



INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN ENUGU EDUCATION ZONE OF ENUGU
STATE.

Dr. Doris Chidi Malu¹

Head of Department English Language Education
Peaceland College of Education Enugu, Enugu State
dorismalu@gmail.com

&

Dr. Ngozika Rita Nnamdi-Eze²

Enugu State College of Education Technical Enugu (ESCET)
ngozirita08@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the influence of social media on the performance of secondary school students in English language in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. The study sample was fifty nine(59) secondary schools, in which twenty three thousand, two hundred and fifty nine (23,259) were students and one thousand, seven hundred and ninety two (1,792) were teachers. A four-point Likert type rating questionnaire titled 'Social Media and Academic Performance of Students in English Language' (SMAPOSIEL) was used to collect data from the respondents. The descriptive survey design was used. Simple random sampling was employed in sampling the respondents. Frequency and mean (X) were used in the analysis of data. The findings of the study led to the conclusion that the dominance and addiction on social media are the major causes of poor performance in English language both in internal and external examinations among secondary school students of Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. To this end, the researcher recommended that social media should be used for academic purposes, social networking sites should be expanded and new pages should be created to enhance students academic activities, more strict and proper supervision by all stakeholders should be imbibed, workshops, seminars and public enlightenment programmes should be launched by the government, parents and teachers should check the sites their students / wards are always using so as to be guided properly. This is to create a balance between social media and academic activities of students to avoid setbacks in the academic performance of the students.

Keywords: Social Media, English Language and Secondary School

Introduction

English Language is the medium of instruction and transmission in our secondary schools, and higher institutions and also the official language of our country Nigeria. Therefore, secondary school students need an efficient English language in order to perform better and perfectly well. Fema, (2003), as cited in Sa'ad & Usman, (2014), was of the view that "a person is functionally literate when he acquired the knowledge and skills in reading and writing which enables

him to engage effectively in all those activities in which literacy is normally assumed in his culture of group". English language normally has four basic skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is the medium of instruction in our schools and compulsory school subject that must be passed at all levels of education in Nigeria (Ochoyi & Danladi, 2008).

Today, however, we are witnessing a trend, which is a great cause of concern for all stakeholders in the educational sector across

the world. The concern is about the popularity, dominance and influence of social media on the academic performance of students, both of higher and of secondary education levels. Many recent studies have, consequently, underlined the positive and negative effects of social media on these students. (Shah, Subramanian, Rouis, & Limayem, 2012; Miah, Omar & Allison-Golding, 2012; Ezeah, Asogwa & Edogor, 2013; Yahya, Olalekan, Afolabi, & Ayelaagbe 2013). The said influence is most evident in their use of English language and their performance in English language examinations.

Meanwhile, the social media is the fastest growing web application in the 21st century, a fact attested to by its wide usage and the wide-ranging consequent influence on the populace. There is indeed abundant evidence that millions of people across the world use social media on a regular basis for various reasons (Daluba & Maxwell, 2013). In fact, the wide nature of applications like Wikis, video streaming and applications, and social networks makes it the phenomenon of the century.

Though social media use cuts across all age groups, studies have, in addition, shown that it is predominant among young persons (Onuoha & Saheed, 2011) and/or students (Dahlstrom, de Boor, Grunwald, & Vockley, 2012; Al-rahmi, Othman & Musa, 2014). In fact, Rosen (2011) found that while those born between 1965-1979 ('Generation X'), spend approximately 13 hours per day on social media, those born between 1990-1999 ('I Generation') spend not less than 20 hours per day on social media. Kalra and Manani (2013) pointed out that these young people use social media for interaction, socialization and entertainment.

Thus, while social media, generally, presents such benefits as encouraging greater social interaction via electronic mediums,

promoting interactions among students and teachers, providing greater access to information and information sources, creating a sense of belonging among users, reducing barriers to group interaction and communications such as distance and social/economic status, and increasing the technological competency levels of frequent users, among others (Connolly, 2011; Zwart, Lindsay, Henderson & Phillips, 2011; Ahmed & Qazi, 2011); preliminary investigation and interviews with some teachers and students have, however, revealed a number of challenges in relation to student's participation on social media networks and the many adverse influences on them. These include a high addiction rate, which affects their time of study, the wrong usage of grammar and spelling in social media discourse as well as distractions from their studies. As stated by Ndaku (2013), students spend a lot of time on social networking sites than in their academic activities and this affects their performance. Given the foregoing, therefore, this study seeks to investigate the influence of social media on the performance of senior secondary school students in English language using Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State.

