

Social Networking Sites Usage and the Negative Influence on Students' Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools in Uyo Senatorial District, Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract

The study explored social networking sites usage and the negative influence on students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Uyo Senatorial District, Akwa Ibom State. Five research questions were raised to guide the study. Descriptive survey research design was used to carry out this study. The population of this study comprised all Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students in Uyo Senatorial District and the target population is 21,726. The sample size for this study comprised 452 students from 27 sampled schools. Multi-stage sampling technique was used in selecting the sample size. A researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Social Networking Sites Usage and the Negative Influence on Students' Academic Achievement (SNSUNISAA)" was used for data collection. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha Analysis. A coefficient value of 0.79 was obtained and this was considered appropriate for the study. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using frequency distributions and arithmetic mean. The z-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that students' academic achievement was greatly impeded by their use of Social Networking Sites (SNSs), time spent on SNSs, gender use, the most visited SNSs, poor grammar and spellings. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended amongst others that, all education stake holders should regularly and adequately communicate the negative influences of these sites to the students. This will enable them to be watchful of their activities and improve in their academic endeavours by their ability to regulate, eliminate or reduce the time spent or wasted on these SNSs.

Keywords: Social networking site, Negative influence, Students, Academic achievement, Secondary schools

1. Introduction

The internet revolution changed the information world with regard to sharing, speed, storage and retrieval of information in whatever form regardless of the people's location. Since the introduction of social network sites years ago, communicating with friends and family has been made easy once there is access to internet. The internet is more than just a means of seeking information. It has given people the ability to connect with anyone from around the globe with a few clicks of a button either for business or commercial purpose. Through the internet, a number of web technologies emerged, and one technology that is making waves with regards to information sharing and communication is the social media networks. The growth of technology towards the end of the 20th century, propelled by the emergence of the internet, satellite, etc. led to what is called Social Media. Social media has transformed and impacted on communication, education, research and learning in general.

Social media has emerged as a term frequently used and variously defined as different types of communication platforms and electronic ways of interacting. For the purpose of this research, the definition of social media developed by Bryer and Zavatarro (2011) will be utilized. According to Bryer and Zavatarro (2011), social media is the technology that facilitates social interaction, make collaboration possible, and enable deliberations across stakeholders. Going by this definition, social media includes such tools as electronic blogs, audio/video tools like YouTube, internet and chat rooms, cellular and computer texting, and Social Networking Sites (SNSs). SNSs has been defined as web based services that, within a bounded system, enable individuals to construct a semi-public profile, articulate a list of other users with whom they share connection, and view or traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). At the basic level, social networking sites allows users to set up online profiles or personal homepages, and develop an online social network. The profile page functions as the user's own webpage and includes profile information ranging from their dates of birth, gender, religion, politics and hometown, to their favourite films, books quote and what they like doing in their spare times. It also shows the different groups they are affiliated to and the celebrities they are following online. In addition to profile information, users can design the appearance of their page, and add content such as photos, video clips and music files.

SNSs such as MySpace, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, Classmates, Google+, LinkedIn, Twitter, Netlog, Hi5, WhatsApp, 2go, Instagram, Badoo, etc., has attracted millions of users, many of whom has integrated these sites into their daily practices. Many people especially students use up a considerable amount of time on these sites doing different things such as chatting with friends, watching online movies, post latest pictures of themselves and events attended, uploading or downloading, getting information concerning their academic work or career. Social site has become a habit for some students and they find it difficult to study for one hour without login to

one network site or the other. Some students have become very smart because of the information they get on these sites, while some have become very poor academically. Among the vast variety of online tools which are available for communication, social networking sites have become the most modern and attractive tool for connecting people throughout the world (Aghazamani, 2010).

Social networking sites are dominating all internet users' generations, especially the students' communities. Students who are active on SNSs always log in to their accounts on the different networking sites they are registered on as a part of their everyday routine. Millions of students do that on a regular basis and that is why they have been blaming various social networking sites for their steady decline in grade point averages. The emergent phenomenon aroused the researcher's curiosity to look into social networking sites and why they negatively affect students' academic performance. Students spend so much of their time on these SNSs at the detriment of their academic performance. Their involvement in these sites has become an obsession for many of them and this has integrated into their daily and academic life, significantly affecting their grades. The time spent by students on Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and other SNSs has become a great cause for concern as most of them cannot go for two-three hours without checking and updating their profiles on these social media networks thereby putting their education and career pursuit in jeopardy.

