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Impact of Social Networking Sites Utilization on Academic Performance of Undergraduate Students' in Yobe State University Damaturu, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study x-rays the impact of social networking sites utilization on academic performance of undergraduate students in Yobe State University Damaturu. Exploratory survey research design was used. Simple random sampling technique was used to select three hundred and seventy (370) students for the study. A self-developed Questionnaire was used to collect the data, the instrument was pilot tested and reliability of 0.76 was found. The data collected was analyzed using Mean and standard deviation (SD) for the research questions While Mann-Whitney was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that social networking sites utilization has positive impact on academic performance of undergraduate students with cluster mean=2.634 and also the undergraduate students are competent in utilizing social networking site with cluster mean=2.580. Similarly, there is significant difference between male and female students ($U(366) = 691.5$, $P < 0.05$) of Yobe State University Damaturu in terms of social networking sites utilizations in favour of male students. The study recommends that the university should organized orientation programme and skill development to students that will encourage them to have the requisite skill, to be more competence and exposure to enable them to be more proficient in the utilization of SNSs in learning activities. The state government and university management should intensify their efforts and join hands together and ensure that computer laboratories are provided with adequate functional computers hardware and software for students' to use. Seminars should be organized to students more especially female students' on effective usage of Social Networking Sites.

Keywords: Social Networking Sites, Academic Performance, Undergraduate, Utilization.

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Introduction

Scholars are becoming increasingly concerned about the factors that bring about differences about students' academic achievement; numerous variables were brought to focus, few among the factors are effective use of teaching aids such as utilization of information and communication technologies by teachers in teaching and learning process, academic self-efficacy of the learner', personality variables such as parental motivation and parental socio-economic status and external variables such as the student's home, school's climate, student-teacher ratio in class, peer group influence and more recently effective utilization of Social Networking Sites (SNSs) by the learners.

Students' academic performance at the tertiary institution is not only an indicator to the effectiveness or otherwise of schools but a major determinant of the future of youths in particular and the country in general. The medium through which the attainment of individuals and the country educational goals can be achieved is through learning. Students' academic performance have become a subject of interest to all and sundry and these account for the reason why researchers have been working hard to figure out the factors that militate against good academic performance (Aremu & Sokan, 2003). Students' academic performance has been differently referred to in literature as academic achievement, or scholastic functioning. Students' academic performance has attracted attention of parents, policy-makers, and researchers in general (Adejumo, Oluwole & Muraina, 2015).

The growth of technology towards the end of the 20th century propelled the emergence of the internet, satellite which led to what is called Social media or Social network (Duran, 2013). Social network or social media is a term in this present world which means the compasses of the emergence of digital, computerized or networked interactive information channel. It is also a form of electronic communication which facilitates interaction based on certain interests and characteristics. Social networks are media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. It uses web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues into social dialogues. It has emerged as a term frequently used (and variously defined) to describe different types of communication platforms and electronic ways of interacting.

Chen and Bryer, (2012) define Social network as a platform for people to share ideas, meet new friends and to reconnect with old friends. Social Networking Sites offer people new and varied ways to communicate via the internet, either through their PC or mobile phones such as Zoom, Goggle meet, MySpace, Skype, Facebook, Twitter, 2go, Whats-App, Nimbuzz, ebuddy, E-mail, BBM, Wechat e.t.c. They allow teachers' and students' to simply and easily create their own online pages or profile and to construct and display an online network of contacts often called 'friends'. Users of these sites can communicate via their profile both with their lecturers and people outside their list of contacts (Apagu, & Wakili, 2015). With the SNSs, students' find it easy to communicate with their classmates, discuss class assignments and even submit assignments to their lecturers, watch videos, make comments on friends' pages e.t.c. In countries like Nigeria and other developing countries, Oliver and Goerke, (2007) observations revealed that young people are high users of established technologies, such as computers, the internet, E-mail, and mobile phones. This has supported the remark made by Thomas and Knezek (2008) that the students of nowadays are described as "digital natives" who have "spent most of their entire lives on using computers, videogames, digital music players, video cams, cell phones, and all the toys and tools of the digital age"

