

## Use of Social Networking Sites and Academic Performance among Students of Selected Tertiary Institutions in Kogi State

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### Abstract

This study assessed the use of Social Networking Sites and Academic Performance among Students of Tertiary Institutions in Kogi State with a focus on Facebook, by looking into the specific use of facebook among students of some selected higher institutions in Kogi state (KSU, FPI and FCE; its level of usage; and also to identify the possible effects of facebook on their academic performance. Anchored on uses and gratifications theory, the study employed survey research method and relied on questionnaires as instrument for the collection of primary data. A sample of 384 students was selected from the students' total population of 23,474 using fitcher formula. Through multi-stage sampling technique, the questionnaire was proportionately administered in each of the schools on the randomly selected students. The data were quantitatively analyzed using tables showing frequencies and simple percentages. Results revealed amongst other things that, Students use facebook primarily to escape from boredom, for communication; make new friends; update status; chats; post/comment on photos; and admonition among others. Finding also reveals that majority of the students hardly ever visit the site during class period, studying hours or miss classes because of facebook; that facebook usage does not have negative effect on the students' academic performance (except on their spoken and written communication). The study concludes that the utilization of social media by students of tertiary institutions in Kogi state portends both beneficial results of the uses and gratifications highlighted in this study which show that facebook has a significant positive influence on, and limited danger to, the academic performance of students and recommends among other things that students should be encouraged to adequately utilize the potentials of facebook for academic excellence and also that, lecturers should look out for and completely discourage the use of facebook and other social networking sites gadgets during classes.

### Background of the Study

Experience has shown that no advent of technology had ever left the society the same. The technological advancement in the communication sector is not an exception. The influence of communication technological change in the latter century has been strong to the point of redefining the pattern of the society so much so that Marshall McLuhan described the evolving world as a global village. One of such Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) that had continued to blur the physical boundaries between nations of the world, and breaking down social borders among the different social strata in the society is the 'Social Networking sites' (SNSs).

SNSs are online community of internet users who want to communicate with other users about areas of mutual interest. They are also sites built on web 2.0 which allows users to generate and transfer contents to peers, friends and relatives. These sites like *facebook*, *BlackBerry Messenger (BBM)*, *2go*, *myspace*, and *WhatsApp* among others have become an established part of the online environment that enables individuals, institutions and organizations to maintain and visualize their social networks. They have become global phenomenon's that have attracted extensive population from different ages, cultures, and educational levels (Boyd & Ellison, 2007:1, Mazman & Usluel, 2011).

Earlier studies have demonstrated that SNSs are widely embraced by the younger generation, variously labelled 'Generation Y (Digital Natives and the Net Generation),' (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005:2). This, McLoughlin and Burgess (n.d) noted, could be as a result of the fact that SNSs break down barriers at different levels, such as private and public space, learning spaces and social spaces, and informal and formal communication modes. The affordability of social networking sites gadgets like mobile phones and computers further enable communication among broad circles of contacts, locally and globally, and permit the combination of activities of e-mail, messaging, website creation, diaries, photo albums and music or video uploading and

downloading.

Empirical evidences have also lend credence to the fact that SNSs could be put to a variety of uses depending on the user and the motive behind it. For instance, Majias (2005) observed that people use social networking sites for analyzing and sharing information, reflection, establishing and maintaining spontaneous social contacts and relationships and supporting informal learning practices.

Social networking sites are considered to play an active role in younger generation's daily lives (Lenhart, 2009), as most of the active users are students of tertiary institutions. No wonder, Oblinger and Oblinger (2005:12) called them 'the most wired and connected generation in human history', 'Digital Natives', and 'the Net Generation'. Against this backdrop, social networking sites have become excellent tools for education and can be used socially and collaboratively between learners and teachers as well as amongst students. For instance, Asabere (2012: 462-470) noted that current ICT trends are providing accessibility to online services such as social networks and these enable collaboration amongst students and contribute a lot to social learning activities. Students of tertiary institutions in Nigeria are keying into the limitless opportunities. The rapid growth of this technology has improved and enabled collaborative and learning activities especially because of its high level of interactivity, accessibility and affordability.

