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SOCIAL NETWORKING AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITIES IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

    This study investigated social networking and the academic performance of students in the Universities in Kwara State. The study was a descriptive survey type. The population consisted of all university undergraduates in Kwara State, Nigeria, while the target population was undergraduates in two selected Universities in Kwara State. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the two Universities which are; University of Ilorin, Ilorin and Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. The proportional stratified sampling technique was used to select 90 respondents from University of Ilorin and 60 respondents from Al-Hikmah University totaling 150 respondents. A questionnaire titled "Social Networking and Academic Performance Questionnaire" (SNAPQ) was used for data collection. Test re-test method was employed for the reliability with 0.76 coefficient. Two research questions and four hypotheses guided the study. Percentage was used to answer the research questions while t-test and ANOVA were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that a majority of the respondents sspend more than three hours on social networking sites daily. There was no significant difference between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on school type, there was a significant difference between length of stay on social networking site and academic performance of students and also, there is a significant difference between the use of social networking site and academic performance of students in various specializations. It was recommended among others that University undergraduates should see social network as an avenue to connect with fellow students, locally and internationally and University management, parents and government should monitor social networking activities of their students, children and citizens to check the excessive and abusive use of the platforms without invading their privacy.

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Key words: Social Networking, Academic Performance, Undergraduates and Universities.

INTRODUCTION

The term Internet is actually a short form for "Internet networks", which implies that internet is a network of computer networks which gives room for people to message, share files and so on, from different locations which led to networking (Andrew 2005). Hence, according to Olawepo & Oyedepo (2008), Networking is referred to as the connection of two or more computers to communicate with each other. This implies that, when millions of computers in different locations around the world are connected together to allow users send and receive information to one another, this process is referred to as networking.

Social Networking involves the use of the internet to connect users with their friends, family and acquaintances. Social networking websites are not necessarily about meeting new people online, although this does happen. Instead, they are primarily about connecting with friends, family and acquaintances you already have in real life. The most well known social networking sites are the Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and Bebo. These sites allow you to share photos, videos and information, organize events, chat, download music and even play games like Scrabble and Chess online.

Development in computer technology have licensed the internet to serve as a platform not just for obtaining information but an avenue for exchanging ideas and knowledge with other users and extract ideas or opinions of expert via emailing, tele-conferencing, messaging and so on, through the introduction of social networking sites (Ahmed et al, 2014). Over the years, social networking among students of higher institutions has become more and more popular. It is a way to make connections, not only on campus, but with friends outside of school. Due to the increased popularity of social networking sites, economists and professors are questioning whether grades of students are being affected by how much time is being spent on these sites (Choney, 2010).

Many students of today's higher institution can be thought of as "digital natives", a term coined by Prensky (2001) to describe individuals who have known nothing but a digital environment since birth, surrounded by and using cell phones, computers, videogames, digital music players, and all the "necessities" of the digital age. In many cases this digital culture has influenced students' skill and preferences in number of prominent areas related to education (McCarthy 2010). These students prefer receiving information quickly and are good at processing information rapidly; they prefer multitasking and nonlinear access to information; they have a low tolerance for lectures and prefer active rather than passive learning, and they rely heavily on social networks for social and professional interactions and accessing information (McCarthy, 2010).

According to Ahmed (2013) the process of teaching and learning has always been a fertile ground for early adopters of innovation in computer technology. Consequently, David (2010) asserted that great educators have always known that learning is not something that is limited to the classroom or that should be forcibly undertaken under the supervision of teachers.

Social networking websites can be understood as platforms on which a range of activities takes place, as well as locations for interaction among individuals, groups and communities. A majority of social networking websites do a lot more than just allow youths to have a profile and a friend's list; they build upon and integrate many communication tools and technologies (e.g. e-mail, messaging, video sharing and photo-sharing) (Ewem et al, 2013).

Academic performance is a multidimensional construct consisting of three dimensions: student's characteristics, teacher/lecturer's competencies and academic environment. The student's characteristics dimension of the academic performance concerns how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers helped in defining the extent of performance (Loo and Choy, 2013). The determinants of this dimension are student's intelligence, personality and the socio-economic status. Within the academic context, for example, student's ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate their knowledge verbally or down on paper enhances academic performance. Teacher's competencies dimension of academic performance, on the other hand, concerns how well teachers can impart knowledge on students.

