

## Impact of social networking on academic achievement of undergraduate social studies students in rivers state, Nigeria

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### Abstract

This research study is to examine the influence of social media on the academic achievement of social studies students in Rivers State. To carry out this study, three research questions were posed and two hypotheses formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted descriptive survey design. A sample size of 50 representing 10.9% was drawn from a total population of 460 social studies students through simple random sampling techniques. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. They had a reliability coefficient of 0.78 determined through split-half techniques. Mean, standard deviation and the simple percentage were used to analyze the research-questions and t-test were used in testing the hypothesis. Analysis of data revealed that a good number of students were addicted to social media usage. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended to others that social media should be used for educational purposes so as to create a balance between social media usage and academic achievements.

**Keywords:** influence, social networking, academic achievement social studies

### Introduction

The Evolution of internet technology by man, no doubt, has turned the entire world into a “global village”. According to Boyd (2007) <sup>[1]</sup>, the millions of social networking sites have transformed the thought of global village into a reality where billions of people communicate through social networking site. Social networking sites are online communities of the internet that students use to communicate with other users so as to promote their interactions with others. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) <sup>[5]</sup>, classified social media into six different classes. They include:

1. Collaborative project (Wikipedia),
2. Blogs and microblogs (Twitter)
3. Content communities (YouTube)
4. Social networking (Facebook, 2go, BB chat)
5. Virtual game world (world of war craft)
6. Virtual second world (second life).

A study conducted in United State shows that 41% of 12-13 years old and 61% of 14-17-year-olds teenagers use a social network (Lenhart & Madden, (2007) in Kandroudi & Bratitsis, 2014) <sup>[4]</sup>. Teenagers have become accustomed to this lifestyle much more than the older generation had. Livingstone (2008) <sup>[6]</sup> put it with precision when he said teenagers now use the social media for the majority of their activities and gathering as opposed to older generations who use resources like television or newspapers. In a related development Godman (2007), estimated that the vast majority of teenagers in Nigeria visit at least one social networking site approximately twenty times each day. On this note, parents and teachers have a great role to play because of safety concerns and some likely risk it may pose.

Perhaps, it was on this note that Fomsi & Nwaizugbu (2016) <sup>[2]</sup> advised that, educators have to use social media in the

classroom so that the students will be familiar with its advantages. To crown it all, Search Institute (2013) <sup>[8]</sup> identified advantages of using social networks in school in such a way that:

- Educators can use it to communicate with students outside the classroom.
- Students can use it to make connections with others who share their interest
- Since most students possess social networking abilities, educators can take advantage of this and create online forum and class blogs.
- Stronger school communities could be built if students and educators could collaborate with others outside their community using social networking.

In view of the above advantages, students should be encouraged to form online communities in other to plan for a project, have a group discussion about class material or use social media site as a way to keep in contact especially when a student missed class and need to be updated on current academic information.

Today, the reverse is the case. Most students have resulted in dilemmas such as users interacting through the use of social networking sites that focuses on building and reflecting social association among people who share interest and or other activities with so many social networking sites displayed on the internet, students are tempted to abandon their lectures, assignment and other reading times in preference for chatting online with friends. Lots of students are now addicted to online rave of the moment with Facebook chat, Whatsapp, Instagram, blackberry message, E-mail, text messages, phone calls video chats, pinging, 2going to mention but few while lectures are on.

The above exposition indicates that social networking

influence on students can never be overemphasized. This is because, the present generation of students, lecturers and administrators have either cell phone, desktop computers, tablets and other digital devices which can enable them to have access to social networks for both socialization, teaching and learning process.

**Statement of Problem**

The world is now becoming a global market in which internet has been the most important source of information to the society. Ever since the advent of social media, academic achievement of students continues to face a lot of challenges and neglects. In most cases, students devote most of their precious time to social networking sites such as Facebook, pinging, Whastapping, 2going, gaming, making new contact and friends thereby putting more pressure on the parents, teachers and the educational business at large.

In most cases, the students download music, pictures, chat with friends and peer groups, watch films, make calls, send text messages and other while lectures are on. In fact, some of the question that comes to mind includes: If a student can access social network in the classroom, what will they do at home? Are they using these devices for socialization or educational purposes? The researchers’ desire to answer these questions spurred the conduct of this study.

**Aims of the Study**

The aims of this study are generally, to examine the impact of social networking on the academic achievement of undergraduate social studies student in Rivers State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Ascertain the level of students’ addictiveness to social networking
2. Determine if age has an influence on a student that uses social network has influence social studies.
3. Find out the extent to which social network is used for academic achievement.

**Research Questions**

The study sought to provide answers to the following questions;

1. To what extent does social network addictiveness affect

academic achievements?

2. In which way does age of students influence the use of social network?
3. Do students use the social network for educational enhancement?

**Hypothesis**

1. Students addictiveness to the social network has no significant influence on academic achievement.
2. Age of students does not have a significant influence on the use of social networking.