However, exposure and use of these networks tend to have both positive and negative implications on the student. Oye, Helou and Rahim (2012:25) buttress this in their assertion emanating from their findings that "as a result of more time being dedicated to the use of social networking sites for non-academic usage and less time to academic usage by students, it tells considerably on what becomes their academic output". In view of this, the use of social networking sites has raised dust among researchers. Some see it as distraction to learning for the student as it involves multitasking, while others attest to the potentials of SNSs for learning. There are also those who argue that young adult learners view and use social networking sites as a platform for socializing more than learning.

The development of SNSs seems to be gradually changing the educational trend among university students. Amongst other areas, this can be clearly seen in the use of informal patterns of spellings in their academic works Bauerlein (2008) cited in Moon (2011: 47). This trend has made some students (mostly indigenes of the social media) to be poor in spelling and as such, words like "thru", "C", "tin" etc are now used in writing in place of the original words "through", "see", "thing". This has made Adebowale (2001:96-113), to note that the evolution of the internet has changed the entire concept of learning in our society.

### **Statement of the Problem**

With the emergence of numerous social networking sites (SNSs) like *Facebook*, *Whatsapp* and *2go* available today, the socialization patterns of young people have changed dramatically. These social networking sites are used to mediate personal interactions and communication, as well as provide youths with a powerful space for socializing, learning, and participating in public life. However, the combination of social networking activities with educational activities has raised questions on the performance of students in school, since they combined both activities to their academic pursuit.

Incidentally, such fears are further aggravated by the steady increase in the adoption of these sites especially *facebook* among students of tertiary institutions in Kogi state in recent time. This is in addition to findings that students who engage in the continuous switching of attention from social networking to educational activities and vice versa, are likely to experience less effective retrieval of information as well as less effective encoding and storing of information. This is even more especially so because research has shown that human brain cannot process information simultaneously or concurrently as constantly switching between tasks may reduce performance

Nevertheless, although, research on students use of social networking sites is beginning to accumulate, questions still remained yet unanswered regarding what exactly students of tertiary institutions in Kogi state do on *facebook* and its influence on their academic performance. Therefore, this study is an attempt to bridge the research gap identified above using an empirical method.

### **Objectives of the Research**

The objectives of this paper therefore are to:

1. Find out the specific use of facebook among students of some selected higher institutions in Kogi state;
2. Determine the extent to which students of some selected higher institutions in Kogi state make use of facebook; and
3. Identify the possible effects of facebook usage on the academic performance of the selected higher institutions in Kogi state.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the specific uses of facebook among students of the selected higher institutions in Kogi state?
2. What is the extent to which students of the selected higher institutions in Kogi state make use of facebook?

3. How does the use of facebook affect the academic performance of students in the selected higher institutions in Kogi state?

#### **Scope of the Study**

The study covers students of higher institutions in Kogi state which includes; Kogi State University, Anyigba; Federal Polytechnic, Idah; and Federal College of Education, Okene. However, out of the many social networking sites in use in Nigeria, this study was limited to facebook. This is because earlier study has proven that facebook is among the dominant social networking sites used by students of tertiary institutions across the country. Besides, reducing it to facebook makes the study manageable and gives clearer picture of the effect of specific social networking site (this time facebook) on the academic performance of the students under study, rather than treading the same old path as done by some of the researchers who had conducted similar studies in the past.

In Kogi State University, students are limited to only the regular undergraduate students (those running first degree programmes), while others like those undergoing diploma, post graduate programmes among others are excluded from the list that made up the population of this study. In the same vein, students in Federal Polytechnic, Idah (FPI) and Federal College of Education (FCE), Okene were limited to National/Higher National Diploma students and National Certificate of Education (NCE) students respectively. Others outside this definition were excluded for easy management and clarity of purpose. Besides, studying only the selected population category could not have invalidated the result of this paper in any way.