Since the introduction of SNSs years ago, communication between lectures and their students has been an easy one through the use of internet. The internet has given people the ability to connect with other tutors from around the globe with a few clicks of a button. And can easily send information to students' or receive information. SNSs have attracted millions of users, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily routines (practices). Students consume a lot of time on this sites uploading and downloading, getting information concerning their academic work (Duran, 2013). But the question here is; how then does the students' cultivate creative minds that can withhold the challenges of the SNSs in

developing countries like Nigeria? Wheeler, Yeomans, and Wheeler (2008) recognized that social media usage by students in institution of higher learning enhance relationship, improve learning motivation. On similarly vein, Rifkin, Longnecker, Leach and Ortia (2009) find out that social media offer personalized course material and developed collaborative abilities of the students. Moreover, Khan (2010) study observes that greater percentages of students including those at the Ph.D. level are using social media to help them in their study. Social media among students has come to stay as many students' are always online every second, chatting with friends, watching online movies, or doing research. Visiting SNSs have become a habit for some students; they find it difficult to study for one hour without logging into one networking site or another (Oliver & Georke, 2007). Some students have become very smart because of the information they get from the sites, it is easy to get almost any materials for school assignment, home-work, and tutorials while some spend much of their times watching movies and become poor academically.

Von Hellens, and Nielsen (2001) says communication is a basic human need and for that reason, man has always found a means of meeting this needs either through interpersonal or mass communication. Unlike in the past, students' of the world are today living in a global village because of various breakthroughs in information technology. The world has now become a global village where the whole world is now compressed into a single electronic chat room. Gateway (n.d) opines that information that usually takes many days or weeks to disseminate now takes seconds or minutes. It is now possible for students' to make interpersonal communication with others students' to get desired information as quickly as possible from other areas of the country or from other countries with the use of SNSs without leaving their (vicinity) immediate environment.

This research utilizes the definition of social media by Punie and Cabrero (2006) as being “technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberations across stakeholders”. Utilizing this definition, social media includes such tools as electronic blogs, audio/video tools (e.g., YouTube), Internet chat rooms, Google class, Google scholar, Wikipedia, answer.com etc. While all of the previous tools can and do facilitate interaction between and among users to various degrees, this research is primarily concerned with the impact of Social Networking Sites utilization on academic performance of undergraduate students' in Yobe State, university Damaturu, Nigeria.

As related to this study, the previous statistics indicated that SNSs tend to have the highest usage rate among college students that is, those under 30 years old, for younger cohort groups below the college level, their usage rate tends to be the lowest (Lenhart, 2009). Similarly, male students uses social networking sites more than female students (Volman & Van-Eck 2001; Sarfoet, 2011) Therefore, in other to fill in the gaps in the previous studies and add more to the existing literature, this study examines the impact of Social Networking Sites utilization on the academic performance of undergraduate students in Yobe State University, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Advancement in technology in this era has reshaped all human activities on earth to include communication. The world has become a global village where the use of computer and internet facilities is indispensable (Cuban, 2001). Social networking/media is among the numerous means which the students' interact and communicate online. Today millions of students' are now on social network most especially students' of young age exchanging views, ideas and other related matters.

The issue of the use of SNSs by students and its effects is a phenomenon that disturbs the mind of many educated people and researchers in the world at large (Lenhart, 2009). The problem of SNSs is not only prevalent in the study area but a National phenomenon that attracted the attention of various scholars within and outside the nation. For many years, various researchers conducted researches on this subject with view of finding out the possible impacts, yet little study was conducted in the study area. Moreover, SNSs can have impact on the students'; educationally, economically and socially. Thus, Davies and Cranston (2008) highlighted some of the risk associated with SNSs to include criminal activities such as cyber bullying, online harassment, Facebook addiction, sexual abuse or harassment, educationally the students may not pay attention due to the much time that is been wasted on SNSs doing unnecessary things and subsequently affect their academic achievement. Socially, many students' turned to be

circumstantial criminals, creating unnecessary social unrest. Moreover, some scholars attributed the reasons of poor academic performance to socio-cultural factor, economic factor and others traced it to religious and psychological factors. Wherever lies the problem poses a lot of damages to the general development of the individual, society and the nation at large. In view of the above, this study examines the impact of SNSs utilization on students' academic performance of Yobe State University Damaturu, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the impact of Social Networking Sites utilization on academic performance of undergraduate students' in Yobe State University, Damaturu. The study specifically achieves the following objectives:

1. determine the impact of SNSs Utilization on Academic Performance of undergraduate students in Yobe State University Damaturu
2. determine the level of competency of undergraduate students' in utilizing SNSs in Yobe State University Damaturu.
3. determine the difference between male and female undergraduate students level of competency in utilizing SNSs in Yobe State University, Damaturu.