Statement of the problem

One of the factors that have been associated with the steady decline in the quality of Nigerian education system and the students they produce is the very fact that the system had in a recent time being with the wide range of educational laxity in the use of social media network. This worrisome, uncultured behaviours beside their influence among students also tends to cut across all strata of the school system both junior, senior and tertiary. It is now a common knowledge that most secondary school students not only possess Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc., accounts, but also that most of them are now

addicted to the online crave of the moment (Oche&Aminu, 2010). With so many social networking sites displayed on the internet, many secondary school students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends more than their academics that disrupt the educational equilibrium in the use of English in our school system and even the society at large. Some studies have found a drop in students' grades and academic performance, and lack of time for studies as consequences of social media network participation (Banquil et al, 2009; Kirschner and Karpinski, 2010; Ndaku, 2013), which results in their poor performance in both internal and external examinations in the English language. In Nigeria secondary schools today more especially in Enugu Education Zone, there is a serious concern about the increase in social media network problems such as: wrong spelling, use of acronyms, waste of time and energy in chats, twitter, facebook etc. For instance, the students are used to short forms of writing words in their chat rooms; they forget and use the same in the classrooms. They use things like 4 in place of 'for', U in place of 'You', D in place of 'The', etc. This affects their class assessment and also most of them perform badly in English language in schools for they negatively turns to posting and accessing write-ups in distorted grammar and both leads to increase in grammatical errors, increase in wrong spellings, high rise of spelling distortions/corruption of words, high rise in use of slangs and street expressions. There is need for this distortions and anomalies to be corrected. Based on this foregoing, therefore, this study is designed to investigate the influence of social media network on the performance of secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the degree to which social media influence the senior secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State. Specifically the study intends to:

1. Determine how secondary school students in Enugu Education Zone of Enugu State are addicted to social network and its influence on their academic performance.
2. Ascertain how the use of social media positively influence their academic performance in their English language internal and external examinations.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How would student's addictiveness to social media network influence their academic performance?
2. How does the use of social media influence the academic performance of the students in Enugu Education Zone positively in their English language internal and external examinations?

Concept of Social Media

Social media has emerged as a term frequently used (and variously defined) to describe different types of communication platforms and electronic ways of interacting (Mozee, no date). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined it as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, allows the creation and exchange of user generated content and depend on mobile and Web based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, create, discuss and modify user generated content. They refer to the internet-based social websites like the Facebook, MySpace,

Twitter, etc. which allow users to interactively communicate with one another. Social media can also refer to those “web-based and mobile-based technologies which are used to turn communication into interactive dialogue between organizations, communities and individuals (www.wikipedia).

The media allow users to meet friends, exchange ideas, images, audios, videos and most importantly stay connected. Since through their inventions, they have become increasingly popular in different countries across the globe. Bryer and Zavatarro (2011) see social media as “technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberations across stakeholders”.

Anjugu (2013) describes social media as “a group of internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of users generated content”, while Ezeahet *al* (2013) defines it as “modern interactive communication channels through which people connect to one another, share ideas, experiences, pictures, messages and information of common interest”.

Students Addictiveness to Social Media:

Rosen (2011), cited in Kirschner and Karpinski (2010, p. 4) declared as follows about the modern generation of young people: Welcome to the Net Generation. Born in the 1980s and 1990s, they spend their days immersed in a “media diet” accumulating a fulltime job plus overtime devouring entertainment, communication, and every form of electronic media. They are master multitaskers, social networkers, electronic communicators and the first to rush to any new technology. They were born surrounded by technology and with every passing year add more tools to their electronic repertoire. They live in social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, and Second Life gathering friends; they text more

than they talk on the phone; and they Twitter the night away often sleeping with their cell phones vibrating by their sides.

This clearly indicates that social media is part and parcel of youth life today. Thus, over the years, scholars have examined how much time students invest in social media. Lin and Subrahmanyam, (2007) found that majority of college students in the United States used social networking sites (SNSs) at least one hour a day. Ahamed and Qazi (2011) in a study of six universities in Pakistan, found that majority of the students spend 1-3 hours daily on social networking sites. Tham and Ahmed (2011) in a study conducted at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota found that, while both males and females spent time on SNSs, the said time however, decreased as the age of the respondents increased and the results revealed that female college students spent more time on SNSs than male students. Jagero and Muriithi (2013) in the context of students in private universities in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, found that a majority of the students spend 30 minutes to one hour daily on social networking sites.