#### **Theoretical Framework: Uses and gratification theory**

The uses and gratification theory was developed in 1974 by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (Wimmer & Dominick 2011:294). Basically, the theory places more emphasis on “what people do with media” rather than “what media do to people” (Katz, 1959 cited in Idakwo, 2011:24). Uses and Gratifications theory is the study of the gratifications or benefits that attract and hold audiences to various types of media and the types of content that satisfy their social and psychological needs.

SNSs as new media of communication also lends itself to uses and gratifications approach, in part due to its interactive nature (Grant, 2005:627). Uses and gratifications research has typically focused on how media are used to satisfy cognitive and affective needs involving personal needs and entertainment needs (Rubin, 2002:426). This theory directly places power in the hands of the audience. Rather than assuming that media messages have direct, uniform effects on those who consume them, the Uses and Gratifications perspective proposes that receivers make deliberate, intentional decisions about the media messages they expose themselves to and at what frequency based on personal needs and desires irrespective of its influence on them- positive or negative.

Relating this theory to this current study, it shows that students use social networking sites like *facebook* just to satisfy their needs- which may either be physical or psychological- irrespective of the direction of its influence on their academic performance. Besides, it offers explanations to suggest that students use this site for varying reasons. In other words, users select media based on how well each one helps them meet specific needs or goals. Hence, this study tries to find out how this uses and gratification derived from the use of *facebook* by students of tertiary institutions in Kogi state impacts on their academic performances.

#### **Conceptual clarification/Review of Related Literature:**

##### **(i) Social Networking Sites**

In recent time, the world has witnessed what could be referred to as communication evolution through ‘technological advances and increased use of the Internet’ (Moqbel, 2012). This communication revolution, as well as the more technologically empowered lifestyle of individual users, has changed the way people communicate and connect with each other (Coyle, 2008; O’Murchu, Breslin & Decker, 2004). Social networking sites are a recent trend in this revolution. Social networking sites therefore, are web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection with, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system, (Boyd and Ellison, 2007).

Social networking sites are created to take care of variety of human needs and could be classified using that format. For instance, Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007:143) classified SNSs into: work-related contexts (*LinkedIn.com*), romantic relationship initiation (*Friendster.com*), connecting those with shared interests such as music or politics (*MySpace.com*), or the college student population (*Facebook*). It should however be noted that the examples mentioned above were based on the original intentions of founders of the SNSs, though these intentions have been taken to another level by users.

This is why latter classification of SNSs takes somewhat different approach and put different factors into consideration. To Fraser and Dutta (2008), SNSs should better be classified into the following five categories- egocentric/identity construction social networking sites such as *Facebook* and *MySpace*;

opportunistic social networking sites for business connections such as *LinkedIn*; community social networking sites representing cultural or neighborhood groups; media-sharing social networking sites such as *YouTube* and *Flickr*; and Passion-centric social networking sites for sharing common interests such as *Dogster*.

Social networking sites came on board in the mid 1990s and one of the first at its emergence was *Classmates*, a site initiated in 1995 (Rooksby, 2009). The uniqueness of social networking sites is that they not only allow individuals to meet strangers but enables users to discuss and make visible their social networks. This results into connections between individuals which otherwise is not possible through any other media already existing. Maximum time is often used on social networking sites to communicate with people who are already friends or acquaintances in the social network, sharing same mindset or same interests and views (Raj Jain, Gupta & Anand, 2012).

The public display of connections is a crucial component of SNSs. The friends list contains links to each friend's profile, enabling viewers to traverse the network graph by clicking through them. On most sites, the list of friends is visible to anyone who is permitted to view the profile, although there are exceptions. Most SNSs also provide a mechanism for users to leave messages on their friends' profiles. This feature typically involves leaving comments, although sites employ various labels for this feature. In addition, SNSs often have a private messaging feature similar to webmail. While both private messages and comments are popular on most of the major SNSs, they are not universally available.

