

UTILIZATION OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG STUDENTS OF HASSAN USMAN KATSINA POLYTECHNIC NIGERIA

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Abstract. In 21st century, easily access to information and communication technology through social media become major concern throughout worldwide. This study examined the use of social media among students of Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic. The objectives are: (1) to determine Hassan Usman Polytechnic students in actively usage of social media, (2) to identify students' perception of social media and (3) to examine the frequency of social media usage. A descriptive survey design was adopted. Sampling size of 98 students of Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic were randomly selected. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection and analysed using descriptive analysis. The result revealed students used social media to share information, chit-chat and interaction with friends. Without noticed, students might use social media to discuss national issues, engage in cyber-crimes and expose themselves to pornography. The findings also indicate that using social media has influenced their lifestyles either positive or negative, and indirectly could affect their achievements in academic excellence. The study concludes that social media is an indispensable Internet platform among Hassan Katsina Polytechnic students. In recommendation, researchers opinion that Social Media Acts should be introduced and stipulate the dos and don'ts among the students and public uses of social networking sites in Hassan Usman Polytechnic Nigeria.

Keywords: *social media, students, Nigeria, polytechnic, academic excellence*

Introduction

Social Media are media that allow users to meet online via the Internet, communicate in social forum like Face book, Twitter, etc., and other chat sites, where users generally socialize by sharing news, photo or ideas and thoughts, or respond to issues and other contents with other people. Common examples of social media are the popular social networking sites like Face book, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, etc. Social Media is an interactive media format that allows users to interact with each other as well as send and receive content from and to each other generally by means of the Internet.

Importance of social media

Social media are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation by stakeholders across boundaries, time and space. These technologies include: blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Face book), and virtual worlds (Bryer and Zavatarro, 2011). The rise of social media sites as another platform on the internet has gained popularity over the last decade. The sites have attracted millions of users worldwide (Boyd and Ellison, 2007) due to this fact many people are changing the outlets where they search for news, information, business and entertainment. These social media sites let those who use them create personal profiles, while connecting with other users of the sites. Users can upload photographs and post what they are doing at any given time. (Pempek et al., 2008). The social media by their nature have the capabilities of educating, informing, entertaining and inflaming the audience. Above all,

they possess a contagious and outreaching influence which the conventional media lack. This potential is most likely what Osahenye (2012) refers to as “unstoppable power of the social media.

Vast of social media usage pattern of students

Abubakar (2011) posits that social media, which include blogs (political Blog), networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), video sharing (YouTube) audio sharing (Podcast), mobile sites (2go etc.), image or picture sharing (flicker), etc. have the capacity of boosting participation because of their open, conversational nature, connectedness and textual and audio-visual characteristic appeals.

In a study conducted on Social Network Addiction among Youths in Nigeria, Olowu and Seri (2012), concluded that majority of the respondents spend more time on social networking sites, which affects their productivity negatively. The findings of this study also indicate that youths in Nigeria are spending too much time on social networking sites at the detriment of other necessary things such as their studies. A study conducted in 2013 to find out students’ use of social media revealed that students view social media for the purposes of leisurely entertainment, to watch films, to expose themselves to photography, discuss serious national issues like politics, economy, and religious matters on the new media. (Mehraj et al., 2014).

Nigeria, a country with population of 167 million people (Odor and Nnadiukwu, 2016), 115 million mobile telephone subscribers and 56 million internet users, has been described as the biggest internet and mobile market (Opata, 2013). Today, in Nigeria there are over 1000 social media networking sites, which include social, educational, entertainment and gossip, etc. One common feature of most of these sites is that their names are usually associated with a tag name Naija or Nigeria. The mass appeal of social media on the internet could be a cause for concern, particularly considering the gradually increasing amount of time youths spend online. In Nigeria, undergraduates spend more time on Face book, Twitter and other social media sites through smart phones that are now in abundance among them and most of them cannot go for two-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 (Idankwo, 2011). *Table 1* indicates the four colleges of the polytechnic paved together 65 (63.70%) agreed that the social media has negative impact to their studies. Thus, 33 (32.34%) of the students agree on positive impact (*Figure 1*).

Table 1. Impact of social media in student academic work.

