Use of Social Media among Students of Nigerian Polytechnic
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ABSTRACT
This study examined the Use of Social Media among Students of Nigerian Polytechnic. The main objectives of the study are: to find out the reasons why students of Nigerian Polytechnic use Social Media, to identify students’ perception of Social Media and to find out the frequency of Social Media usage. A descriptive survey design was adopted. Nine hundred and thirty two Students of Kaduna Polytechnic were randomly selected for the study. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. Administered questionnaires were analyzed using cumulative mean. Findings revealed that the students used Social Media to share Information, chat and interact with friends. Similarly, they spend more than five hours using Social Media. Findings of the study indicate that using Social Media has positively influenced their lifestyles and greatly helped them to achieve academic excellence. The study therefore concludes that Social Media is an indispensable Internet platform among Nigerian Polytechnic students.

Keywords: Social Media, Students, Nigerian Polytechnics, Usage

INTRODUCTION
Social Media are media that allow users to meet online via the Internet, communicate in social forum like Facebook, Twitter, etc., and other chat sites, where users generally socialise 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 Facebook, Myspace, Youtube, Flicker, 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.

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 Facebook), 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, & 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, Yermolayeva, & Calvert, 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 “unstopable power of the social media.

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, Ajewole, Olowu, and Fasola, (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 phonography, discuss serious national issues like politics, economy, and religious matters on the new media. (Ezeah, Euphemia, Asogwa and Obiorah, 2013). Nigeria, a country with population of 167 million people (census 2006), 115 million mobile telephone subscribers and 56 million internet users, has been described as the biggest internet and mobile market (NCC 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 Facebook, Twitter and
other social media sites through smartphones 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)

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.

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. Students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria are not immune to these problems. The main
problem of this study therefore is the manifestation of some or many of the problems associated with social media
networking among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria.

Kaduna Polytechnic the study area, since its establishment as Kaduna Technical Institute in 1956 (Kaduna Polytechnic
Examination Regulations Book, 2012), the school which over the years came to be known as Kaduna Polytechnic, was
the largest in West Africa. Internet café on campus and access among the students has now greatly increased the rate of
plagiarism, for instances among the students, who usually lifted works from the Internet and used them without
attribution during assignments. The purpose of this academic inquiry therefore, is to unravel some of the fundamental
purposes which students of Nigerian Polytechnics use the social media for.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The following are the study’s objectives:

a) To find reasons for usage of social media among Students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria.
b) To find frequency of social media usage among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria.
c) To identify how students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria perceive social media

METHOD AND PROCEDURE
The Descriptive Survey Method was used with structured questionnaire. The population of the study is the entire students
of Kaduna Polytechnic. The total population of the study is 18,640 as at July 2013. A total of 932 students participated in
the study representing 5% of the population, using simple random sampling technique. Data for this study is analyzed
using a 2-point Decision Rule Table rating scale of Accepted and Rejected. The Accepted option is
based on Highest Mean Score range of 4.4 downwards to 3.0. The Rejected option is based on Lowest Mean Score range
of 2.4 to 0.5 as shown in the table below.

Decision Rule Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accepted Highest Mean Score Range</th>
<th>Rejected Lowest Mean Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.4, 4.3, 4.2, 4.1, 4.0 and 3.4</td>
<td>2.4, 2.3, 2.2, 2.1, 2.0, 1.4, 1.3, 1.2, 1.1, 1.0 and 0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data for this study was analyzed by the Mean statistics. The formula is as follows:

\[\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (x_i \times n_i) + \sum_{j=1}^{m} (x_j \times n_j)}{N} \]

\[N = n_1 + n_2 + n_3 + n_4 + n_5\]

Note that \(n_1 + n_2 + n_3 + n_4 = 811\)

Data presentation
Out of the 932 questionnaires distributed for the study, only 811 were returned usable, representing 87%. The
demographic information of the respondents shows that 67% were male while 33% were females. The age variables
indicate that 9% are between the ages of 15 – 18 years, 37% are between 19 -21 years, 25% between 22-28 years while
28% are between the ages of 29 and above.