The background of today's social networking sites according to Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman, and Witty (2010) cited in Boyd & Ellison (2008:214), began in 1997 with the launch of *SixDegrees.com* which "allowed users to create a profile list of their friends and in 1998, surf the friends list".

Social networking is as old as humans have been around. Just as in nearly every other species, humans have an instinctual need to be communicated with, and share thoughts, ideas, and feelings about their daily lives. Only the tools with which we communicate have changed over the Millennia (Safko, 2010:5). Social media make it possible to share such information like photos, videos, audio files, and comments. These sites seem to be gaining such high popularity among users. This point was aptly emphasized by Stefanone, Lackaff, and Rosen (2010) when they affirmed that explosion in popularity of social networking sites (SNSs) represents one of the fastest uptakes of communication technology since the web was developed in the early 1990s. Even though the list is endless, some examples of these SNSs include *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Blogs*, *2go*, *YouTube*, *MySpace*, *BB messenger*, *LinkedIn*, *WhatsApp* and *Wikis* just to mention but a few.

#### **(ii) Facebook**

*Facebook* is a social networking device that enable users interact through conversations, and build relationships by networking with other users. *Facebook* groups are created as part of a smaller community within the social networking site and focus on particular interests or beliefs about certain issues (Graybill-Leonard, Meyers, Doerfert & Irlbeck 2011). As of January 2008, *Facebook* has more than 64 million users, and since January 2007 has had an average of 250,000 new registrations per day. It has 65 billion page views per month, and more than 14 million photos are uploaded to its site daily (Gane, & Beer 2008). A more vivid picture of this growth was painted by Kaplan and Haenlein (2009) when they affirmed that:

*By January 2009, Facebook had registered more than 175 million active users. To put that number in perspective, this is only slightly less than the population of Brazil (190 million) and over twice the population of Germany (80 million). At the same time, every minute, 10 hours of content were uploaded to the video sharing platform YouTube. And, the image hosting site Flickr provided access to over 3 billion photographs, making the world-famous Louvre Museum's collection of 300,000 objects seem tiny in comparison.*

Safko (2010:8) identified *Facebook* as being by far the most popular and widely used social network. He gave the following few statistics on *Facebook*: It has 425 million users; more than 35 million users update their status each day, more than 3 billion photos are uploaded each month, more than 5 billion pieces of content including *blog* posts, news, web links, notes, photos, and so on, are shared each week; more than 3.5 million events are created each month; more than 1.5 million businesses have fan pages and more than 20 million people become "fans" of fan pages every day

The use of mobile phones especially smart phones and the internet have made it possible for people to communicate and respond to just about any issue in their environment. This is in line with Hill (2010) assertion that the proliferation of mobile digital media and communications technology appears to have partially democratized image-making and media creation.

#### **Methodology**

Bearing the nature and objectives of this study in mind, the survey research design was employed for this task. Survey, as it has been established, lends itself to the sampling of peoples' opinion using questionnaire for the collection of quantitative data. Meanwhile, questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to contain eighteen (18) questions on both the respondents' demographic data and

those touching on the various aspects of the research objectives. The questionnaire contained both open and close-ended questions structured in such a way to forestall problem of quantification and categorization of the responses during analysis. The population of this study consist of twenty-three thousand, four hundred and seventy- four (23,474) students of the three selected tertiary institutions in Kogi state. The population of this study is gotten from the official document of the affected institutions as shown in the table below:

**Table 1: List of Selected Institutions**

Institutions	Population
Kogi State University, Anyigba	13,583
Federal Polytechnic, Idah	6,039
Federal College of Education, Okene	3,852
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,474</b>

The sample size for this study is 384. This was statistically determined using the Fisher formula as cited in Ibrahim (2009). The Fisher formula state thus:

$$n = z^2 pq / d^2$$

Where

n= desired sample size where the population under study is more than 10,000

z= standard normal deviation = 1.96

p= proportion of target population estimated to the practical characteristics from a previous similar study.