Influence of social media network on students’ academic performance in general and on their performance in English language in particular:

It is generally agreed that social media has both positive and negative effects on the academic performance of students across the world. In fact, many researchers today are working to explore the correlation between social networking sites and academic performance. The advent of the social media has made the erstwhile impossible become possible, as one can conveniently communicate with anyone at any time irrespective of geographical barriers and distance. Umekachikelu (2013) has expressed that “it is amazing that with a click one passes information to thousands of

people in a second.” This is the power of social media. It has made business, politics and social life effortless and easy. This is further accelerated by the fact that these social media sites are accessible with mobile smart phones, anywhere and at any time. Before examining the influence of the social media on the performance of students in English language we outline briefly these effects in general.

Positive effects:

Social media offer great benefits. Ikpe and Olisa (2010) have observed that “social media are new communication technologies... which are used as channels of information dissemination to heterogeneous audiences without the constraints of time, space or distance”. With the social media one can conveniently send or receive information to or from anyone and at any time irrespective of geographical barriers. Soola (2008:87) described the new media (social media) as communication technologies with “impressive array of sophistication, increasing efficiency, reliability, speed, accuracy, cheapness, portability and ubiquity made possible by microprocessors”.

Young (2006) in a study titled “the effect of internet use and social capital on the academic performance of students” observed that the internet expands its reach to teenagers’ school life. Young noted that students are more reliant on the internet to access information that is involved in school life as well as entertainment. The researcher further added that internet, though consumes time, has less effect on studies. Yang (2003) notes the effect of social media depends large on the degree of usage.

Internet engagement: In a world where online engagement is important for businesses, students are becoming experts at developing a sense of internet presence. Not only do they know how to interact with others on the internet, they know how to use basic

and even complex functions in order to do so. Thus, students use social networking sites to interact with their peers and even teachers about class-related subjects.

Informal knowledge and skill: Social Networking sites can facilitate learning and skill development outside formal learning environments by supporting peer to peer learning, skills collaboration and diverse cultural expression. The knowledge and skill young people are learning through SNSs are directly relevant to the ‘participatory web’ in which ‘user generated content is now integral in a rapidly developing online business model that capitalizes on the social networks, creativity and knowledge of its users; and this means that new business models are expected to emerge.

Education: Social networking sites help in schools and universities programmes. Such social networking sites for example, blogs help to leverage or complement formal educational activities and enhancing outcomes. SNSs are also used to extend opportunities for formal learning across geographical contexts. Thus, social media can enhance the interactions of marginalized young people with their teacher and increase their confidence in educational activities.

Individual identity and self-expression: Because SNSs are essentially flexible and designed to promote individual customization, they are used to experiment as well as find legitimacy for their political, cultural or sexual identity. Social networking sites can provide users with a space to work out identity and status, make sense of cultural cues, negotiate public life and increase user’s sense of personal belonging. This sense of personal belonging and identity has been

Negative effects:

Different researchers have conducted research to ascertain the influence of social media on users; for example, Moon (2011) in a study on “impact of facebook on

undergraduate academic performance”, averred that:

social media have negative impact on students. According to the result, the more students use facebook, the more it affects their academic performance. Similarly, Oye (2012) notes that most of the younger students use social networking sites mainly for socializing activities, rather than for academic purpose. Oye (2012) further observed that most of the students do feel that social networking sites have more positive impact on their academic performance. In another study conducted by Shana (2012), it was revealed that students use social network mainly for making friends and chatting. The result showed that only about 26 percent of the students (respondents) indicated that they use social media for academic purpose. Gonzalez (2003) also reported a problem with using online communication: that it negatively affects the student’s use of language, grammar and spelling. She suggested that online communication often leads to the use of short phrases and incomplete sentences, and that it often becomes informal conversation that may negatively impact academic writing. Because writing on Social media is different from writing in a classroom, students might not see the connection between the two forms of writing (academic writing and informal writing). They consider writing on Social media as a type of informal writing for communication, not for academic purposes. Social media has been noted to have some negative effects on students’ academics thus:

