermittent meetings in the form of seminars, workshops, or one on one canceling should be encouraged in secondary school. The step will help intimate the adolescent students on the potential advantages and disadvantages of the uses and misuse of social media. It will as well encourage them on the right use of such a platform to enhance learning especially in this era of the Covid-19 pandemic and holiday when students and their teachers a distant from each other.

Teachers should be encouraged to join large student groups with the aim of providing guidance to help curtail off-topics and non-academic discussions [7,8]. The time spent by students as well should be monitored as our findings disclosed that the time spent on the platform is high compared to the time spent studying. Students should be discouraged from operating more than one social media network as many of them lack the necessary discipline to manage multiple social media networking. Parents and guidance should ensure their wards pay sufficient attention to studying and device strategies to restrict frequent access to electronic devices that can provide easy access to social media networks.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, participant's written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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