Social Media and Students' Academic Performance among Secondary School Students

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Abstract: The study assessed the impact of social media on students' academic performance in Secondary Schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The theory underpinning this work is the theory of social constructivism. The work adopted a correlational-survey design, and a sample size of 248 respondents was determined from a population size of 1242 using the proportionate sampling technique. 248 copies of a structured questionnaire were distributed. 246 were retrieved and used in the analysis. A total of 209 copies, of which the respondents agreed to using social media, were used in answering the research questions and analysing the hypotheses. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions, while the Person Product Moment Correlation and T-test were used in testing the hypotheses. Person product moment correlation was used in examining the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, while T-test was used to determine if the level of relationship is significant a 0.05 level of significance. The result of the analysis showed a significant relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. Based on the findings, the study recommended that students should be better educated on the use of social media, how to effectively use it and ability to strike a balance between the use of social media and their academics. The study suggested that similar studies be carried out in private schools and other states in the country.

1. 1. Introduction

The world is enjoying the improvements in communication technology which has improved communication through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Present Technology in communication has transformed the world to a "Global village". The revolution of the Internet has changed the process of sharing, storing and retrieving information anywhere in the world without distance barriers. A lot of people use the internet daily to transfer information. Internet usage statistics for the world showed that 3,739,698,500 were estimated Internet users as at 31st May, 2017 with a penetration rate of 49.7%. Also, the estimated population of Africa in May, 2017 was 1,246,504,865 of which 353,121,578 were Internet users (Internet World Stats, 2017). The penetration of Internet on the continent was 28.3%. In Nigeria, the number of internet users as at 31st March, 2017 was 93,591,174 with 48.8% Internet penetration, and 46,695.6% internet growth percentage between 2000 and 2017 (Internet World Stats, 2017).

Through the Internet, many web technologies with regard to information sharing and communication have emerged, and one prominent technology is the social media (Mingle & Adams, 2015). The evolution of social media permeates all facets of society with positive and negative impacts. Social media has transformed and impacted communication, learning, research and education in general (Aghazamani, 2010).

Davis, Canche, Deil-Amen and Rios-Aguilar (2012), see social media as "web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage, and share new user generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communication". Through this platform, people create personal or organisational profiles and share information. However, it is not limited to desktop or laptop computers but accessible through mobile applications and smart phones.

Social media usage has been met by mixed feelings in Nigeria. There have been calls to establish a working framework to regulate the usage, while some others believe it is an extension of the freedom of speech of individuals. A lot of people have argued about the benefits, whereas some emphasise the negative effects.

The most important thing is that it has given people freedom to express themselves and voiceless now have a voice. Like most things, this new freedom can also be abused and at such is observed to be the fresh wine of freedom which is beginning to intoxicate (Odu, 2013). This is bound to affect other areas of life and the society at large.

The senior secondary school certificate examinations result for the year 2010 showed that less than average number of students obtained credit and above in five subjects including English and Mathematics. This low average score has been reoccurring over the years. However, since 2015 there has been a steady improvement in performance. The result of the just concluded 2017 senior secondary school certificate examinations revealed a performance rate of 59.22% (Vanguard, 2017). There have been a lot of debates on the impact that social media has on society and specifically, its effect on education. Ito, Baumer, Bittanti, Boyd, Cody and Herr-Stephenson (2009) observed that teenagers use social media for some positive activities, which include joining groups they find interesting and contributing in various activities. Ahn (2011) believes that social media provide an avenue for youths to engage in groups that encourage them to improve in specific knowledge areas. Fishman, Lunsford, McGregor and Otuteye (2005) also observed that students seem to develop various writings through various social media. On the contrary, Ogedebe, Emmanuel and Musa (2012) observed that the time students dedicate to social media affect their commitment to class activities which in turn affect their academic performance. Banquil, Chuna, Leano, Rivero, Dianalan, Matienzo and Timog (2009) discovered a steady decline in students' grades as a result of social media usage.