However, the number of non-human elements in the academic environment and their functionality help define the academic performance of students. Within the academic environment, for example, the amount and quality of facilities such as library, laboratory, suitable classrooms, decent hostels and other teaching aids could enhance or lower student's performance. Mark and Nor (2014) asserted that accurately measuring academic performance is a vital component in planning for a student's education. Measuring performance determines how well students have achieved desired educational goals. It is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment (Quenemoen, et, al. 2003).

Research has suggested that, 94% of University students are users of at least one social network (Junco et, al., 2011). Numerous social networks exist, including Twitter, Facebook and so on. Undergraduate students spend countless hours using social networks. Twitter users currently total, "200 million people who send an estimated 155 million messages or tweets per day" (Junco et, al., 2012, p. 1). Instant messaging among undergraduate students has recently declined, but students still spend an average of an hour and 20 minutes per day chatting. Facebook is one of the most commonly used social networks with

approximately 85%-99% of undergraduate students utilizing it (Junco, 2012a). As smart phone technology continues to develope more students would have easier access to social networks, and students would use them more frequently (Stollak, Vandenberg, Burkland, & Weiss, 2011).

The rationale for use of online social networks among undergraduates may be found in McLaughlin and Lee's (2008), assertion that online social networks allows learners to access peers, experts, and the wider community in ways that enable reflective self-directed learning. In line with this, Kimberly et, al (2009) argued that the involvement of a student in activities such as making friends on online social networks should be seen as a way of having access to up to date information that can be channeled towards improving academic performance which they described as how students cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. Onuoha (2011) reported that a majority of the undergraduate students use Facebook (96%), YouTube (84%), Blogs (20%), Twitter (14%), MySpace (12%) and LinkedIn (10%). Likewise, the study of Hargittai (2007) revealed that Facebook was the most popular online social network among students, with almost four in every five respondents using it. In one of such study, Santos, Hammond, Durli and Chou (2009) studied students in Singapore and Brazil, and discovered that many of the Brazilian students used online social networks to socialize and discuss their studies while the Singaporean students used them for social interactions only.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out the relationship between social networking and academic performance of undergraduate students in universities in Kwara State.

Research Questions

1-   How many hours do you typically spend on social networking sites daily?
2-   What is the level of academic performance of students of Universities in Kwara State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested:

H_1:   There is no significant difference between length of stay on social networking site and academic performance of students in Universities in Kwara State.

H_2:   There is no significant difference between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on school type.

H_3:   There is no significant difference between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on gender.

H4: There is no significant difference between the use of social networking site and academic performance of students in various specializations in Universities in Kwara State.

Methodology
Research Type: the research method adopted for this study was a descriptive survey method which was considered appropriate by the researchers to give systematic description of the relationship between social networking and academic performance of students in the universities in Kwara State.

Instrument: A researcher-designed questionnaire titled "Social Networking and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (SSAPQ)," was used for the study. The questionnaire was made up of two sections: A and B. Section A of the questionnaire elicits information on the bio-data of the respondents, while section B consisted of 20 items on social networking and academic performance of undergraduate students in universities in Kwara State structured along a 4-point modified Likert-type scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

Sample and Sampling Technique
The population for the study consisted of all university undergraduates in Kwara state, Nigeria, while the target population was undergraduates in two selected Universities in Kwara State. Purposive sampling method was used to select two Universities in Kwara state. The Universities that were covered include: University of Ilorin, Ilorin and Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. Thus, the proportional stratified sampling technique was adopted to select the respondents according to the population of the sampled universities. the sample for the study was 200 students. The proportional stratified sampling technique was adopted to select One hundred and twenty (120) respondents from University of Ilorin and Eighty (80) respondents from Al-Hikmah University making a total of two hundred (200) respondents which cut across all levels of the two universities. Two hundred questionnaire were administered some were not returned, some were not properly filled. Hence, 150 that were properly filled were used for this analysis.

Procedure for Data Collection
The researchers through 4 research assistants. (two from the sampled universities), administered the questionnaire to all the students involved in the study. Each student was given a copy of the questionnaire and the questionnaire was collected back after 2 hours.

Results

The data gathered were analysed using the following procedure: bio data of the respondents and research questions were addressed using frequency counts and percentages, while the research hypotheses were statistically tested using the t-test and ANOVA at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1: **Percentage Analysis of the Distribution of the Respondents by Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	69	46.0
Female	81	54.0
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Table 1 shows that out of the 150 respondents that participated in the study, 69 (46.0%) were males, while 81 (54.0%) were females. This shows that there were more female respondents than male respondents that participated in this study.