Gender is one of the demographic variables affecting social media use, as there are some differences between use by male and female. Educational experience for male and female also plays a role in their social media usage as well. Some researchers are of the opinion that there are no significant gender-related differences found towards the actual usage of social networking sites while others think otherwise. With the advocacy for gender equality currently besieging our society today, the evolution of social networks in students' lives is expected to be oriented towards gender-equality and that is one of the issues this research is poised to determine.

When it comes to social media usage among young adults, the landscape is regularly shifting. Several studies from the past few years have attempted to gauge which social media platforms are most popular among this segment of the population and the result can be slightly perplexing. There are researches claiming that Facebook is the most frequently visited social networking site while others argue that Facebook is no longer the go-to choice among college users and even younger teens. However, various studies show that actual usage patterns differ from such proclamations. Amid it all, one thing is clear, social media in all of its forms has definitely become an integral part of life for college students, and even younger generations for that matter. Widespread usage of Facebook by students limits their time, deteriorating their academic performance consequently affecting their grade point.

SNSs such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, 2go and LinkedIn have led to an increase in poor writing, grammar and spelling. Sending messages which have little or no grammar are at the base of this problem. Thanks to mandatory character limits, students shorten words and leave out punctuation to get their points across. Internet chat rooms and social networking sites are encouraging students to spell words incorrectly. As people typed at speed online, there is now a 'general attitude' that there is no need to correct mistakes or conform to regular spelling rules. The popularity of social media and the speed at which information is published has created a lax attitude towards proper spelling and grammar and this has reduced student's ability to effectively write without relying on a computer's spell check feature.

It is therefore pertinent to carry out an investigation into social networking sites usage which can likely affect the secondary school students' academic achievement negatively. Hence, this study seeks to investigate the use of social networking sites, time spent on SNSs, gender use, the most visited SNSs, poor grammar and spellings and possibly establish their negative influence on students' academic achievement among secondary school students in Uyo Senatorial District in Akwa Ibom State.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The rapid advancement of media technology has had a great influence on the way students communicate on a daily basis. The growing dimension of the use of social media among students today cannot be overemphasized. Over the years, social networking among students has become more popular. It is a way to make connections, not only on campus but with friends outside the school environment. Social networking is a way that helps students feel they belong to a community. Due to the increased popularity of it, researchers are questioning whether grades of students will not be affected by how much time is spent on these sites. Some researchers believe that the use of technology such as internet is one of the most important factors that can positively or adversely influence students' academic performance. Many parents and guardians are worried that students spend a considerable amount of time on Facebook and other social media sites thereby limiting their study time. Though parents are worried about students' constant use of social media sites, many students continue to utilize these sites on a daily basis. It therefore follows from the divergent views of scholars that social networking sites negatively influences students' academic achievement even though there are positive influences too. It is against this background that this research is being carried out to ascertain the negative influence of students' use of social media sites on their academic performance. Hence, the question which presents the problem of this study

therefore is; what are the negative influences of social networking sites on students' academic achievement?

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The general objective of the study is to find out those social networking sites factors that bring a difference in the academic achievement of secondary school students. Hence the specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Establish the difference in students' academic achievement based on the use of social networking sites.
2. Determine the difference in students' academic achievement based on the time spent on social networking sites.
3. Examine students' academic achievement based on gender use of social networking sites.
4. Determine students' academic achievement based on the most visited social networking site.
5. Examine students' academic achievement based on students' poor grammar and spelling.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study:

1. What is the difference in students' academic achievement based on the use of social networking sites?
2. What is the difference in students' academic achievement based on the time spent on social networking sites?
3. In what way does students' academic achievement differ based on gender use of social networking sites.
4. What is the difference in students' academic achievement based on the most visited social networking site?
5. In what way does students' academic achievement differ based on students' poor grammar and spelling?

2. Theoretical Framework

Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) is an approach to understanding why and how people actively seek out specific media to satisfy specific needs. It was originated in 1974 by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch as a reaction to traditional mass communication research emphasizing the sender and the message. It discusses how users deliberately choose media that will satisfy given needs and allow one to enhance knowledge, relaxation, social interaction, diversion or escape. Uses and Gratification Theory also known as Functional Theory is concerned with the social and psychological origin of needs, which generate expectation of the mass media which leads to different patterns of media exposure, resulting in need gratification and other consequences, mostly unintended ones (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitch, 1974 p.20).