Research Question

1. What is the impact of SNSs utilization on academic performance of undergraduate students in Yobe State University Damaturu?
2. What is the competency level of undergraduate students' in utilizing SNSs in Yobe State University Damaturu?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in utilizing SNSs in Yobe State University Damaturu.

Methodology

The researchers adopted explorative research design. An explorative study is always supportive when an in-depth analysis has not been done concerning a particular topic or study group under investigation. The population for the study comprised of all undergraduate students' in Yobe State University, Damaturu with the total population of nine thousand seven hundred and sixty three (9,763). The sample of the study was three hundred and seventy (370) which was selected using krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of determining sample size of a known population.

The Research instrument used for the study was questionnaire designed by the researchers to illicit responses from the students; the questionnaire was named Students' Level of Competency on utilization of Social Networking Sites (SLC-SNS). The questionnaire has three (3) sections. Section A contains bio-data information while section B contains the items that respondents are expected to express their opinion on their perception toward SNSs utilization and section C contains the items that respondents are expected to express their opinion on their level of competency on the SNSs utilization. Four (4) point Likert-like type options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) were used. The total numbers of items in the questionnaire are 1 to 30. The instrument was pilot tested, and the reliability coefficient obtained was found to be 0.76 using Crombach Alpha. By virtue of the value obtained, the instrument was adjudged to be reliable for the study.

The researchers distributed the questionnaire to the selected students in face to face method of distribution. Similarly, the researchers also anticipates that not all questionnaire distributed would be returned and hence distribute as many question as possible to deal with the problem of mortality which could be treat to internal validity of the study. The data gathered from the administration of the research instruments was analyzed using descriptive statistical tools. Mean and standard deviation (SD) was used to answer the research questions. The arithmetic mean for the values was computed as $4+3+2+1= 10/4 = 2.50$ Therefore, any item with weighted mean of 2.50 was considered accepted and any item with

weighted mean less than 2.49 was considered rejected as a decision rule while Mann-Whitney test was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Answering Research Questions

Research Question one

The Research question state: What is the impact of SNSs utilization on academic performance of undergraduate students in Yobe State University Damaturu?

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of impact of SNSs utilization on undergraduate students' Academic Performance in Yobe State University

S/N	ITEMS	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1.	I have right attitude towards the use of SNSs on my studies	3.3011	1.28008	Agreed
2.	I am comfortable using SNSs in learning process	3.6774	1.36044	Agreed
3.	I won't have anything to do with SNSs	1.7903	1.21882	Disagreed
4.	Most of SNSs are not available for use	1.6129	.91278	Disagreed
5.	I have phobia for using SNSs	2.0806	1.29188	Disagreed
6.	The state of facilities discourages me from using SNSs	2.3441	1.19117	Disagreed
7.	SNSs makes course more interesting	3.5968	1.26841	Agreed
8.	SNSs cannot address the need of school system	1.6720	.47074	Disagreed
9.	SNSs skill is worthwhile	3.6774	1.19151	Agreed
10.	I am ready to use SNSs to access learning material	2.5914	1.20081	Agreed

CLUSTER MEAN: 2.6344

Table 1: reveals the mean responses of undergraduate students' in Yobe State University on impact of SNSs utilization on Academic Performance. The baseline for agreement on all the items presented to the respondents is 2.5. From the mean responses, it would be seen that the respondents agreed with 5 items. The cluster mean of all the items was 2.6344, which is above the cut-off point of 2.50. This indicates that SNSs utilization influence Academic Performance of undergraduate students in Yobe State University Damaturu.

Research Question Two

The Research question state: What is the competency level of undergraduate students' in utilizing SNSs in Yobe State University Damaturu?