Table 2: **Distribution of the Respondents by University**

Respondents by University	Frequency	Percentage (%)
University of Ilorin	90	60.0
Al-Hikmah University	60	40.0
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Table 2 shows that out of the 150 respondents that participated in the study, 90 (60%) respondents were from University of Ilorin, while 60 (40%) respondents were from Al-Hikmah University.

Table 3: **Distribution of the Respondents by Field of Study**

Field of Study	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sciences	34	22.7
Engineering	28	18.7
Arts and Humanities	33	22.0
Business and Social Sciences	27	18.0
Education	28	18.6
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Table 3 shows that out of the 150 respondents that participated in the study, 34 representing (22.7%) were Sciences students, 28 representing (18.7%) respondents were Engineering students, 33 representing (22.0%) were arts and Humanities students, 27 representing (18.0%) were Business and Social Sciences students while 28 representing (18.6%) were Education students.

Table 4: **Distribution of the Respondents by Level**

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
100	20	13.3
200	32	21.3
300	48	32.0
400	43	28.7
500	7	4.7
Total	**150**	**100.0**

Table 4 shows that out of the 150 students that participated in the study, 20 (13.3%) were 100 level students, 32 (21.3%) were 200 level students, 48 (32.0%) were 300 level students, 43 (28.7%) were 400 level students while 7 (4.7%) were 500 level students.

Answering of the Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

Research Question 1: How many hours do you typically spend on social networking sites daily?

Table 5: **Percentage Analysis of Number of Hours Students of Universities in Kwara State Spent on Social Network**

Hours on Social Network	Frequecy	Percentage (%)
1 Hour	5	3.3
2 Hours	37	24.7
3 Hours	35	23.3
More than 3 Hours	73	48.7
Total	**150**	**100 (%)**

Result on table 5 indicated that 5 (3.3) of the respondents spend an hour on social networking sites daily, 37 (24.7%) spend 2 hours daily on social networking sites daily, 35 (23.3%) spend 3 hours daily on the social networking sites daily, while 73 (48.7%) spend more than 3 hours on social networking daily. This showed that more respondents spend more than 3 hours on social networking site than those who spend 1 hour, 2 hours and 3 hours in this study.

Research Question 2: What is the level of academic performance of students of Universities in Kwara State?

In order to answer this research question, respondents' performances were collated. The output of the analysis reveals thus:

Table 6: Percentage Analysis of the level of Academic Performance of the Respondents in Universities in Kwara State

Academic Performance	Frequecy	Percentage (%)
High Level	19	12.7
Average Level	90	60.0
Low Level	41	27.3
Total	**150**	**100 (%)**

Result on table 6 indicated that 19 (12.7%) students had a high level of academic performance, 90 (60.0%) had average level of academic performance while 41 (27.3%) had low level of academic performance. This showed that the level of academic performance of students of Universities in Kwara State was average.

Hypotheses Testing

HO₁: *There is no significant difference between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on school type.*

Table 7: **The t-test Analysis of the Difference between Students' Use of Social Networking Site and their Academic Performance based on School Type**

School Type	No	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.t-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Public	90	55.08	7.56				
				148	0.59	0.55	Accepted
Private	60	54.28	8.55				

P<0.05

Results on table 7 shows a t-value = 0.59 with p-value = 0.55> 0.05 alpha level. Since 0.55 was greater than 0.05 alpha level, hypothesis one is thus accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on school type.

HO₂: *There is no significant difference between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on gender.*

Table 8: **The t-test Analysis of the Difference between Students' Use of Social Networking Site and their Academic Performance based on Gender**

Gender	No	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.t-Value	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Male	69	55.29	7.99				
				148	0.75	0.45	Accepted
Female	81	54.31	7.93				

P<0.05

Results on table 8 shows a t-value = 0.75 with p-value = 0.45 > 0.05 alpha level. Since 0.45 was greater than 0.05 alpha level, hypothesis two is thus not rejected. This indicates that there was no significant difference between students' use of social networking site on their academic performance based on gender.

HO:3 *There is no significant difference between length of stay on social networking site and academic performance of students in Universities in Kwara State.*

Table 9a: **ANOVA summary Table of Difference between Length of Stay on Social Networking Site and Academic Performance of Students in Universities in Kwara State**

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.	Decisi-
Between Groups	790.899	3	263.633			
Within Groups	8626.461	146	59.085	4.462	0.005	Reject
Total	9417.360	149				

p>0.05

Results on table 9a show F-value = 4.462 with p-value = 0.005< 0.05 alpha level. Since 0.005 is less than 0.05 alpha level, hypothesis three is thus rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference between length of stay on social networking site and academic performance of students in Universities in Kwara State.