Where none exists, p= 50% or 0.5

q= 1-p

d= degree of accuracy = 5% or 0-05

For this study therefore, the sample size is:

$$(1.96)^2 (0.5) 1 - (0.5) / (0.05)^2$$

$$1.96 \times 1.96 = 3.8416$$

$$3.8416 \times 0.5 \times 0.5 / 0.0025 = 384.16$$

$$n = 384.16 \text{ or } 384 \text{ approximately.}$$

Hence, three hundred and eighty-four (384) respondents were sampled for this study.

The sampling technique used in this paper is multi stage sampling. First, purposive sampling technique was employed to select the three schools (Kogi State University, Anyigba; Federal Polytechnic, Idah; and Federal College of Education, Okene), and the social networking site (facebook) chosen for this paper. At the second instance, quota sampling technique was employed and the 384 questionnaires was proportionally distributed among the three selected institutions according to their contribution to the entire population of the study as seen in table 2 below.

**Table 2: Selected Institutions' Population and Sample**

Institutions	Population	Percentage	Sample Size
Kogi State University, Anyigba	13,583	57.9%	222
Federal Polytechnic, Idah	6,039	25.8%	99
Federal College of Education, Okene	3,852	16.4%	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,474</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>384</b>

This is to checkmate the likely bias and unfair distribution that may arise out of the variations in the populations of these schools. Finally, simple random sampling technique was employed to decide the various faculties/schools, departments, levels and the individual respondents chosen for the administration of the questionnaire. Only facebook users were sampled in each of the school. This was made possible as the researchers would first ask any qualified respondent if he/she use facebook or not. In the event that the students' response is that he/she does not use face book, the researchers moved on to the next person. This was repeated until the whole questionnaires were exhausted.

The validity of the instruments was done using face validity technique. In checking for the reliability of the study instrument (questionnaire), a pre-test was conducted at Kogi state university, Anyigba. A total of 20 respondents were administered copies of the questionnaire for this purpose. The reason was to determine whether the responses would be in tandem with the expected understanding when generating the instrument. Data gathered was analyzed using tables of frequency and simple percentages to show the distribution of results and understanding of analysis.

### Data Presentation and Analysis

In this study, as noted earlier, three hundred and eighty-four (384) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents in the three selected tertiary institutions. However, only three hundred and thirty-five (335)

meaning 87% was returned or returned valid, while forty-nine (49) meaning 13% was not returned or were returned invalid. Hence, the 334 constituted the actual number of validly returned questionnaire used in the analysis as below.

**Table 3: Questionnaire Return Rate**

Institutions	Total Issued	Total Returned/Valid	
Kogi State University, Anyigba	222	199	89.5%
Federal Polytechnic, Idah	99	83	83.7%
Federal College of Education, Okene	63	53	84.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>87%</b>

Individually, as seen in the table above, out of the 222 copies of the questionnaire taken to Kogi State University, Anyigba, 199 meaning 89.5% was returned usable while the remaining 10.5% was not returned or returned invalid; 99 copies issued to students of Federal Polytechnic, Idah, 83 meaning 83.7% was returned valid; and out of the 63 administered in Federal College of Education, Okene, 53 (84.5%) were returned valid.

### Respondents Demographic Variables

**Table 4: Respondents Distribution by Age (n= 335)**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Age	%	%	%	F	%
16-20	37	42	36	129	38.5
21-25	55	53	51	177	52.9
26-30	7	5	11	25	7.3
31-35	1	0	2	4	1.3
36-40	0	0	0	0	0
41 & above	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 4 shows the respondents distribution by age. According to the data in the table, majority of the respondents (52.9%) fall within the age of 21 to 25 years. A good number of them (38.5%) are within the 16 to 20 age bracket, while only 7.3% and 1.3% of the respondents are within the age brackets of 26 to 30 years and 31 to 35 years respectively. None of the respondents was 41 years old or above. Only a negligible percent of the respondents were above 25 years old in all the schools as seen in the table above.