These Uses (exposure to the media) and Gratification (benefits) are determined by the needs of members of the audience. Such needs may include information, entertainment, self-esteem and prestige. Through the uses and gratification research, communication scholars have shown that everywhere, people selectively expose themselves to mass media content, choosing only those media messages that would serve the function of satisfying or gratifying their needs (Rosengren 1985). Therefore, Uses and Gratification approach emphasizes audience members motive for making specific consumption choices and the consequences of that intentional media use. That is to say, they choose the content, make meaning of it and act on the meaning. It embraces the interactive nature of media and its audience. People's needs are generated by their individual differences and this could be based on sex, ethnic group, and educational qualification. This is because the needs are determined by who or what they are, and people use the mass media for the purpose of gratifying these needs (Okunna, 1999).

This study adopts Uses and Gratification theory as a theoretical framework for the following reasons:

- It has previously been used successfully to examine the underlying reasons for media use to satisfy particular needs.
- It has previously been used successfully to understand consumers' motivations and behaviours in the use of traditional media such as TV and radio.

Researchers are currently using this theory to examine the extent of use, motivations, and gratifications for the exponential use of new media including social network sites (Karimi, Khodabandelou, Ehsani, & Ahmad, 2014). The theory is applicable to this study because the students' usage of the social media channels depends largely on the specific satisfaction they derive from them. Therefore, this study focuses on ascertaining the purposes and the benefits which the new media serve for their student-users that invariably sustain their usage. It presupposes that there are certain satisfactions the new media provide to the students without which their usage would have waned.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Use of Social Networking Sites and Students' Academic Achievement

Academic performance must be managed efficiently keeping in view all the factors that can positively or negatively affect their educational performance. The use of technology such as the internet is one of the most important factors that can influence educational performance of students positively or adversely. With the

increase in the use of social network among students, one wonders the type of influence it would be exerting on students' academic performance. In Nigeria today, the public perception is that the widespread use of social network among students is likely to have a negative influence on students' academic performance. One of the reasons adduced for this is that the obsessive attitude of the students towards social networking has led to students' poor allocation of study time and continuous poor academic performance (Ewular, 2010). In 2012, a hot debate ensued in Swaziland about the effects of social media on the young users. One section of the Swazi population attributed the 'disastrous' students results to social media usage during learning hours in school. *Facebook, Sex, Caused Pupils to Fail – Minister and Minister Bans Cell Phones in Schools*, screamed the headlines of both editions of the *Times of Swaziland and Swazi Observer* published on January 26, 2012. Mahamba high school teachers, one of the oldest Methodist Mission Schools, where 43 pupils out of 70 failed, blamed it on pupils found logging into Facebook and surfing the internet during lessons (Ntshangase, 2012). The then Minister of Education and Training Wilson Ntshangase banned mobile phone usage by both teachers and pupils in all the country's schools (Ntshangase, 2012).

Kalra & Manani (2013) argue that excessive use of these sites not only have long lasting effect on psyche of students but also affects the physical, mental and social aspect of their life. They went further to add that sometimes these sites also affect the academic achievement of the students because they don't want to leave that particular aura and thus their concentration stands divided. Many students have lost interest in their studies as they spend most of their time on these sites. A study by Mingle and Adams (2015) revealed that majority of the respondents used WhatsApp and Facebook for making friends and chatting. In addition, majority of the respondents experienced negative effects such as poor grammar and spelling, late submission of assignment, less study time and poor academic performance due to the heavy participation on social media networks. Furthermore, there was a high addiction rate among students in the usage of social media networks.

2.1.2 Time Spent on Social Networking Sites and Students' Academic Achievement

Nigeria, a country with a population of 167 million people (NPC, 2006), 152.1 million mobile telephone subscribers and 92.4 million internet users, has been described as the biggest internet and mobile market (NCC, 2016). The mass appeal of social media on the internet could be a cause for concern, particularly considering the gradually increasing amount of time students spend on Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and other social media sites through smart phones that are now in abundance among them. Most of them cannot go for two-three hours without checking and updating their profiles on these social media networks even at the detriment of other activities such as educational and career pursuit (Idankwo, 2011). Paul, Baker and Cochran (2012) reveal a statistically significant negative relationship between time spent on SNSs and academic performance.