Displacement Effect on Academic Activities: Since majority of students use social networking sites for socializing purposes, they therefore tend to spend more time for socializing rather than learning. Thus, excessive use of SNSs reduces student’s academic performance since time

meant for studies is used on non-academic issues like chatting and making friends (Salvation & Adzharuddin 2014). For instance, the Karpinski research shows that students who used Facebook had a “significantly” lower grade point average than those who did not use the site. The majority of the students who use Facebook every day are under achieving by an entire grade compared with those who shun the site. Researchers have discovered how students who spend their time accumulating friends, gossiping and poking others on the site may devote as little as one hour a week to their academic work. Karpinski says she isn’t surprised by her findings but clarifies that the study does not suggest that Facebook directly causes lower grades, merely that there’s some relationship between the two factors. (cf. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/education/article6078321.ece>).

Psychological Disorders and Health Problems: It has been discovered that anxiety, depression, poor eating habits, lack of physical exercise; increasingly short attention spans and subverted higher order reasoning skills such as concentration, persistence, and analytical reasoning are among the common disorders seen in the frequent users of social media and this manifest itself more these days because people are more closer to those far away from them but far away to those very close to them. It has also been added that a tendency to overestimate one’s ability to multi-task and manage projects; and technology being seen as a substitute for the analytical reasoning process are tendencies evidenced amongst frequent users of the social media. Collectively, these play roles in a student’s educational process to various degrees and at various times (Mozee, no date). However, amidst all sociological benefits, social media have regrettably contributed to

moral degeneration and decadence among youths in several countries, including Nigeria. This, no doubt, stems from the gross obsession with and abuse of these social networking sites.

There is evidence that while social media is used as means of communication, it can also be used to propagate deviant behavior among young people. Deviant behavior is considered to be abnormal or antisocial if it is uncommon or different from the norm and does not conform to what society expects (Thio, Taylor, & Schwartz 2012). Deviant behavior among young people can be attributed to a combination of several generalized factors (Patchin&Hinduja, 2013).

With Particular Reference to social media use and its influence on English language performance,

Rouis, Limayem, &Salehi-Sangari (2011) investigate the effects of using Facebook on academic performance of undergraduate students at Lulea University of Technology Sweden in relation to their personality traits. The proposed research model tests how Facebook usage affects performance of students with different personality traits. In addition the research tries to justify the relationship among the three i.e. Facebook usage, personality traits and academic performance. Their analysis of 239 students' data reveals very significant results. This research establishes that using Facebook has strong negative impact on academic performance of students with extrovert personalities. However, factor of self-regulation among students greatly reduces this negative impact as they have high level of effective self-control while using social media platforms. Cognitive absorption, which defines extent of deep involvement, is another personality factor taken into consideration while undertaking this research.

Junco *et. al.* (2011) investigates the impact of Facebook being a social medium on students' performance on academic courses. The research analyzes data from 1839 respondents studying 4 years degrees in residential institutes of northeastern USA to find trends on frequency of Facebook visits and activities, time spent on Facebook, time spent on class preparation and academic grades of the students under research. Analysis of the collected data reveals that time spent on Facebook and frequency of visiting Facebook are negatively related to students' performance in terms of their GPA. However, there is slightly negative correlation between time spent on this widely used social medium and the time spend in studying for class. He further adds that although time spent on social media and academic performance are negatively correlated but, this relationship in real world scenarios does not seem to be a major hurdle in academic success.

Research Method

The study adopted survey research design. The study was carried out in Enugu Education Zone. The population of teachers in Enugu Education Zone is one thousand, seven hundred and ninety two (1,792) while the number of students is twenty three thousand, two hundred and fifty nine (23,259), thereby making it a total population of twenty five thousand, and fifty one (25,051). The main source of this information is from the Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB) Enugu. Ten (10) secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone were selected through simple random sampling from Fifty nine (59) secondary schools in Enugu Education Zone. The instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was subjected to face validity and validated by three experts in the field of information and communication

technology (ICT), measurement and evaluation in Education, and English language. The experts were renowned lecturers from Education Faculty and supervisors from Godfrey Okoye University. The experts made professional suggestions

and corrections which helped in modifying the questionnaire in order to achieve its overall objective. The data collected for the study from the respondents were carefully analysed by the researcher using frequencies and mean score.

Results

Research question 1: How would student's addictiveness to social media network influence their academic performance?