The understanding of social media usage by secondary school students is vital in achieving performance in order to improve secondary school education in Nigeria. Although there are other factors standing in the way of academic performance, social media seems to be a major factor, considering its interest among secondary school students. There are many works on social media usage among students in Nigeria, but there exists a gap in knowledge on social media and its impact on academic performance, bearing in mind that social media is a fascination among secondary school students. Hence, there is need to investigate the relationship between social media and students' academic performance in Nigeria, in order to determine students' attitude to social media and how it impact on their academics. This research work seeks to examine the impact of social media on academic performance of students

1.1.   Statement of the Problem

The Nigerian educational system is confronted with a lot of challenges which have resulted in a rapid decline in the quality of education. Such challenges range from poor infrastructure and learning environment to inadequate funding, unavailability and instability of teaching staff, politicisation of education, indiscipline among school administrators and students, poor parenting/guidance amongst others (Mahmoud, 2013; Nigerian Finder, 2016; Sherif, 2017). A fast growing challenge to the performance of students and the educational system in Nigeria is the use of social media.

There is a deviation, distraction and divided attention between social media activities and students' academic work. Secondary school students in Nigeria are fascinated with social media and spend so much time on it. It is observed that students devote more attention to social media than they do to their studies. It is now common to see youngsters chatting in sensitive and highly organised places like religious places, streets, public vehicles and lecture rooms. Some are so carried away that they chat while walking along highways.

Instead of focusing on their books, they spend time chatting and making friends on social media and this might definitely have influence on their academic performance. Performing well academically is a function of how effective ones reading and study habits are. Apart from the reading habit, another area that is of concern is the disruption of students' writing skills. Students now find it difficult to write long essays and even when they write, most words will be abbreviated. Some students do not even know the correct spellings for some words. Likewise, they have inculcated the habit of writing in shorthand. Abbreviations and incomplete sentences are mostly used while communicating via social media and they apply such in tests and examinations. For instance, okay is represented as k, because is replaced with bcos or cz, you is represented as u, the is d, I am is written as am, why is y, etc. Based on these problems, the researcher is interested in examining the impact of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

1.2.   Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between social media and students' academic performance in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.
The specific objectives of this study were:
1. To examine how the use of blogs influence students' academic performance.
2. To ascertain how the use of collaborative projects affect students' academic performance.
3. To examine the relationship between social gaming and students' academic performance.
4. To assess the extent to which social networks stimulate students' academic performance.
5. To determine the extent to which age is a factor in the use of social media.

1.3.   Research Questions

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following questions were proposed:
1. What is the relationship between blogs and students' academic performance?
2. How much influence do collaborative projects have on students' academic performance?
3. What relationship exists between social gaming and students' academic performance?
4. To what extent has social networks stimulated students' academic performance?
5. How is age a factor in using social media?

1.4.   Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were proposed in this research.
Ho_1 There is no significant relationship between blogs and students' academic performance.
Ho_2 There is no significant relationship between collaborative projects and students' academic performance.
Ho_3 There is no significant relationship between social gaming and students' academic performance.
Ho_4 There is no significant relationship between social networks and students' academic performance.
Ho_5 Age does not significantly influence the use of social media.

1.5.   Assumptions
  i.   Students are familiar with and agree to using certain types of social media.

ii.   Students have access to the internet and are active on social media.

2.   Theoretical Framework
The theory underpinning this study is the Theory of Social Constructivism.
Constructivism is a combination of various speculations diffused in to one frame. It is the digestion of both behaviourialist and psychological beliefs. The constructivist position keeps up that learning is a procedure of developing significance; it is the means by which individuals understand their experience (Caffarella & Merriam, 1999).

Social constructivism is a theory of knowledge in sociology and communication theory that inspects the learning and understandings of the world that are produced mutually by people. These theories expect that understanding and importance are produced in a joint effort with other people (Amineh & Asl, 2015).