Impact of social media	Responses	Percentage (%)
Positive impact	33	32.34
Negative impact	65	63.70
Total	98	96.04

Source: Idankwo (2011)

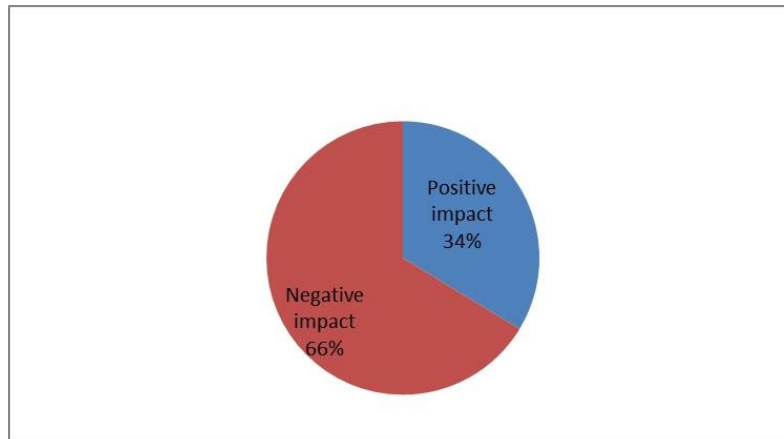


Figure 1. The impacts of social media on students.
Source: Idankwo (2011)

The numerous problems of social media usage have recently been the major focus of attention worldwide. Issues of fraud, identity thefts, pornography and countless other negative influences associated with social networking in general have been a cause of concern for scholars and authorities worldwide. There are increasing concerns on the use of social media for Internet crimes ranging from hacking to recruitment for terrorism. In connection to this study, majority students of Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic went to Internet café to assess the internet, and these circumstances are suspected to have link with the increasing rate of plagiarism. Therefore, the main problem to this study is the issues associated with social media networking among students in Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic, Nigeria. Hence, the social media has accordingly come to be seen in many countries including Nigeria as a source of bad influence on the youth, particularly students. So, the aim of this study is to investigate how the students of Hassan Usman Katsina utilize the social media.

Materials and Methods

Four colleges of Polytechnic are selected for the study, namely college of engineering, college of science and technology, college of agriculture and college of liberal studies. The selected respondents are through purposive sampling technique range between twenty-five (25) years old in each college and the total are expected to reach one hundred (100) undergraduate students (Ang, 2017; Hua, 2016). Meanwhile, capture sampling method is used to administer the instrument. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire, which distributed to students in each college, and the returned questionnaires were ninety – eight (98) in number. The data was subjected to descriptive analysis, particularly concentrate in frequency and percentage in table counts.

Results and Discussion

In *Table 2*, 20 responses with the percentage of (20.61%) uses social media for academic purposes, while 70 responses are not (having the percentage proportion of (71.41%)) and left with 8 responses undecided with (8.10%) percentage proportion (*Figure 2*).

Table 2. Usage of social media for academic purposes.

Usage of social media for academic purposes	Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	20	20.61
No	70	71.41
Undecided	8	8.10

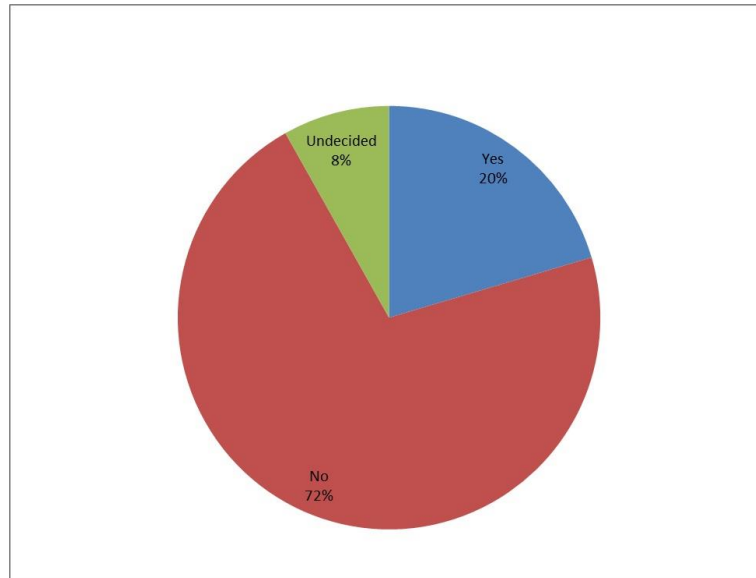


Figure 2. The Usage of Social media for Academic Purposes.

Meanwhile, *Table 3* indicated often used by students in social media are Facebook with 40 respondents (40.81%), WhatsApp with 20 respondents (20.40%), and Skype with 14 respondents (14.28%), while MySpace, Twitter, Badoo, Blogs/web scholars, as well as Google+/ social bookmarking are less used by the undergraduate polytechnic students (*Figure 3*). Another finding showed that the student in the four colleges of the polytechnic use social media for reaching out to friends and information about life. This finding is in line with Ndolo (2006) which found out that majority of undergraduates given the following reasons for using social media reaching out to friends for updating about news.

Table 3. Social media often used by the students.