In a study conducted on social network addiction among youths in Nigeria, Ajewole and Fashola (2012) in their study concluded that majority of the respondents spend most of their time on social networking sites which affects their academic performance negatively. The findings of this study also indicated that youths in Nigeria are spending too much time on social media networking sites at the detriment of other necessary things such as their studies. Also, a study by Oye, Mahamat and Rahim (2012) revealed that most students unconsciously get addicted to the use of social media networks and get obsessed with them. The participants indicated that they always intended to spend few minutes but always ends up spending hours surfing and updating profiles as well as viewing photos. It was also revealed that there was a high rate of addiction to social media networks.

Ibrahim (2012) also posited that most students prefer being on the site than reading their books. Students are often being observed during school time in the various hiding places either discussing social networks or browsing with their phones. Olubiyi (2012) noted that these days, students are so engrossed in the social media and they end up being online almost all day. It has been observed that even in classrooms and lecture theatres, some students are always busy pinging, WhatsApping, 2going, or Facebooking, while lectures are ongoing. Time that ought to be channeled into learning, academic research, and innovation have been crushed by the passion for online presence. Regular online presence brings about distraction from academic exercise and this result in poor academic performance. Existing findings suggest that youth spend varied amounts of time on SNSs.

Rithika and Selvaraj (2013) posit that students who spend more time on social media may have difficulty balancing their online activities and their academic performance. The study found majority of respondents 203(38.7%) who spent over 8 hours daily on social networks which was quite disturbing. In addition, a combined total of the 186 (35.5%) respondents also spent between 3 and 7 hours on social networks per day. They concluded that there is a significant negative impact of social network participation on students' performance through the use of mobile technologies as these increases the frequency and flexibility of visits to these sites. In addition, the study furthered revealed that most of the students' 372 (71.5%) time for submitting assignment was affected due to the use of social media. Majority 274 (59%) added that this was as a result of the distraction caused by social media and which in turn made them to procrastinate on their assignments.

2.1.3 Gender Use of Social Networking Sites and Students' Academic Achievement

Gender is the only significant demographic variable affecting social media use, as there are some differences between use by male and female. Females are more likely than males to have a personal profile on Facebook, but

males are more likely than females to sustain a profile on LinkedIn (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith & Zickuhr, 2010). Furthermore, female were four to five times more likely than male to use social networking sites (Tufekci, 2008). Moreover, Sheldon (2008) found that overall, females were more likely to use social media for maintaining relationships with family and friends, passing time, and entertainment, but males are more likely to use social media to meet new people. Female students were also more likely than male to use the internet for relational communication, such as contacts with friends, family and romantic partners (Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Ledbetter, & Mei-Chen, 2007). Educational experience for male and female seemed to play a factor in social media use as well. Male and female were more likely to use social networking sites frequently if they had college experience (Lenhart, Purcell, Smith, & Zickuhr, 2010). According to Pew Internet (2007), girls (female students) are more likely to use social networking sites than male. For girls, social networking sites are places to reinforce pre-existing friendships while for boys who use the sites, the networks provide opportunities for flirting and making new friends.

Flad (2010) carried out a study on the influence of social networking participation on students' academic performance across gender lines. 41 students were surveyed, 54% were female and 46% were male. The purpose of the research was to examine the influence of social networking participation among a sample of high school students to determine how this involvement affects academic performance, future plans and overall attitude towards school. Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram are the most utilized social networking sites by students and these sites are visited once a day. When looking at differences in answers based on gender, the most significant finding was that more female students visit these sites regularly than the male students. Majority of the students disagreed that social networking interfered with their ability to hand in a homework assignment on time and their studies. The result of this study indicated that females are more likely than males to engage in social networking. Though males and females may both have access to these websites in various forms, females invest more time in maintaining their accounts. Females were more likely than males to participate in social networking but were also likely to have higher grades and take more rigorous classes. This study has shown that social networking can have a negative influence on study habits and completion of homework assignments.

2.1.4 Most Visited Social Networking Site and Students' Academic Achievement

When it comes to social media usage among young adults, the landscape is regularly shifting. Several studies from the past few years have attempted to gauge which social media platforms are most popular among this segment of the population and the result can be slightly perplexing. The name Facebook originated from the small photo albums given to the new college freshmen and faculty to help them cope with meeting new people at the college (Ketari & Khanum, 2013). Zuckerberg, Moskovitz and Hughes found Facebook in 2004; it was originally design for college students because initially it started as a means of communication within Harvard University students (Ketari & Khanum, 2013). But now, it is open to anyone who is 13 years of age or older as long as a person has a valid email address or valid cell phone number and the skills necessary to create and customize their own profiles with photos, videos and information about themselves (Power, 2012). Facebook is owned and operated by Facebook Inc. and it has more than one billion users worldwide (Ketari & Khanum, 2013).