**Method of Study**

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study was made up of four hundred and sixty (460) second-year social studies students of University of Port Harcourt, University of Education Port Harcourt and Federal College of Education Omoku. From this population, a sample of fifty (50) made up of twenty-five (25) males and twenty-five females (25) were drawn using simple random sampling techniques. The research instrument for the study was titled “Social Network Achievement Test (SONAT). It had section A and B. Section A describes respondents’ demographic information. Section B was used to answer the research questions. It had a modified four-point Likert rating scale with response options of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3 points, Strongly Disagree (SD) = 2 points and Disagree (D) = 1 point. The questionnaire (SONAT) was validated by three experts. The reliability coefficient of the instrument (SONAT) was determined with the Pearson Production Moment Correlation Technique, and the reliability coefficient of 0.81 was attained. The researchers personally administered all the 50 copies of the instrument to the respondents and collected on the same day. The simple percentage was used to answer the research questions and t-test statistical analysis was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

**Research question I**

To what extent does social network addictiveness affect the academic performance of students?

**Table 1:** student’s addictiveness to social network and academic achievement.

S. No	Statement	SA	A	SD	D	Total	Decision
1.	Addiction to online social network is a problematic issue that affects my academic level	30 60%	10 20%	7 14%	3 6%	50 100%	Accepted
2.	Online social network distracts me from studies	10	32	5	3	50	Accepted
3	I spend more hours online than reading my books	37 74%	8 16%	5 10%	3 6%	50 100%	Accepted
4	There is no improvement on my grades ever since I started accessing social networking sites	19 38%	5 10%	22 44%	4 8%	50 100%	Rejected

Results from table 1 show that item statement 1,2, and 3 accepted while item statement 4 was rejected. Based on the above response, one can now infer that students addicted to social network were affected negatively in terms of academic achievements.

**Research question 2.**

In which way does age of students influence the use of social network?

**Table 2:** Age influence on the use of social network

S. No	Statement	SA	A	SD	D	Total	Decision
1.	Age has impact on the use of social network	30 60%	10 20%	7 14%	3 6%	50 100%	Accepted
2.	The use of social network becomes boring as I grow older	10 20%	32 64%	5 10%	3 6%	50 100%	Accepted
3	Social network is not relevant to elderly people	5 10%	3 6%	6 12%	30 60%	50 100%	Rejected
4	The younger generations are the most active users of social network	25 50%	20 40%	5 10%	- -	50 100%	Accepted

Results from table 2 show that item statement 1, 2 and 4 accepted while item statement 4 was rejected. We can infer from the above result that the use of social network can be found mostly among the teenagers. This is in line with the findings of Goodman (2007) [3].

**Research questin3**

Do students use the social network for educational enhancement?

**Table 3:** The use of social network for education of social network

S. NO	Statement	SA	A	SD	D	Total	Decision
1.	Most of our course outline are downloaded through social network	8 16%	10 20%	20 40%	12 24%	50 100%	Rejected
2.	I obtain some course materials through social network	18 36%	32 64%	20 40%	12 24%	100%	Accepted
3	We submit our term papers to lecturers through social network	8 16%	6 12%	20 40%	16 32%	50 100%	Rejected
4	We take some of our test online	2 4%	7 14%	20 40%	21 42%	50 100%	Rejected

The result of the analysis in table 3 above revealed that item statement 1, 3 and 4 was rejected while item statement 2 was accepted. This shows that social network was not mostly used for education purpose.

**Hypothesis 1:**

Student addictiveness to social network has no significant influence on academic achievement

**Table 4:** T-Test Analysis on Student Addictiveness to Social Network

N	Mean	SD	DF	T	Significance 2-tailed	Result
50	3.34	0.939	49	10.089	.0001	Significant

The result in the table above shoes that t-test value of 10.089 was obtained at the df of 49. It was calculated that the t-value at .0001 significant level was lesser than the chosen 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning that students addictiveness to the social network has an influence on academic achievements.

**Hypothesis 2**

Age does not have significant influence on the use of social network?

**Table 4:** T-Test Analysis on Age and Social Network Usage

N	Mean	SD	DF	T	Significance 2-tailed	Result
50	3.34	0.670	49	14.774	.0001	Significant

Results on table 5 above show that the calculated t-value of

14.774 is obtained at the df of 49. Based on this, t-value at .0001 level is lesser than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected on the ground that age has a significant influence on social network usage.

**Discussion of Findings**

The study investigated the impact of social media on the academic achievement of undergraduate social studies students. Results obtained indicate that students addicted to social Networking were affected negatively in terms of academic achievements. These findings are in agreement with the study carried out by Olubiyi (2012) [7]. He pointed out that students are always busy pinging, 2going or Facebooking while lectures are on. Thus, it affected their academic achievements.

The study also revealed that the use of social network is mostly found among the teenager as shown in Table 2. These findings are in line with Moraham and Shmacher (2000) that social networking addiction was excessively used by the youths.

Evidence from Table 3 shows that students used the social network for other purposes instead of academic achievements. Then, the finding of Livingstone (2008) [6] will be very useful here. His findings revealed that a significant relationship exists between computer attitude and it uses in institutions.

**Conclusion**

The result of the findings of this study showed that social networking has a negative effect on the academic achievement of students which has resulted in dilemmas such as; users interacting through the use of social networking sites for socialization. It is, therefore, arguably to say that social

networking has its advantages and disadvantages, depending on individual perception.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings of the study, the following recommendations is made;

1. The use of social Networking by students should focus mostly on academic achievements and not for negative purposes.
2. Teachers should expose the students to a social network site that will be of benefit to the students.
3. Students should be educated on the influence of social network on their academic achievement.
4. Teenagers should be discouraged on the use of social networking.

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