

Social Media and Students' Academic Performance: A Case Study of the Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

Wadzani A. Gadzama¹, Ogah U. S.² and Abdullahi Nuhu³

^{1,3}ICT Unit, Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. ²Department of Computer Science, Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

Corresponding author: ask4gadzama@gmail.com

Abstract

The use of social media nowadays amongst students to efficiently share information has become worrisome, especially in their academic pursuits. Most often students are involved in using social media on campus, most common during assignments, reading, practicals and lectures. These activities tend to affect them negatively in their studies. Social media refers to the use of applications and websites to share resources effectively in real-time. This paper assesses students' usage of social media and its effects on their academic performance at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Questionnaires were distributed to students of the Polytechnic. The data collected were analysed and presented. Out of one thousand 1000 copies of the questionnaires distributed among students of various departments across the different Schools (Faculties), only nine hundred and fifty-eight 958 were retrieved which represented a response rate of 95.8 %. The study shows that majority of the respondents have mobile phones with internet access which enables them to have access to many social media sites that they are conversant with. The results of this study revealed that most students access these sites throughout the day. On average a student spent between one to three and half hours a day. The results indicate that the use of social media has affected students' concentration in their studies thus negatively affecting their performance. It is recommended that students should be discouraged from using phones during academic activities to access social media as it affects concentration even though phones could be helpful with assignments and studies, they should be used when necessary.

Keywords: Social media, Students, Academic performance, Internet access

Introduction

In recent years social media has changed the way people interact with each other on the internet most especially among students. The increased use of social media is a result of the rapid growth of the internet which has affected the world (Aljabry et al., 2017). This cannot be farfetched from the reduced cost of internet-accessible gadgets, cost of data, internet availability, and ease of use of the devices (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2015). The flexibility, conveniences, easy access and use of social media is the major factor influencing its use among youths especially students. These factors have positively affected the acceptance and use of social media to share resources (Kolan & Dzandza, 2018).

Social media has become an integral part of students' life in tertiary institutions. They use it to interact and share information. However, if the sharing of information is not regulated and controlled effectively, it will affect their academic performance negatively (Ijeoma G & Burke, 2013). (Daluba & Maxwell, 2013) Social media can also be seen as an interface over which students can interact with each other to share ideas and information in real-time. Social media have not only affected social

networking; they serve as a powerful tool for healthcare, politics, activism, and academic connections in institutions among others. It is not surprised; that it has become a more powerful tool in today's daily activities (Permatasari et al., 2013).

One of the massive, impressive and acceptable technological inventions by the majority of the youths is social media. It is now one of the most popular and widely used around the globe. It creates, encourages and increases social communication amongst individuals of different age groups (Amin et al., 2016). Most often students are continuously involved in the use of these social media. In most cases, it has become an integral part of their day to day life irrespective of where they find themselves. Some students cannot afford to stay a day without getting access to social sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Blogs amongst others. It has become like an addiction to some. They cannot control how and when to use it. These social sites allow individuals to create accounts and use them to post, share and communicate information with each other. They also allow users to build and maintain relationships and encourage others to be a part of a community. Due to a lack of regulations, these activities have become worrisome among students, especially in our polytechnics.

Statement of Research Problems

The media technologies' recent advances have had a significant influence on how individuals share information frequently. The rapidly increasing importance of the use of social media sites by students of tertiary institutions these days cannot be overstated (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2015). Social networking between several students has increased in number over the years. This provides a way of connecting with friends not only on campus but globally. Many institutions and lecturers are concerned that their students are placing more emphasis on the internet to access Facebook and other social media sites, thus leaving students with insufficient time to concentrate on their studies. Despite lecturers being concerned about their students' constant use of social media sites; several more students will continue to use them daily. This research was conducted against these problems to determine the impact of students' use of social media sites on their academic performance at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi.

Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of this research.

1. To examine the frequent use of social media amongst students in the institution.
2. To determine the impact of social media on students' academic performance.
3. To recommend ways students can use social media to improve their academic studies.

Research Questions

1. Does the frequent use of social media amongst students common in the institution?
2. To what extent does the use of social media among students affect their performance in Federal Polytechnic, Mubi?
3. What are the measures to be taken to curtail the adverse effect of social media on students' academic performance in Federal Polytechnic, Mubi?

Literature Review

Social media has continued to influence the way students live on campus. These influences have negative effects on their academic performance. (Raut, Vishranti & Patil, 2016) state that over 90% of students visit social sites on daily basis for one reason to another. Most often, they have integrated

the use of social media into their everyday activities. According to (N., 2010);(Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2015), 85% of Facebook users are mostly undergraduate students out of the over 500 million members and that number is still on the increase. It is projected that the number of undergraduate use of social media will continue as many people are joining on daily basis. (Kist, 2008) states that more than half of the youths in the United States that have internet access are also members of social networking sites. In Nigeria, more than 90% of the undergraduates that have access to mobile phones and internet access are members of one or more social sites. Most often being a member of a social site is been seen by students as a level or status.

Even though the use of social media varies from one student to another, the use of Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Myspace, Skype, WhatsApp, LinkedIn Online, gaming and other social tools during lectures and other academic activities has become a distraction to the majority of the students on campus. Thus, negatively affecting their academic performance (Raut, Vishranti & Patil, 2016). (Enriquez, 2010) Cited by (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2015) revealed that students who use social networking sites while studying are more likely to have 20% lower grades than students who are not members of social networking sites. Furthermore, (Choney, 2010) in his study on looking at the effect of time spent on Facebook on students' academic performance, he discovered that a user of Facebook has an average Grade Point Average (GPA) of 0.76 less than non-user of Facebook. Similarly, (Nwangwa et al., 2014) cited by (Mingle & Adams, 2015) revealed that the relationship between academic performance and Facebook usage that non-users of Facebook spend more hours per week studying their books compared to users of Facebook and thus the former get higher GPAs than the later.

