

Perceived impact of Social Media on Students' Behaviour in Secondary Schools in Agbani Education Zone

Onovo, Nonso Emmanuel and Okechukwu, Oliver (Ph.D)

Mathematics and Computer Science Education Department, ESUT

Corresponding Author: N. E. ONOVO Email: nonso.onovo@esut.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the perceived impact of social media on the social behavior of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone. Specifically, the study determined the areas of application of social media among students and its impact their social behaviour. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. 386 SSII students were selected from a population of 3860 SSII in secondary schools in the Agbani Education Zone. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Application of Social Media Questionnaire (ASMQ). Three experts from the Department of Science and Computer Education, Faculty of Education, ESUT, validated the instrument. Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability coefficient and the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.69. Percentage score, mean, and standard deviation statistics were used to answer the research questions, while t-test statistics were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 significance level. The findings show that students use social media for making new friends, conversing with friends and family members, sharing pictures and videos, entertaining themselves via watching movies, playing games, listening to songs, engaging in discussion with mates after school hours, seeking professional advice, political and sports news update. Social media have a negative impact on the students' social behaviour. Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents should stop giving students smartphones to limit access to the internet, as it distracts them from studying. Also, parents should monitor the kind of social media sites students participate in including their online friends so as to reduce these negative impacts on them.

Introduction

Social media is an interactive platform for communication between people of different categories. The media is tagged social media because of its attribute that enables the interactive communication among users on the web. According to Aldas, Camandona, Concepcion, Sales, and Vinson (2024), social media are media with web-based tools and services that via collaboration and information sharing promote community development. Andreas and Micheal (2010) cited in Apuke (2016) stated that social media are internet-based applications/software developed using web 2.0 ideology and technological foundation that allows users to create and share content. This aligned with the submission of Buettner, (2016) that social media are platforms on the internet that allow individuals and organizations to create and disseminate information in the form of career interests, ideals, and pictures in virtual communities and networks using computer-mediated tools. This indicates that social media are online communication platforms where users create ideas and messages, whose content can be text or videos, and share with their communities. More so communication in these platforms is in the form of interactive dialogue.

Social media redefine how we relate to each other as humans and how we, as humans relate to the organization that serves us. As an interactive platform, social media engages users to participate by posting, commenting, liking, or sharing content as a way of communicating and engaging users and the general public on particular subjects. This aligned with the submission of Apuke (2016) that social media makes communication easy among individuals irrespective of their location through the sharing of information in real-time conversations. As an online platform, it facilitates real-life social network connections among people with common interests, activities, and backgrounds.

Social media being the most popular channels of communication in today's world include; Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, Blogs, Google+, Flickr, Vine, Tumblr, WeChat, WhatsApp, etc. Miah, Omar, and Allison-Golding (2012) reported that the number of social media users is increasing daily with more people spending most of their time on Facebook and Twitter, among others. This is supported by the report of the Nigerian Communication Commission (2018) in Otaru, and Nwankwo (2021) that active mobile phone lines have increased from 144 million to 146 million between 2017 and 2018. It is projected that the estimation of smartphone users of 40 million will increase to 140 million by 2025. This shows that there are more and more people coming on the internet space probably to use social media platforms daily.

Social media has the characteristics of educating and entertaining its users. Its influence breaks boundaries that other media lack. This is what Osahenye (2012) referred to as the "unstoppable power of social media". Silius, Kailanto, and Tervakari (2011) noted that social media enhances learning by enabling students to engage in online communities that supports learning where information and ideas are exchange. In these communities, students can post, comment, or like content. They can blog, and share resources (files, images, videos, etc). Hence, students decide the information content to be posted or shared among them.

Nigeria Communication Commission (2015) reports that among 90 million people using social media in Nigeria, students are of greater percentage. This aligned with the submission of Mberia and Kamaku (2014) that secondary school students' social media usage is on the increase and the time spent on the media consumes time for studying. This has resulted in the poor performance of students which some researchers have

associated with bad behaviours such as poor concentration as a result of inadequate sleep, lack of good study habits, and truancy in schools among others. Muritala, Makama, and Godwin (2014) stated that social media has exposed students to different kinds of bad behaviours probably because of peer groups they formed on the media. More so, it enables students to romantically connect with friends and strangers which may derail their attitude and change their behavior toward their school activities.

Social behaviour is referred to as human behavior. Social behavior is an individual activity that influences another individual activity. A social behavior is stimulated by an individual in the society which again stimulates other members of the group or society. According to Adegboyega (2020), social behaviour is an individual's disposition, perception, attitude, and reaction, towards those around him/her. It is a response focused on the humanity or human existence among members of the society which is possible because of social communication (Akubugwo & Maria, 2013).