Table 4.6. Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents of students' competency on the SNSs utilization on Academic Performance in Yobe State University

S/N	ITEM	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1.	I can use web search engines (Chrome, Firefox AltaVista etc) very well	3.6774	1.16044	High
2.	I can use the web camera to communicate on the internet	2.1989	.75566	Low
3.	I enjoy the use of Liquid Crystal Display (LCD) or Multimedia Projector or Presentation of my assignment	1.5108	.76575	Low
4.	I can use web authoring tools	2.3495	1.04567	Low
5.	I can connect my computer and its peripherals to browse the internet	2.6559	1.34763	High
6.	I can search for documents on SNSs to help me developed my personal note	3.3012	1.28009	High
7.	I can locate and run an application programme e.g MS office, goggle, Wikipedia and answer.com.	2.5161	1.30788	High

8.	I can access information on CD/DVD	2.9194	1.51353	High
9.	I can open a new document in word	3.3011	1.42400	High
10.	I can print to various networked printers	2.5495	1.08567	High
11.	I can use spreadsheet package very well for calculation	1.5108	.76575	Low
12.	I can create a basic presentation package for seminar and presentations	2.1505	.55888	Low
13.	I can organize electronic files into folders	2.5989	1.25566	High
14.	I can sort and filter data for my personal use	2.3495	1.04567	Low
15.	I can set up a database and update them	1.4570	.72095	Low
16.	I can communicate online with my lecturer on assignment	2.6129	1.30084	High
17.	I can save a document in various file formats including PDF	2.9570	1.50177	High
18.	I can attach files to outgoing e-mails for assignments	2.8720	1.91278	High
19.	I can access an internet site via its website address	2.6226	1.86726	High
20.	I can download files from the internet	3.4946	1.27298	High

Cluster Mean= 2.580

Table 2: reveals the mean responses of students' competency on SNSs utilization on Academic Performance of undergraduate students' in Yobe State University Damaturu. The baseline for agreement on all the items presented to the respondents is 2.50. From the mean responses, it would be seen that the respondents agreed with 13 items. The cluster mean of all the items was 2.580, which is above the cut-off point of 2.50. This indicates that undergraduate students are competent in the use of SNSs on Academic Performance.

Hypothesis Testing

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between male and female students in SNSs utilization on Academic Performance in Yobe State University.

Table 3. Mann-Whitney test Results of Male and Female students in Yobe State University

Test Variable	N	df	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U- calculated	P-value
Male	201		62.87	6098.5		
		366			691.5*	.021
Female	167		43.93	922.5		

Significant at 0.05

Table 3: Shows the Mann-Whitney test of Male and Female students in Yobe State University Damaturu with mean ranking of 62.87 and 43.93 for Male and Female undergraduate student respectively. The result showed that there is a statistically significant difference between the groups in favour of male undergraduate ($U(366) = 691.5, p < 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that the SNSs utilization influence male students Academic Performance higher than their female counterparts in Yobe State University Damaturu.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of first research question showed that undergraduate students at Yobe State University Damaturu have positive attitude towards SNSs utilization on their Academic Performance. The finding is in line with the earlier findings of Wheeler, Yeomans and Wheeler (2008) and Rifkin, Longnecker, Leach and Ortia (2009) whose results indicated that social media usage by students in institution of higher learning increases their learning motivation, offering personalized course material and developed collaborative abilities of the student. This finding is not startling because students visits ICT laboratories more often during their free time and are seen carrying laptop computers and other electronic devices. The finding of second research question showed that undergraduate students are competent in the SNSs

utilization for their academic performance. The finding agrees with the earlier finding of Khan (2010) whose finding shows that a greater percentage of students including those that the Ph.D. level commonly use social media to ameliorate their study.

Finding of the research hypothesis showed that there was statistically significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in favour of male students. The finding agrees with Volman and Van-Eck (2001) and Sarfoet (2011) who revealed that female students have low levels of computer use due to their limited technology access, skill, and interest. The male students on the other hand utilized more SNSs in their learning processes than their female colleagues.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following based on the findings of this study:

1. The university should organized orientation programme and skill development of students that will encourage them to have the requisite skill, to be more competence and exposure to enable them to be more proficient in the utilization of SNSs in learning activities.
2. The government, NUC and university management should intensify their efforts and join hands together and ensure that computer laboratories are provided with adequate functional computers hardware and software for students' to use.
3. Seminars should be organized to students more especially female students' on effective usage of Social Networking Sites.

Conclusion

It has been concluded that Social Networking Sites utilization has a positive impact to undergraduate students' academic performance in Yobe State University Damaturu. Similarly, students in Yobe State University Damaturu are competent in the use of SNSs and Male Students utilize SNSs more than their female students in Yobe State University.

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