The ability of most students to focus on their studies has gradually reduced recently due to the distraction of using social sites and their mind tends to be preoccupied with the happenings on the social media rather than their studies (Raut, Vishranti & Patil, 2016). The more time students spend on social sites the less time are likely to spend studying. Students who simultaneously use social media while studying are likely to be affected academically.

One of the negative effects of social media on education is that it distracts students from concentrating in a lecture class. A lecturer cannot determine who is paying attention in the lecture hall (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016). It creates distraction and addiction among its users. Most often it exposes students' especially females to a lot of social danger in society. (Siddiqui & Singh, 2016) state that students now engage in online friendships, Ponzi schemes, drugs, kidnapping etc. as a result of the social sites they use.

Exercises that demand cantered consideration among students such as studying are gradually reducing among youths, whereas exercises that depend on multitasking such as social media usage e.g. instant messaging are on the increase among students (Levine et al., 2007). It is also common knowledge that many students are multitasking during lectures, readings and assignments with social media sites. This multitasking especially among students is taking a lot of their capacity to focus considerable attention on their academic studies (Levine et al., 2007). However, this activity tends to overstress their brain to concentrate and remember what they have studied. Hence result in poor academic performance.

(Kuppuswamy, S., & Narayan, 2010) State that social media websites have continued to attract the mind of students from studies and redirect them towards non-educational and improper activities such as posting, gaming and futile chatting which have no benefit to their academic pursuit. Even though social networking sites were designed with a positive impact, recently it is a known fact that students have become addicted to them. This addiction is seriously having an adverse effect on their

studies at various academic levels thereby distracting them from their studies (M. & Selvaraj, 2013). Most students rely on social media for virtually everything they do and give less attention to their education and future career. Thus, affecting their focus on the academics.

Methodology

A survey method was used as a research design for this study. Questionnaires were used as the instrument for data collection. The population for the study comprised the National Diploma and Higher National Diploma students of Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, Adamawa state. The total numbers of students sampled were 958 representing the entire population drawn from Faculties (Schools). A simple random sampling technique was employed to select the students that form the sample size of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

A total of 1000 questionnaires were distributed for ascertaining how the use of social media has impacted the academic performance of the students in Federal Polytechnic, Mubi. On returning the questionnaires, a total of 958 were received and analyzed in the tables below using a simple percentage.

Table 1: The level of social media addiction among students of Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

Score	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Disagree	54	5.64
Disagree	76	7.93
Neutral	103	10.75
Agree	177	18.48
Strongly Agree	548	57.20
Total	958	100

Source: Field, 2022

Table 2: The effect of social media on student academic performance in Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

Score	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly disagree	42	4.38
Disagree	66	6.89
Neutral	93	9.71
Agree	164	17.12
Strongly agree	593	61.89
Total	958	99.99

Source: Field, 2022

Results and Discussion

Table 1 above shows that 54 students representing 5.64% strongly disagreed that the students of Federal Polytechnic, Mubi are social media addicts, 76 students representing 7.93% disagreed while 103 students of 10.75% are neutral. Meanwhile, 177 students with 18.48% and 548 students with 57.20% agreed and strongly agreed that there is social media addiction among students of Federal

Polytechnic respectively. With 75.68% (Agree + Strongly agree) of the students agreed to this assertion, it is indicated that there is social media addiction amongst students of Federal Polytechnic Mubi.

Table 2 shows that the academic performance of the students of Federal Polytechnic Mubi is negatively affected with 79.01% (Agree + strongly agree) of the students agreed to this fact. 42 students representing 4.38% and 66 students representing 6.89% strongly disagreed and disagreed with the assertion that the use of social media negatively affects the academic performance of the students. While 93 students with 9.71% are neutral, 164 of the students with 17.12% agreed with the fact as well as 593 students representing 61.89% support by strongly agreed.

Conclusion

It has become very glaring from the results that the use of social media is increasing especially among students due to advancements in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) around the globe. Social media has a lot of benefits that were initially intended to serve both students and the general public when created. However, if special attention is not given to regulating and controlling how is being used by students in our institutions, it will cause more harm than good in their academic pursuit. The study showed that the academic performance of students has been affected negatively by the use of social media. Furthermore, this will affect the standard of graduates from our polytechnics. The study also revealed that students spend most of their time on social media to write, read, share, post, repost, listen, watch, upload, and download photos, music and videos which are in most cases not related to their studies. Most often these activities are social rather than academic. More worrisome these activities are not allocated to a particular time of the day. They are done during lectures, practical and study hours.

Recommendations

Based on the discussion of findings, the negative impact of social media usage on students' academic performance in Federal polytechnic, Mubi is significant. The researchers, therefore, recommend the followings;

- i. Lecturers and Laboratory Technologies should not allow students to use mobile phones or computers with internet access to access social media sites during lectures and practical classes.
- ii. Students should be encouraged to use social media and the internet for academic-related issues such as eLearning, discussion on assignments/practical or other related issues to help them in their studies.
- iii. Students should be advised and encouraged to reduce the time they spend daily on social media and use those times for their studies.
- iv. New students should be counselled on the dangers of using social sites and should be enlightened on websites that can aid them in assignments and research.

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