Social behaviours are developed through social interaction within family and community. It can either be positive or negative. Adegboyega (2020) stated that positive social behavior can be seen as acceptable behavior because it centers on acceptable positive dispositions, attitudes, perceptions of an individual while negative social behaviour is an opposite of positive social behaviours. The scholar went further through the use of social media students learn bullying, blackmailing, and fraud, among others. These examples align with the submission of Akubugwo et. al (2013) that negative social behaviour include; crime, violence, dishonesty, nuisance, online sexual harassment, etc. In like manner, Al-Sharqi, Hashim, and Kutbi (2015) noted that students' engagement in

bad behaviours such as cyberbullying, cybercrime, fraud, and lack of physical human relations is a result of social media usage. This is an indication that negative social behaviors are those actions that harm or lack consideration for the well-being of others and are disruptive to others in society. Instead of making positive use of social media, they use otherwise.

Social media helps students stay connected with their friends and family through virtual communication. However, social media could be a source of moral decadence for youths and students in secondary schools. It could also be a source of distraction for them, cyberbullying and sexual harassment which may lead to depression. Ibrahim (2012) observes that student neglects the educational benefits of social media which has endangered them into becoming victims of sexual harassment and bullying through posting or downloading inappropriate content.

This indicates that media can negatively influence students' behavior. This is confirmed by the report of Akubugwo et. al, who reported that social media lead users most likely students to develop negative social behaviours such as; posting of nude pictures online, copying slang, using words or phrases that can cause riots or disorder, becoming addicted and abandoning their academic pursuits among others. Kirshner and Karpinski (2010) pointed out that the high rate of utilization of social media is common among students exhibiting luxurious living, have bad attitudes and poor study habit and are disrespectful to parents and teachers.

The habit of students using the internet not necessarily for academic purposes but for other purposes which is not academics is on the rise. These tallies with the submission of Ibrahim (2012), that students neglect the informative and educative benefits social media offer, rather they use it for fraud, pornography, and other social vices. Most of the literature reviewed are studies carried

out outside the area of the study, Hence, the need to carry out similar studies in Enugu State.

In many research works, the issue of gender differences has been a common feature, yet no unanimously accepted conclusion has been reached. For instance, Egbo, Okoyeuzu, Ifeanchio, and Onwumere (2011), in their study, reported that female students tend to use ICT facilities more than their male counterparts. Contrarily, Law and Huang (2011) reported that in using ICT facilities in learning, male students have demonstrated more positive attitudes than female students. This means that controversies still exist as to the prevalent social media and the areas of application based on gender, hence this study also brought in gender as an independent variable in the issue of prevalent social media and the application and influence among secondary school students.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigated the perceived impact of social media on students' behaviour in secondary schools in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the area of application of social media among secondary school students
2. determine the impact of social media on students' social behaviour

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the areas of application of social media among secondary school students?
2. What is the impact of social media on students' social behavior?

Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at $p < 0.05$:

H01: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students in the area of the application of social media among secondary school students.

H02: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the impact of social media on students' social behaviour.

Research Method

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study is comprised of 386 SS II students in secondary schools in Agbani Education Zone, which is 10% of the student population of 3860 senior secondary school class two (SS2) students. A structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Department of Science and Computer Education, Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology.

Cronbach Alpha statistics were employed to establish the internal consistency of the instrument and the reliability coefficient of 0.69 was obtained. For data analysis, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were employed in analyzing the research questions, while t-test was employed in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05, significance level. For the decision to be reached, about mean response score above 2.50 were regarded as agree and mean response score below 2.50 were regarded as disagree. For hypotheses testing, it was interpreted based on significant value (sig) from SPSS output. The hypotheses were rejected when the significant level (p) is less than 0.05 but were not rejected when it is greater than 0.05.

RESULTS

Research question one: What are the areas of application of social media among secondary school students?

Table 1: Mean score responses of students on the areas of application of social media among secondary school students