**Table 5: Respondents Distribution by Gender (n= 335)**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Gender	%	%	%	F	%
Male	53	52	47	178	53
Female	47	48	53	157	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The data in table 5 shows that a slight majority of the respondents (53%) are male and a few of them (47%) are female.

**Table 6: Respondents Distribution by Primary Use of Facebook (n=335)**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Use of SNSs	%	%	%	F	%
*Asking/answering questions related to my studies	11	9	10	34	10
* Posting/commenting on photos	4	5	11	22	6.5
* Chatting	6	7	13	28	8.4
* Communicating with lecturers/classmates	18	12	21	57	16.9
* Escaping from boredom	31	25	21	83	24.9
* Updating status	11	9	8	41	12.3
* Making new friends	13	28	14	54	16
*Others	6	5	3	16	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

According to the table above, majority of the respondents (24.9%) use facebook to escape from boredom. A good number of them (16.9%) used facebook primarily to communicate with lecturers/class mates;

16.1% for making new friends; 12.3% for updating status; 10% for asking/answering questions regarding their studies; 8.4% for chats; 6.5% for posting/commenting on photos; while 5% employed facebook for other activities like admonition; communicating with relatives, loved ones and friends. This implies that not a good number of the respondents (26.9%) use facebook primarily for academic purposes.

**Table 7: Respondents Reason for Using Facebook (n=301)**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Reasons	%	%	%	F	%
Privacy	16	11	8	38	12.7
Ease of Use	22	23	15	66	22
Accessibility	53	64	61	171	56.7
Speed	7	2	10	17	5.3
Others	2	0	6	9	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Their responses to the question in table 7 showed that accessibility is an encouraging factor to majority of the respondents (56.7%), followed by Ease of use (22%), Privacy (12.7%), and Speed (5.3%). Meanwhile, 3.1% of the respondents identified low cost of accessibility, adequate free time to surf the net, and desire for information update as their reasons for using facebook.

**Table 8: Communities Students Subscribe to on Facebook**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Communities	%	%	%	F	%
Entertainment	38	33	36	170	50.9
Educational	21	25	20	109	32.6
Informational	41	42	44	182	54.4
Others	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Here, the students were allowed to tick as many communities as were applicable to them. According to the data in the table, 54% of the respondents said they belong to informational groups on facebook, 50.9% indicated their preferences to Entertainment group, while only 32.6% said they belong to Educational group.

**Table 9: If Respondents look for information relating to their academics on Facebook (n=335)**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Facebook	%	%	%	F	%
Never	7	6	7	20	5.9
Rarely	17	19	21	63	18.8
Sometimes	31	33	38	107	31.8
Often	30	19	20	88	26.4
Always	15	23	14	57	17.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

The data in table 9 shows that only 5.9% of the respondents never looked for information relating to their academics on facebook, while the remaining majority (94.1%) of the respondents did search for information concerning their academics on SNSs but at varying degree though. For instance, 18.8% of the respondents said they rarely sought for information concerning their academics, 31.8% of them do so but sometimes, 26.4% of them often did, whereas only 17.1% of them admitted to always surf the facebook for their academic related information. Again, the individual school does not vary much in this regards. The result suggests that students do visit facebook to look for information concerning their academics.

**Table 10: Respondents Distribution on frequency of Visit to Facebook (n=335)**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Frequency	%	%	%	F	%
Never	2	0	0	2	0.6
Rarely	17	20	18	68	20.3
Sometimes	44	52	19	152	45.6
Often	20	19	31	67	19.9
Always	17	9	12	46	13.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 10 revealed that the respondents visited facebook at different degrees. For instance, 20.3% of the respondents rarely visit facebook site, 45.6% did visit facebook site but sometimes, and only 19.9% and 13.6% of the respondents agreed visiting the facebook sites often and always respectively. Only 0.6% of the respondents never visited facebook site frequently and this constitutes 2% of respondents from Kogi State University.