Social media mostly used by the students	Responses	Percentage (%)
Facebook	40	40.81
MySpace	3	3.06
Google+/Social Bookmarking	5	5.10
Skype	14	14.28
Twitter	2	2.04
YouTube	6	6.12
Badoo	5	5.10
Whatsapp	20	20.40
Blog/web scholars	3	3.06
Total	98	100

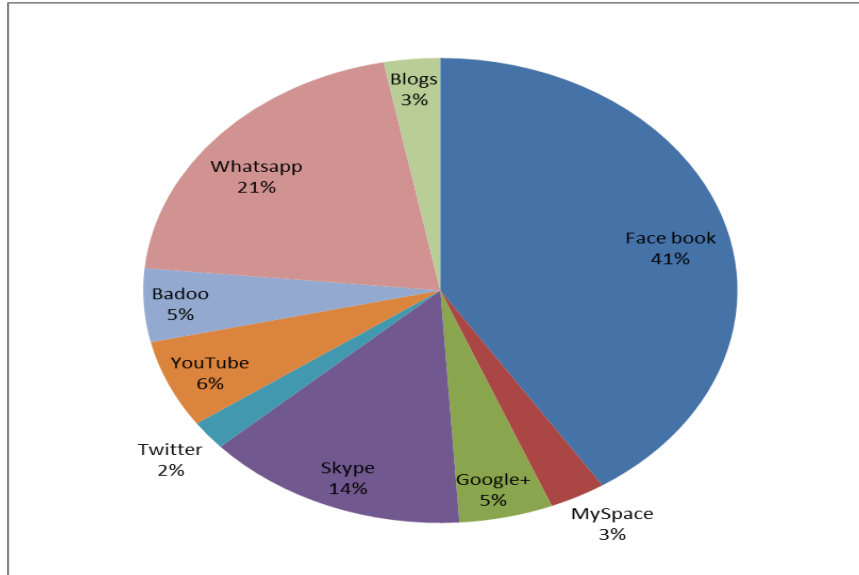


Figure 3. Social media mostly used by the students.

Even though there is high usage of Social Media by the students, it did not reflect that they are using it for academic pursuit. Facebook and WhatsApp have emerged as the most popular and widely used social media amongst students. The finding proved the students believed social media is an essential medium to help them to interact, communicate and expose themselves especially the pornography. This circumstance is a dangerous trend as it negatively influenced students to engage in bad attitude (Oluwaseyi, 2020). In general, frequently spending time in front of the computer for surfing internet will definitely affect their academic output (*Table 4* and *Figure 4*). Based on the *Table 4*, the levels of academic resulted 78 respondents (with 79.59%) of polytechnic performed very low when associated and utilizing with the social media, while only 15 respondents (with 15.30%) performed very high. Only undecided provide the result of 5.10% with only 5 respondents. However, the facts remains that Social Media is an indispensable internet platform among students of Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic, Nigeria. Therefore, this study recommends the students should be encouraged to use Social Media in ways that could be beneficial to them.

Table 4. Levels of academic performance with the social media.

Level of academic performance	Responses	Percentage (%)
High	15	15.30
Low	78	79.59
Undecided	5	5.10

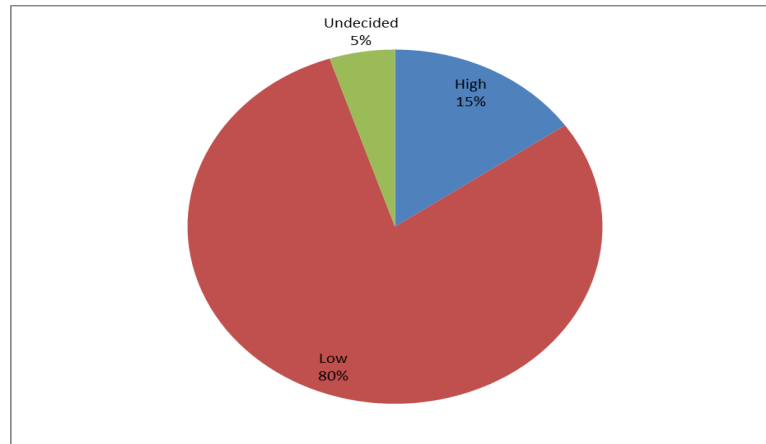


Figure 4. Levels of academic performance with the social media.

In overall, the recommendation from this study are; (1) the students of Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic should frequently use the social media for academic purposes, (2) students should be carefully with the website that they search, share and like especially involved with the social media, (3) students should appreciate and wisely use on the time in reading the books rather than surfing social media which may bring negative effects to them, and (4) the students should be focuses more academic websites like Google Scholar, Researchgate, etc.

Conclusion

Even though there is high usage of Social Media by the students, it did not reflect that they are using it for academic pursuit. Facebook and WhatsApp have emerged as the most popular and widely used social media amongst students. The study concludes the students believed social media is an essential medium which help them to interact, communicate and expose themselves to pornography. Moreover, the study indicates that there is a dangerous trend as it negatively influenced them to engage in bad attitude. On frequently expose to online social media, this might possible negatively affect their academic output. However, the facts remains that Social Media is an indispensable internet platform among students of Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic, Nigeria.

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