SN	I use social media for	Male = 211		Female = 175		Overall		Dec.
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	
1	Making new friends	2.83	1.03	2.66	1.09	2.75	1.06	A
2	Keeping in touch with family and friends	2.66	1.16	2.51	1.18	2.58	1.17	A
3	Posting of pictures and videos	2.69	1.11	2.78	1.18	2.73	1.14	A
4	Passing information to friends	2.69	1.06	2.58	1.08	2.63	1.07	A
5	Playing game	2.79	1.13	2.40	1.19	2.59	1.16	A
6	Watching and downloading pornography	2.33	1.15	2.38	1.10	2.35	1.13	D
7	Watching and downloading movies	2.73	1.09	2.37	1.14	2.55	1.12	A
8	Downloading latest songs	2.81	1.12	2.63	1.09	2.72	1.10	A
9	Watching and downloading tutorial videos	2.58	1.08	2.16	1.11	2.37	1.09	D
10	Downloading educational books	2.73	1.18	2.21	1.10	2.47	1.14	D
11	Engaging in Internet fraud	2.61	1.08	2.24	1.10	2.42	1.09	D
12	Discuss difficult topics with mates after school hours	2.74	1.09	2.29	1.11	2.51	1.10	A
13	To seek professional advice on personal matters	2.63	1.07	2.57	1.16	2.60	1.12	A
14	Search for political news	2.69	1.12	2.40	1.08	2.54	1.10	A
15	Search for sports news	2.64	1.11	2.41	1.08	2.53	1.10	A
16	Search for the latest fashion	2.13	1.17	2.70	1.14	2.42	1.15	D
17	Posting of seducing pictures and videos	2.28	1.10	2.51	1.15	2.40	1.12	D
GRAND MEAN		2.62	1.11	2.46	1.12	2.54	1.12	A

Data in Table 1 shows the mean response scores of male and female students in the areas of application of social media among secondary school students. From the table, male students agreed to all the items except for items 6, 16, and 17 which had mean scores less than 2.50 set for the study. This indicates that male students don't use social media for watching and downloading pornography, Searching for and downloading movies, downloading the latest songs, discuss difficult topics with mates after school hours, to seek professional advice on

the latest fashion, and posting seducing pictures and videos respectively. The female agreed only to items 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 13, 16, and 17 with mean scores greater than 2.50 set for the study.

The overall mean response shows that students apply social media in the areas of making new friends, keeping in touch with family and friends, posting pictures and videos, passing information to friends, playing games, watching personal matters, search for political news and search for sports news.

Research question two: what is the social behavior?
influence of social media on students'

Table 2: Mean score responses of students on the influence of social media on students' social behavior

SN	ITEMS	Male = 211		Female = 175		Overall		Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	
18	Using social media can make me violate	2.29	1.22	2.42	1.13	2.36	1.18	D
19	Using social media can make students disrespect others	2.61	1.17	2.57	1.14	2.59	1.15	A
20	Using social media can make students make anti-social comments (racist, sexist, homophobic, or anti-religious comments)	2.72	1.07	2.55	1.12	2.64	1.10	A
21	Using social media makes students engage in bullying	2.70	1.18	2.62	1.19	2.66	1.19	A
22	Using social media exposes students to sexual harassment	2.54	1.20	2.52	1.18	2.50	1.19	A
23	Using social media makes students start using slang	2.64	1.17	2.68	1.19	2.66	1.18	A
24	Using social media makes students form bad groups in school	2.61	1.17	2.87	1.09	2.74	1.13	A
25	With the use of social media, I find it very easy to tell lies	2.52	1.03	2.81	1.04	2.66	1.04	A
26	Using social media sites encourages gossip	2.58	1.11	2.67	1.15	2.63	1.13	A
27	Most times, I am passive in class because I am busy chatting with my friends	2.54	1.19	2.54	1.07	2.51	1.13	A
28	Using social media can make students conceive negative ideas and thoughts	2.61	1.12	2.75	1.09	2.68	1.10	A
29	Using social media can make students to become mentally dull	2.39	1.07	2.32	1.06	2.36	1.07	D
30	Using social media can allow students to express their views freely	2.52	1.11	2.56	1.14	2.54	1.12	A
31	Using social media can make students feel shy	2.41	1.14	2.38	1.10	2.40	1.12	D
32	Using social media can make students more popular	2.54	1.08	2.52	1.14	2.53	1.11	A
33	Social media usage can make students feel depressed	2.39	1.18	2.58	1.14	2.48	1.16	D
GRAND MEAN		2.54	1.14	2.59	1.12	2.56	1.13	A

Data in Table 2 shows the mean response score of male and female students on the influence of social media on their social behaviour. From the table, the overall mean shows that the students agreed to all the items with mean scores greater than 2.50 except items 18, 19, 31, and 33 with mean scores less than 2.50 set for the study. This shows that using social media can make

students disrespect others, make anti-social comments, engage in bullying, expose them to sexual harassment, form bad groups in school, tell lies easily encourage gossip, and conceive negative ideas and thoughts among other things. This shows that social media impacts students' social behavior negatively. Also, the overall standard deviations between the range of 1.00 to

1.50 indicate low standard deviation, this means that the response score of the students clustered around the mean response. This shows that the students' opinion are the same.

Hypotheses one: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students in the area of the application of social media among secondary students.