Many studies have shown that Facebook is the biggest and most popular networking site we ever witnessed. In a study reported by Chuck Martin at University of New Hampshire (UNH), where 1,127 students were surveyed; the results showed that Facebook is the mostly used SNS at (UNH) with 96% participants, followed by 84% for YouTube and lastly 10% for LinkedIn (Martin, 2009). This is probably due to the reason that adolescents are using Facebook extensively to get a global access. Power's study shows that popularity of SNS is on the increase among college youngsters, with 95% of 18 and 19 years old using Facebook (Power, 2012). According to Alexander (2007), 52% users visit Facebook daily beating out others for daily visitors, such as Twitter (36%), MySpace (7%) and LinkedIn (6%). This shows that Facebook is the most preferred SNS among students. According to a report by Nielsen (2012), in the U.S. alone, total minutes spent on social networking sites has increased 83 percent year-over-year. In fact, total minutes spent on Facebook increased nearly 700 percent year-over-year. A Pew Research Centre report from 2013 found out that Facebook is the most preferred social media platform of young people in terms of numbers of registered users. A 2015 pew report indicated that 71% of teens aged 13-17 use Facebook. Other social media sites used by this demographic group are Instagram (52%), Twitter (33%), Google+ (33%), Vine (24%), and Tumbler (4%) (Lenhart, 2007).

Buhari, Ahmad, and HadiAshara (2014) carried out a study involving 932 polytechnic students between the ages of 15 and 29 years. The study revealed that the students preferred to use Facebook and WhatsApp to share information; communicate with their friends; access movies, photos, and music; search for jobs; propagate their religion; and conduct businesses. Similarly, a Mauritius study involving 4,545 secondary school students reports that the teens preferred Facebook for keeping in touch with friends and family members, making new friends, discussing school work, and sharing photos, music, and videos with their friends (Khedo, Ally, Suntoo, and Mocktoolah, 2013).

Mingle and Adams (2015) in their study investigated social media participation and its effect on the

academic performance of students in four senior high schools in Ghana. The findings revealed that WhatsApp and Facebook were the students' preferred social media. Thirty-eight percent of respondents spent more than 8 hours, 25.8% 1-2 hours, 21% 3-5 hours, and 15.8% 6-7 hours or 8-12 hours daily. Some respondents (38%) indicated that they use social media during school hours. The negative effects of social media on students' performance included reduced time for studying, distraction from school work, and procrastination in completing assignments. Other negative effects included poor grammar and spelling, incorrect sentence construction, and falling grades.

2.1.5 Poor Grammar and Spelling on Social Networking Sites and Students' Academic Achievement

With social media and technology expanding daily, students and the general public are beginning to embrace shortened 'text-speak' as part of an overall trend of using bad grammar, bad punctuation and bad spelling—all for the sake of convenience and speed. While social media lingo may send English teachers into a tailspin, experts have pondered whether poor English grammar may be on a road to extinction in the brave new world of emoticons, texts, tweets, and short Facebook Posts. In speaking to students, it has been observed that the shorthand used in social media and texting can be replicated in the classroom and this trend is impacting nearly all the students. It has affected students negatively because they do not fully spell words when texting or messaging and when writing notes in class. Students spend so much time on social networking sites and they begin to spend little or no time at all socializing in person. As a result of this, students are not able to effectively communicate in person. It should be known that effective communication skills are key to success in the real world and employers are getting more and more dissatisfied with the communication skills of graduates due to this reason.

Volsoo (2009) posited that for many years, educators and parents of the students are putting blame on texting for two reasons: the corruption of language and the degradation of spelling in today's youth writing due to these SNSs texting style. Students are texting day and night on these SNSs so they become used to the inappropriate language that are mostly used online. The study showed that students are using this internet English in their academic work. Volsoo highlighted that in schools, many educators cry about the problem of texting language on students' academic work, and that it seems as if students are unable to use proper language in dissimilar context and as a result, students informal textisms appears in their formal school work (Vosloo, 2009). There are negative effects of social media on writing skills, but in researching this topic, it was difficult to find many sources that clearly stated and showed the negative effects brought about by social media on writing skills.