S/N	STATEMENT / ITEM	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	TOTAL	MEAN (X)	DECISION
1.	Addiction to online social network affects my academic work	90 360	60 180	35 70	15 15	200 625	3.1	Accepted
2.	I use dictionary to learn good and new vocabularies for 3 to 4 hours.	9 36	6 18	85 170	100 100	200 324	1.6	Rejected
3.	Hours I spent online cannot be compared to the number of hours I spend reading my books.	85 340	97 291	9 18	9 9	200 658	3.3	Accepted
4.	I use social media to find friends online, messaging, and profile updates, fun and leisure, watching movies that will take me up to three (3) to four (4) hours daily.	95 380	75 225	20 40	10 10	200 655	3.27	Accepted
Grand Mean = 2.9								

From table 1 above, it can be seen that responses from items 1, 3, and 4 with the mean score of 3.1, 3.3, and 3.27, were above cut off point of 2.5 and therefore agrees with the statement that students addictiveness to social media network influence their academic performance. But only the item 2 with the mean score of 1.6 disagreed with the statement that student's addictiveness to social media network does not influence their academic performance in Enugu Education Zone.

Research Question 2: How does the use of social media influence positively the academic performance of the students in Enugu Education Zone in their English language internal and external examination?

S/N	STATEMENT / ITEM	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	TOTAL L	MEAN (X)	DECISION
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1.	Engaging in academic forum on yahoo, research gate and academia.com, increase my grade and class performance.	100	60	25	15	200	3.2	Accepted
		400	180	50	15	645		
2.	I use face book, Wikipedia, and other social network for finding friends, watching movies, fun and leisure and it helps me in my academic performance.	20	30	60	90	200	1.9	Rejected
		80	90	120	90	380		
3.	I use material got online to compliment what I have been taught in the class during examinations.	70	90	35	5	200	3.12	Accepted
		280	270	70	5	625		
4.	I will not perform well in English vocabulary if I stop online research and information.	75	65	40	20	200	2.9	Accepted
		300	195	80	20	595		
Grand Mean = 2.8								

From table 2 above, it can be seen that responses from 1, 3, and 4 with the mean score of 3.2, 3.12, and 2.9 were above cut off point of 2.5 and therefore agrees with the statement that the use of social media has positively influenced the academic performance of the students in Enugu Education Zone. But only item 2 with the mean score of 1.9, disagreed with the statement that social media network sites has negative influence on students' performance in Enugu Education Zone.

Discussion of Findings

From the research question one, the students and teachers response were positive, their mean responses lies between 3.1 and 3.27 which were above the mean benchmark of 2.5 indicating that the students and teachers agreed that social media affects the secondary school students performance in Enugu Education Zone. It is also in consonance with observation of (Cao & Hong, and Dahlstrom) that integrating social media for both entertainment and learning is common among students in higher level of education. College students use various social media applications to the extent that it is now an indispensable part of their everyday life for personal and learning purposes (Cao & Hong, 2011; Dahlstrom, 2012).

In research question two, the mean response of the students and teachers on the

positive influence that social media has on academic performance of secondary school students of Enugu Education Zone in their English language internal and external examinations lie between 3.2 and 2.9 which are above the mean benchmark of 2.5. It means that the students and teachers agrees that social media has positively contributed in the mass success of students in English language internal and external examination in Enugu Education Zone. The findings also agree with the findings made by (Leask, 2004) "The value of interactive social media technologies in high institutions of learning is now recognized in the way that teaching and learning strategies is in an increasingly globalized process".

Conclusion

The findings of this study and earlier ones showed some notable result that will be used

in a well-articulated programme of creating awareness to help improve the condition and restore sanity among the students in their incessant use of social media network so as for them to acquire the right type of education and the use of correct English since Nigeria has chosen it (English) as a second language. The first independent variable influencing the academic performance of students, that is, social media participation was negatively related with students outcome while the other independent variable were positively related with students outcome.

Recommendations

By this study, it is recommended that;

1. More strict and meticulous supervision and examining procedure should be adopted in the teaching and learning of English to check student's activities during lectures.
2. Public enlightenment programmes should be launched by the government and various stockholders and school administrators to reach out to both urban and rural students on the effect that these unchecked and excess use of social media has on their person and academics. Such programmes could be seminars, workshops, teaching etc.

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