Table 3: t-test results on the mean rating of male and female students in the area of application of social media among secondary students

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig	Dec.
Male	211	2.64	1.11	4.659	384	0.000	S
Female	175	2.46	1.12				

Table 3 shows that the t-value on the mean rating of male and female students in the area of application of social media among secondary school students is 4.659, significant at 0.000 level of significance, which is less than 0.05 level of

significance set for the study and therefore, the hypothesis is rejected as stated.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female students on the influence of social media on students' social behaviour.

Table 4: t-test results on the mean rating of male and female students on the influence of social media on students' social behaviour

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig	Dec.
Male	211	2.50	1.14	-2.149	384	0.032	S
Female	175	2.56	1.12				

Table 4 shows that the t-value on the mean rating of male and female students on the influence of social media on students' social behaviour is -2.149, significant at 0.032 level of significance, which is less than 0.05 level of significance set for the study and therefore the hypothesis is rejected as stated.

students utilize social networking sites as a medium of interaction with friends and classmates for studies, having discussions on national matter, and entertaining themselves among other things. Also, the

Discussion of Findings

In Table 1, data that yielded the answer to research question one which sought to find out the areas of application of social media among secondary school students is presented. This findings revealed that secondary school students use social media for making new friends, conversing with friends and family members, sharing pictures and videos, entertaining themselves via watching movies, playing games, listening to songs, engaging in discussion with mates after school hours, seeking professional advice, political and sports news update. The finding support the submission of Omekwu, Eke, and Odoh (2014) that

findings align with the report of Ezeah, Asogwa, and Obiorah (2013), that students utilize social media for mainly for information sharing, entertainment and political and sports updates. This implies that social media are means students get news updates and entertained, share information with family and friends and establish relationships.

Further analysis indicates that the difference between the mean response scores of male and female students in the area of the application of social media among secondary school students is significant. This difference may be a result that male students use social media for playing games, watching and downloading movies, downloading educational books, engaging in cybercrimes, and searching for political news and sports news whereas female students use it for most especially searching for the latest fashion and posting of seducing pictures and videos. This shows that the two groups apply them significantly for different things. This agrees with the assertion of Liaw and Fluang (2011), that social media usage varies among students based on their gender, that is to say that the gender of students influences social media usage. Probably this is because boys had had earlier online presence in technology in form of video and computer games than the girls.

Table 2 presents data that answer research question two which determined the impact of social media on students' social behaviour. The result shows that Social media negatively influences students' social behaviour. This shows that using social media can make students disrespectful to others, make anti-social comments, engage in bullying, expose them to sexual harassment, form bad groups in school, tell lies easily encourage gossip, and conceive negative ideas and thoughts among other things. The findings agreed with the report of Akubugwo et. al who reported that social

media lead users most likely students to develop negative social behaviours such as; posting of nude pictures online, copying slang, using words or phrases that can cause riots or disorder, becoming addicted and abandoning their academic pursuits among others. Also in line is the finding of Al-Sharqi, Hashim, and Kutbi (2015) noted that students utilize social media to engage in bad behaviours such as cyberbullying, cybercrime, fraud, and lack of physical human relations.

Further analysis revealed that the difference between the mean response of male and female students on the impact of social media on students' social behaviour is significant. This may be due to the fact that the ill behaviour perpetrated by the boys more than the girls because girls are fond of uploading stories about their personal life and relationship problems which boys or male adults takes advantage of. This finding disagrees with the report of Egbo, Okoyeuzu, Ifeancha, and Onwumere (2011), that female students would use ICT more than their male counterparts and that of Law and Huang (2011) that male students have more positive attitudes than female students in the use of ICT in learning.

Conclusion

The study determined the perceived impact of social media on students social behaviour among secondary school students in Enugu state. Findings made from the analysis of data indicate that students use social media for making new friends, conversing with friends and family members, sharing pictures and videos, entertaining themselves via watching movies, playing games, listening to songs, engaging in discussion with mates after school hours, seeking professional advice, political and sports news update. However, the areas of application differ among male and female students. It was also revealed that social

media usage negatively impact students' social behaviour among secondary students in the Agbani Education Zone as shown by the result.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study;

1. Government should make policy to restrict students' use of certain devices in schools and the inclusion of certain types of content that will influence the students negatively on social media sites.
2. Principals and teachers should monitor students' activities on social media by joining and becoming their friends on social media so that they will better guide the students in using social media to promote their performance.
3. Parents should stop giving students smartphones to limit access to the internet, as it distracts them from studying.
4. Parents should monitor the kind of social media sites students participate in and the kind of friends they have online. So that they will better guide the students in the kind of friends they should keep and social media sites they should visit.
5. Social media content creators should stop including contents that have negative influences on the student's social behaviour. But should focus only on content with good academic/educational, moral, and social values that will have positive influences on the students.

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