Table 9b: **Scheffe's post hoc Table for Length of Stay on Social Networking Site and Academic Performance of Students in Universities in Kwara State**

Length of Stay on Social Networking	N	Subset for alpha =0.05		
		1	2	3
One Hour		55.57		
Two Hours			58.35	
Three Hours				51.59
More than Three Hours				54

The table 9b shows the scheffe's post hoc for difference between length of stay on social networking site and academic performance of students in Universities in Kwara State and it was revealed that the four lengths of hours spend on social networking on site were significantly different. One hour has the highest mean score of 55.57 in subset 1, followed by two hours with mean score

of 58.35 in subset 2, followed by more than three hours with mean score of 54.49 in subset 4 and followed by three hours with mean score of 51.59 in subset 3.

HO₄: *There is no significant difference between the use of social networking site and academic performance of students in various specializations in Universities in Kwara State.*

Table 10a: **ANOVA summary Table of Difference between the Use of Social Networking Site and Academic Performance of students in Various Specializations in Universities in Kwara State**

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	df	Mean of Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	1386.100	4	346.525			
Within Groups	8031.260	146	55.388	6.256	0.000	Rejected
Total	9417.360	149				

$p > 0.05$

Results on table 10a show F-value = 6.256 with p-value = 0.000< 0.05 alpha level. Since 0.000 is less than 0.05 alpha level, hypothesis four is thus rejected. This indicates that there is a significant difference between the use of social networking site and academic performance of in various specializations in Universities in Kwara State.

Table 10b: **Scheffe's post hoc Table for Use of Social Networking Site and Academic Performance of in Various Specializations in Universities in Kwara State**

Specializations	N	Subset for alpha =0.05				
		1	2	3	4	5
Education		50.00				
Arts & Humanities			53.39			
Engineering				54.21		
Sciences					57.00	
Business & Social Sciences						59.11

The table 10b shows the scheffe's post hoc for difference between the use of social networking site and academic performance of the students in various specializations in Universities in Kwara State and it was revealed that the specializations were significantly different. Business and Social Sciences have the highest mean score of 59.11 in subset 5, followed by Sciences with a mean score of 57.00 in subset 4, followed by Engineering with a mean score of 54.21 in subset 3, followed by Arts and Humanities with a mean score of 53.39in subset 2 and followed by education mean score of 50.00 in subset 1.

Summary of Findings

The major findings of this study revealed that:

1. More respondents spend more than 3 hours on social networking site than those that spend 1 hour, 2 hours and 3 hours in this study.
2. The level of academic performance of students of Universities in Kwara State was average.
3. There was no significant relationship between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on school type.
4. There was a significant relationship between length of stay on social networking site and academic performance of students in Universities in Kwara State.
5   There was no significant relationship between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on gender.
6   There is a significant relationship between the use of social networking site and academic performance of students in various specializations in Universities in Kwara State.

Discussion

This study analysed the relationship between social networking and academic performance of students of Universities in Kwara State. The finding of this study revealed that more respondents spend more than 3 hours on social networking site than those that spend 1 hour, 2 hours and 3 hours in this study This finding is in consonance with that of Onuoha, et. al. (2011). They found that a majority of the students make use of social networks even though motivation for use is more for social interaction than academic purposes.

The finding of this study revealed that the level of academic performance of students of Universities in Kwara State was average. This finding supports that of Oke (2013) who found that academic performance of secondary school students in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State was average.

The finding of this study revealed that there was no significant relationship between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance based on school type. This finding is in consonance with that of Onuoha, et al, (2011) who found that there was no significant relationship between students' use of social networking site and their academic performance on the basis of school type.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings the following recommendations were made:

- University undergraduates should see social network as an avenue to connect with fellow students, locally and internationally, to facilitate learning beyond classroom walls.
- Universities should promote academic research on suitable social media platforms for academic practice such as submission of assignments, term papers, review sessions, tutorials and collaborative learning.
- Students users of social network should get acquainted with privacy mechanism and be mindful of the information they share on social networking sites.
- University management, parents and government should monitor social networking activities of their students, children and citizens to check the excessive and abusive use of the platforms without invading their privacy.

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