Obi, Bulus, Adamu and Sala (2012) observed that the use of social networking sites affects students' use of English and grammar. 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. and this affects their classroom assessments. Not only does the active involvement in the social networking sites encourage the poor use of grammar but also spellings, as students mostly use slangs or shortened forms of words. Using Twitter as an example, Twitter limits its users to the use of 140 characters. Therefore, users will have no other option than to abbreviate their words as much as they can, just to enable their thoughts fit into the 140-character provision. As a result of the excessive use of abbreviated words and slang by students on social networks, they start to rely on the computer grammar and spell checkers on their devices. This results in the reduction of their command over English language and their writing skills (David, 2014).

Interestingly, social network participation has also developed a form of communication that is affecting linguistic habits of students. Words are used in their raw state as pronounced and this is transferred to the class room environment. A study conducted in Oman by Mehmood and Taswir (2013), on how social network participation affects linguistics of students found out that many students indicated there was a change in their linguistic habits as a result of their constant communication on the social networks. Some of these students also indicated that they used slang language in communicating on social networks and this adversely affects their writing skills in the class room. This study revealed that majority of the respondents' 323 (62%) grammar and spelling has been affected negatively as a result of their participation on social networks. On how they have been affected, they stated addiction to shorthand writing 343 (48.9%) respondents, writing notes with shorthand 287 (40.9%) and spelling of the words the same way they sound 71 (10.1%) as reasons for negatively being affected.

3. Method

The descriptive survey research design was used in carrying out this study. In this type of research, a general overview of the subject will be obtained without affecting the subject's normal behaviour and it will describe the situation as it is without determining cause and effect relationship. The study will be an attempt to ascertain the influence of social networking sites usage, time spent on SNSs, gender use, most visited social networking site, poor grammar and spelling on the academic achievement of students. This design is therefore appropriate for this study as data was collected from representative sample.

Uyo Senatorial District in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria constituted the area for this study. This is located

between longitude 7°40' and 8°40' East, and Latitudes 4°40' and 5°40' North of the Equator. It is situated between the North and South-East corner of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The area is made up of nine (9) local government areas out of the thirty-one (31) local government areas in the state. The District covers Uyo, Etinan, Nsit Ibom, Ibesikpo, Nsit Atai, Itu, Ibiono Ibom, Nsit Ubium and Uruan. There are eighty-six (86) governments owned secondary schools in Uyo Senatorial District (Akwa Ibom State Secondary Education Board, 2016).

The population of this study comprised all Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students in Uyo Senatorial District and the population size is 21,726. The sample size for this study comprised 452 students from 27 sampled schools. The SS2 students were chosen because they were in the age bracket (16-21 years) of students who have the highest user rate of social networking sites. The 452 students were approximately 10% of the SS2 students from the sampled schools and 31% of schools drawn using multi-stage sampling technique. This involved the stratified sampling technique, proportionate sampling technique and the simple random sampling technique. In stage one; the stratified sampling technique was used to cluster the 86 schools into nine Local Education Committees (LECs). In stage two, the proportionate sampling technique was used to proportionately select two to four schools from the nine LECs. At the final stage, since the population of SS2 students and the number of secondary schools in each local government were not the same in size, 10% of students from the 27 sampled schools were used.

A researcher-developed questionnaire titled “Social Networking Sites Usage and the Negative Influence on Students’ Academic Achievement (SNSUNISAA)” was used for data collection. The SNSUNISAA had 2 parts, A and B. Part A had the general instruction and 20 items divided into four sub-sections with 5 items in each sub-section while Part B had the demographic data of the respondents. These sections elicited information on the negative influence of social networking sites usage on student academic achievement. The 20 items in Part A was structured on a four-point scale with a response mode of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) =3 points, Disagree (D) =2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1 point. The face and content validity of the instrument was established by three validates, one in Educational Technology, one in Educational Measurement and Evaluation, and one in Educational Management and Planning, all are lecturers in the faculty of Education, University of Uyo. The corrections and inputs of the validates were reflected before drafting and administration of the final instrument.