Research Question 1: What are the reasons for usage of social media among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria?
The items on the table below provided the answers to research question 1. The table and analyses of the contents are
presented below:

**Table 1.** What are the reasons for usage of social media among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sn</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students of Nigerian Polytechnic use Social Media to Share information</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students of Nigerian Polytechnic use Social Media to connect, interact chat with friends</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Students use it to access News, Movies, Music and Photos</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The students use it for Business Empowerment</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Students use it to view Phonography</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Students use Social Media for Job seeking (employment)</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Students Use Social Media for religious propagation</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work 2013

From the table above we can deduce (by summing up the factors in the table and dividing them by 7 to get 3.7) that since
the mean on the scale is 3.0 while the average mean score associated with factors is 3.7, therefore the students have
answered in agreement with all the factors presented as reasons for using Social Media.

Research Question 2: What is the frequency of social media usage among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria?
The items on the table below provided the answers to research question 2. The table and analyses of the contents are presented below:

**Table 2:** what is the frequency of social media usage among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/n</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Students use Social Media all day (6am – 6pm)</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students use Social Media all night (6pm – 6am)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students use Social Media once in a week</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students use Social Media monthly</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Students spend more than five hours using Social Media</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work 2013

From the table above we can deduce (by summing up the factors in the table and dividing them by 5 to get 3.1) that since the mean score on the scale on frequency of using Social Media by Nigerian Polytechnic students is 3.0 while the average mean score associated with factors is 3.1, therefore the students have in agreement with all factors presented as the frequency of using Social Media.

**Research Question 3:** what is the perception of students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria on social media?

The items on the table below provided the answers to research question 3. The table and analyses of the contents are presented below:

**Table 3:** what is the perception of students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria on social media?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/n</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Social Media has positively influenced Students of Nigerian Polytechnic.</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social Media has negatively influenced Students of Nigerian Polytechnic.</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Students regard Social Media as interesting</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Students regard Social Media as uninteresting</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Social Media help Students to achieve academic excellence</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Social Media reduces the time of reading their books.</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Social Media motivate students to engage in cybercrime</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work 2013

From the table above, we can deduce (by summing up the factors in the table and dividing them by 7 to get 3.1) that since the mean on the scale on the perception of Social Media by students of Nigerian Polytechnic is 3.0 while the average mean score associated with factors is 3.5, therefore the students have answered in agreement with all factors presented as the perception of Social Media by students of Nigerian Polytechnics.

**DISCUSSIONS**

This study investigated the use of social media among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria. Findings of the study give fresh insight into how students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria utilize social media. The study has demonstrated that there is high use of social media by the students, which they regard as an avenue for communication and sources of entertainment, while they perceived it as something interesting that they can use to improve their academic performances. Majority of the respondents declared that social media has impacted positively on their academic and social lives. Based on the above we can infer that the objectives of the study proposed at beginning of this study were achieved.

**SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS**

- Facebook and WhatsApp is the widely use social media among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria.
- That students use their handheld devises to access social media.
- That Students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria use Social Media to connect, interact, share information and chat with friends.
- That the students access movies, phonography, music and photos through Social Media.
- That Students use Social Media all the time (24/7)
- That the students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria regard Social Media as interesting platform for achieving academic excellence.
- That Social Media has affected their attitude of reading their books.

**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 whatapps have emerged as the most popular and widely used social media amongst students. The study concludes that the students believed that social media is an essential medium that help them to interact, communicate and expose themselves to pornography. The study concludes that this is a dangerous trend as it negatively influenced them to engage in bad attitude. On frequency, although the study realizes high frequency of usage, there is another danger in hours they spent surfing the net which will definitely affect their academic output. However, the facts remains that Social Media is an indispensable internet platform among students of Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigeria. The study recommends that students should be encouraged to use Social Media in ways that could be beneficial to them.

**REFERENCES**