**Table 11: Respondents Distribution based on the Classes they Miss Generally**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Missed Class	%	%	%	F	%
Never	51	61	47	191	57.1
Rarely	42	31	48	119	36
Sometimes	5	7	5	14	4.2
Often	1	1	0	7	2
Always	1	0	0	4	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 11 is an attempt at ascertaining the level at which the respondents missed classes. The data shows that majority of the respondents (57.1%) never missed classes; a good number of them (37.5%) rarely ever missed classes, and only 4.2% and 2% of them sometimes and often missed classes respectively. Only 0.7% of the respondents reported to have always missed classes. By implication, the use of facebook may not have caused students to miss classes.

**Table 12: Respondents Distribution by Visiting Facebook during Classes**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Visit During Classes	%	%	%	F	%
Never	67	69	82	254	76
Rarely	17	14	7	42	12.6
Sometimes	15	15	3	35	10.3
Often	1	2	2	4	1.1
Always	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 12 reveals that majority of the students (76%) never visited their facebook site during classes. Only 24% of them admitted visiting facebook during classes at different degrees though. For instance, while 12.6% of them said they rarely visit facebook during classes, 10.3% said they sometimes did, and only 1.1% said they often did. None of the respondents admitted to have always visited the facebook site during classes.



**Table 13: If Facebook Usage can influence Students' Result Performance**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Results	%	%	%	F	%
First Class/Distinction	7	5	3	21	6.3
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Upper/Upper Credit	34	29	26	117	34.9
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Lower/Lower Credit	28	41	37	104	31
Third Class	3	0	0	3	0.8
Pass	10	5	4	27	8
Probation/Repeat	0	0	0	0	0
Others	18	14	30	111	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 13 above sought to know the respondents' current result so as to be able to infer the influence of facebook usage on their academic performance. According to the data in the table, most of the respondents (80.1%) are academically good. This constitute 6.3% of the respondents who said their last result put them on First Class/Distinction; 34.9% on Second Class Upper/Upper Credit; and the 31% of them who said the last result placed them on Third Class (only Kogi state University students ticked this option though). While only 8% of the respondents are within the class of pass, none of them fell below as such; none is on probation/repeat. Nevertheless, 10.7% of the respondents said they have not seen their results at the time their opinions were being sought. The result implies good academic performance by the respondents.

**Table 14: Whether the Use of Facebook affects Respondents Spoken or Written Communication**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Responses	%	%	%	F	%
Yes	59	57	59	199	59.2
No	41	43	41	136	40.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 14 revealed that the use of facebook affects the spoken and written communication among the majority of the respondents as indicated by the 59.2% of them who ticked yes. Meanwhile, 40.8% of them said it does not affect their spoken and written communication.

**Table 15: Respondents Choice of Language on Facebook**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Language	%	%	%	F	%
Formal	39	47	39	121	36
Informal	33	23	42	123	36.8
Slang	28	30	19	91	27.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

According to the data, only 36% of the respondents said they use formal language while on facebook, the remaining 64% of them use non--academic languages (for instance, 36.8% reported to have used informal languages and 27.2% said they used slang while on facebook).

By implication, very few respondents used formal languages while on facebook.

**Table 16: Whether Facebook Use Affects Students Study Timing**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Reasons	%	%	%	F	%
Yes	20	20	37	120	23
No	80	82	63	402	77
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table 16 reveals that the use of facebook does not affect the study timing of the majority of the students as 77% of them said so compared to only 23% that stated otherwise. The result is similar in the three selected institutions under study. This finding goes to show that although, students use facebook considerably, they were able to manage it in such a way that it does not affect their study time.

**Table 17: If Facebook helps Student with their Homework (n=335)**

Institutions	KSU	FPI	FCE	Total	Total
Responses	%	%	%	F	%
Yes	73	80	72	254	75.8
No	27	20	28	81	24.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2013**

From this findings, it was observed that 75.8% of students noted that facebook help them in doing their homework, while 24.1% said otherwise. The situation as shown by the results is also very similar in all the selected schools. This implies that facebook contribute to better academic performance by the undergraduate students of the selected tertiary institutions in Kogi state.