Reliability coefficient of the research instrument was established through a trial test using 20 males and 20 female Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students selected from a public secondary school which is not earmarked for the actual study. After the appropriate scoring of the responses, Cronbach’s Alpha Analysis was employed to determine the internal consistency reliability of the instruments. A coefficient value of 0.79 was obtained and this was considered appropriate for the study, and this in line with the view of Uzoagulu (2011) that a reliability coefficient of 0.70 and above is acceptable for a good instrument. The research instrument was finally administered using three trained research assistants using direct administration and retrieval method. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using frequency distributions and arithmetic mean. The decision rule was based on the midpoint of 2.50 rating. Items with mean scores of 2.50 and above were registered as agreement and showed positive responses while the ones with 2.49 and below were regarded as disagreement and showed negative responses. The z-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results

Table 1: Mean scores of students’ responses based on the use of social networking sites N=452

S/N	Social Networking Site Usage	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (x)	Remark
1	Addiction to social networking is a problem	1.17 (162)	2.02 (280)	0.03 (6)	0.02 (4)	3.24	High Extent
2	Usage of social networking sites affects my study time	1.32 (189)	1.68 (240)	0.05 (9)	0.08 (14)	3.13	High Extent
3	My social network page is always open when I am studying	1.69 (266)	1.16 (186)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2.85	High Extent
4	My involvement in social networking sites has led to a decline in performance in most subjects	0.94 (139)	1.84 (271)	0.30 (42)	0 (0)	3.08	High Extent
5	Social media is associated with divided attention	0.60 (92)	2.03 (312)	0.30 (45)	0.02 (3)	2.95	High Extent
Grand Mean						3.05	

Data presented in Table 1 reveals that all the items attracted positive responses as shown by their mean ratings which are all above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Results from the table using the grand mean of 3.05 reveal that the use of social networking sites negatively affects students’ academic achievement in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Table 2: Mean scores of students' responses based on the time spent on social networking sites N=452

S/N	Time Spent on Social Media	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (x)	Remark
1	I use social networking sites very often	1.77 (244)	1.33 (185)	0.12 (16)	0.05 (7)	3.27	High Extent
2	Social networking sites affects my study timings	2.70 (349)	0.62 (77)	0.15 (19)	0.04 (7)	3.51	Very High Extent
3	I stay too long online whenever I log into my profile	0.81 (117)	2.29 (330)	0 (0)	0.03 (5)	3.13	High Extent
4	I stay awake late in the night and gets up early to spend more time on social networking sites	1.95 (262)	1.28 (171)	0.10 (15)	0.03 (4)	3.36	High Extent
5	Spending time on social networking sites interferes with my ability to complete my assignments	3.39 (399)	0.39 (47)	0.04 (6)	0 (0)	3.82	Very High Extent
Grand Mean						3.42	

Data presented in Table 2 reveals that all the items attracted positive responses as shown by their mean ratings which are all above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Results from the table using the grand mean of 3.41 reveal that the students spend a greater part of their time on these social networking sites and this negatively affects students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Table 3: Frequencies and Percentages of the most visited social networking sites and the gender distribution N=452

Social Networks	Male Student		Female Student		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Facebook	(95)	21%	(108)	24%	(203)	45%
WhatsApp	(36)	8%	(45)	10%	(81)	18%
2go	(27)	6%	(40)	9%	(67)	15%
Twitter	(22)	5%	(9)	2%	(31)	7%
LinkedIn	(3)	0.7%	(2)	0.3%	(5)	1%
Non-users	(43)	9.3%	(22)	4.7%	(65)	14%
Total	(226)	50%	(226)	50%	(452)	100%

Results in Table 3 shows that social networking sites commonly used by students are Facebook 45% (203 students), WhatsApp 18% (81 students) and 2go 15% (67 students). Further analysis indicates that 14% representing 65 students do not use social networking sites while the remaining 86% use social networking sites distributed across the various platforms. A close look on the table also indicates that females use social networking sites more than their male counterparts. This is shown by 9.3% and 4.7% representing males and females who make up the 14% of students who do not use social networking sites.

Table 4: Mean scores of students' responses based on poor grammar and spelling due to their constant use of social networking sites N=452

S/N	Poor Grammar and Spelling	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (x)	Remark
1	My writing always has grammar mistakes	1.34 (198)	1.41 (207)	0.20 (31)	0.10 (16)	3.05	Agreed
2	My writing always has spelling mistakes	0.71 (137)	0.50 (95)	1.04 (195)	0.13 (25)	2.38	Disagreed
3	I use abbreviations often when putting up update and comment on my social networking profile	1.42 (207)	1.31 (191)	0.27 (41)	0.08 (13)	3.08	Agreed
4	I use slangs mostly on social networking sites	2.02 (262)	1.36 (177)	0.07 (10)	0.01 (3)	3.46	Agreed
5	Social networking sites affects my English language usage	0.37 (72)	0.50 (99)	1.38 (271)	0.05 (10)	2.30	Disagreed
Grand Mean						2.85	

Data presented in Table 4 reveals that secondary school students scored below 2.50 in items 2 and 5. This indicates that they disagreed with the statement that social networking sites negatively affect their spellings and use of English Language. The students also scored 2.50 and above in all the items 1, 3 and 4. This shows that they agreed to grammar mistakes, and excessive use of abbreviations and slangs. Results from the table using the grand mean of 2.85 reveal that students' grammar and spellings are negatively affected due to their high-level usage of social networking sites.

4.1 Discussion

From the analysis of data, the result of the study from research question one showed that the use of social networking sites by the secondary school students negatively affects their study time. This is in agreement with Banquil, Chua, Leano, Rivero, Burce, Dianalan, Matcenzo, and Timog (2009) who came up with a conclusion that social networking sites do affect one's academics adversely and cause a gradual drop of grades of students. They attributed this to the student investing his or her time in social networking sites instead of their studies. This finding is also in alignment with a research conducted by American Educational Research Association who declared on its annual conference in San Diego, California in 2009 that social media site users study less and generated lower grades eventually (21st century scholar.org). On the other hand, the findings of this study contradict the findings of Oskouei (2010) who proposed that internet is advantageous to both students and teachers if used as a tool for knowledge creation and dissemination.

The result from research question two is in consonance with the study conducted by Yeboah and Ewur (2014) which revealed how distractive social media networks are when it comes to academics. They indicated that social media networks such as WhatsApp distracts students' academic life and affects their concentration during classes. The study also indicated that social networks take away the time of students and tend to lead to procrastination of school academic works. Wade and Renata's (2011) study in Utah confirmed the above which also revealed that about two-thirds of the students in the study reported using electronic media while in class, studying, or doing homework.

The result from research questions three and four supports Tufekci (2008) who said that females were four to five times more likely than males to use social networking sites. Similarly, a Mauritius study reported that the teens preferred Facebook for keeping in touch with friends and family members, making new friends, discussing school work, and sharing photos, music, and videos with their friends (Khedo, Ally, Suntoo, & Mocktoolah, 2013). It is also in consonance with the study of Haq and Chand (2012) who concluded that Facebook use had an adverse influence on males' performance than females and this was due to the fact that males spend more time on sports and games activities than females, which caused a loss of time and a bad influence on academic performance. Davis, Canche, Deil-Amen and Rios-Aguilar (2012) in their study identified that Facebook had the highest number of users among the respondents.

The result from research question five supports the study of Rosen (2012) who posited that students on social media sites were more concerned about their appearance rather than focusing on the detail and accuracy of their writing skill and grammar usage. This finding also aligns with a research carried out by David (2014) who concluded that as a result of the excessive use of abbreviated words and slang by students on social networks, students start to rely on the computer grammar and spell checkers on their devices. This results in the reduction of their command over English language and their writing skills.

5. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it is clear that students' academic achievement is greatly impeded by their addiction and use of social networking sites. This is clearly seen in the time they spend on it, poor studying habit, excessive use of slangs and abbreviations, poor grammar and spellings and much more negative influences. Therefore, the findings of the study have led the researcher to conclude that, social networking sites usage negatively influences secondary students' academic achievement if not properly monitored or managed.

5.1 Recommendations

1. Administrators should ensure that students' use of social networking sites should be used for solving problems in education and no student should be allowed to make use of phone in class or in the library.
2. Parents should closely monitor their wards on the usage and time spent on social networking sites, know what they are doing online, whom they are chatting with and ensure that the sites are used responsibly.
3. All education stake holders should regularly and adequately communicate the negative influences of these sites to the students. This will enable them to be watchful of their activities and improve in their academic endeavours by their ability to regulate, eliminate or reduce the time spent or wasted on the use of the social networking sites.
4. Educators should ensure that students' poor use of grammar, informal and inappropriate way of writing in their academic work is not ignored. Marks should also be deducted for the use of slang, wrong spelling and abbreviations.

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