### Summary of findings

The findings of this study could therefore be summarized as follow:

1. Majority of the students were within the youthful age that has been found to be the heavy users of facebook.
2. As it has to do with the Specific uses of Facebook among Students of the Selected Tertiary Institutions in Kogi State, Students use facebook primarily to escape from boredom, communicate with lecturers/class mates; make new friends; update status; ask/answer questions regarding their studies; chats; post/comment on photos; admonition; and communication with relatives, loved ones and friends. Meanwhile, only a little number of the students' population (26.9%) uses facebook primarily for academic purposes; meaning not a good percentage uses it primarily for academic purposes. They also in addition to the above also use facebook primarily because of its accessibility, ease of use, privacy, speed, and low cost.
3. As it has to do with the extent to which students of the selected higher institutions in Kogi State make use of facebook, the result implies that though the students visit facebook at different degrees but a good number of them use this site moderately as indicated by the 46% of the entire respondents who said they only sometimes use facebook. The result also shows that majority of the students hardly ever visit the site during class period, studying period or miss classes because of facebook.
4. Though, entertainment and information dominated the students quest for joining groups/communities on facebook as against education, findings however shows that its usage does not have negative effect on the students' academic performance as seen in their last good result performance; class attendance, concentration during lecture time; and study timing. This implies that facebook users here are still committed to their studies.
5. Facebook is still useful to the students in the area of homework and search for academic information as acknowledged by majority of the respondents. Nevertheless, its (facebook) usage has negative effect on spoken and written communication of students as identified by majority of the respondents. By implication, very few students use formal languages while on facebook, even though, informal language and slangs are not fit for academic communication. When students spends quality time on facebook where they use both informal language and slangs, the tendency is off course high to form a habit that will follow the student into the academic environment and as such, affect their communication specifically and academic performance negatively, even though findings (of the effect on their academic performance ) shows otherwise.

### Conclusion

This study has been able to clearly demonstrate the effect of facebook usage on the academic performance of students of tertiary institutions in Kogi state. The observations drawn from empirical data revealed that students have embraced the use of facebook, and its academic application is on the increase, even though some of the students still see facebook as outright distraction, a good number of them have embedded it in their tools of learning like research, doing home work, linking up with mates and lecturers alike among others.

It is important to also conclude that students need a blended learning environment provided by facebook and other social networking sites and not merely a traditional environment restricted to an in-class or out-of-class environment especially in the face of the evolving global village. The beneficial results of the uses and gratifications highlighted in this study show that facebook has a significant positive influence on, and limited danger to, the academic performance of students. The use of social networking sites is, and will continue to remain popular with the digital and virtual generations, who will also continue to communicate in ways unfamiliar to adults and if tailored to the specific educational needs of each student, SNSs can be a useful instrument in improving academic performance of students of tertiary institutions in Kogi state.

### Recommendations

- SNSs servers should be upgraded in line with the students' current academic needs and challenges. This will go a long way in encouraging students to adequately utilize the potentials of facebook for their

academic excellence.

- Students should be taught proper time management so that they would rightly allot time for various activities especially while using facebook in their various institutions of learning so as to enhance chances of better academic performance.
- Also, lecturers should look out for and completely discourage the use of facebook and other social networking sites gadgets during classes. Nonetheless, the National Communication Commission (NCC) should review downward the cost of accessing facebook or any other social networking site like Blackberry subscription, bearing in mind that majority of people on the site are students who may not have enough money but need the site to meet their academic demands.
- Encouraging academic staff's active utilization of the site for imparting knowledge to students as well is another realizable recommendation. This action will boost group academic communication, and also encourage and sustain students' efforts towards learning and problems solving. It will reduce to the minimum endless youthful social communication while it achieves better utilization of the Internet and available technologies for learning.

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