This theory was pioneered by Vygotsky (1978). He argues that the culture and context form understanding. Learning is not just an internal process, neither is it an inactive adjustment of behaviour, rather it is a social construct mediated by language through social discourse (McMahon, 1997). The most vital components in this theory are
  i.   the supposition that people legitimise their experience by making a model of the social world and the way it functions, and
ii.   the confidence in language as the most basic framework through which people develop reality (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009).

Vygotsky (1978) states that psychological development happens first on a social level and after that it can happen inside the person. Learners can comprehend others and construct knowledge if they relate with conditions (Roth, 2000). To McMahon (1997), culture and setting in understanding what happens in the society and knowledge development in light of this comprehension are underlined in social constructivism.

Kim (2001) believes that social constructivism depends on particular assumptions about reality, knowledge, and learning.
  i.   Reality: The first assumption of social constructivism is that reality does not exist ahead of time; rather it is developed through human action.
ii.   Knowledge: Social constructivism sees knowledge as a human item that is socially and culturally developed. People can make

meaning when they associate with each other and their environment.

iii. Learning: Social constructivism believes that learning is a social procedure. Learning does not happen just inside an individual, nor is it created by outside powers (McMahon, 1997).

Social constructivism, influenced by Vygotsky's (1978) work, proposes that knowledge is first developed in a social setting and is then internalised and utilised by people (Kim, 2001). Collaborative elaboration, the process of sharing personal perspective, brings about learners constructing understanding together and this development is not conceivable alone inside people (McMahon, 1997). Social constructivist researchers see learning as a dynamic procedure where learners should figure out how to find standards, ideas and realities for themselves, consequently they empower and advance the mystery and instinctive deduction in learners (Brown, 1994). As it were, social constructivist features that reality is not something that people can find since it does not pre-exist preceding their social development of it.

3.   Conceptual Framework

The concept of Social Media and Students' Academic Performance are discussed in this section.
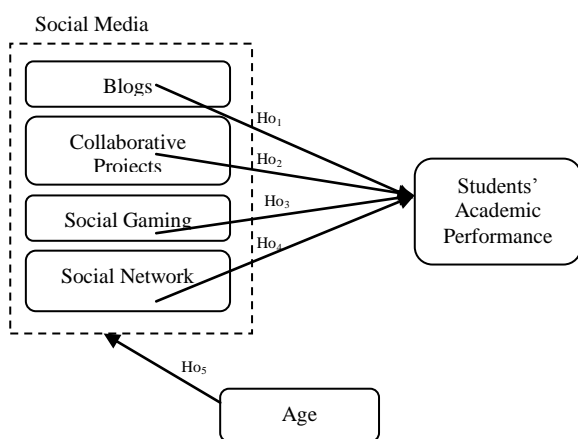

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3.1   Social Media

Social media is defined as "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein,2010). Social media is the fastest

growing web application in the 21st century. All web based applications which allow creation-exchange of user-generated content and enable interaction between the users can be classified as "Social Media". These could be in the form of Social Networking Sites, Blogs, Internet forums, Bookmarking sites, online community sites, etc (Taprial & Kanwar, 2012).

Individuals are keen on networking and connecting with friends, sending messages, sharing information, interacting with one another in simultaneously gathering information or just transferring files (films, songs or pictures) on the Internet. Any media (websites) that enables people perform all these tasks easily, becomes a social media site. Social media has significantly changed the way organizations, groups, and people communicate today.

Characteristics of the Social Media

Taprial and Kanwar (2012) identified six properties of social media. They are:

1.   *Accessibility*: The social media is open and takes negligible or no expenses to utilise. They are easy and do not require extraordinary skills or knowledge to use. It is totally easy to associate with others. Therefore anyone with online access can participate in discussions.

2.   *Interactivity*: Social media provides two-way or multi communication. Users can communicate with each other on anything.

3.   *Longevity*: Social media content is available for a long period, possibly forever.

4.   *Reach*: The Internet offers unlimited reach to all available content. It can be gotten anywhere it can be reached. Social media offers similar service to every user who can share anything with anyone they like.

5.   *Speed*: The content created on the social media is available to everyone as soon as it is published. One can communicate quickly with no external hindrance to message delivery. The responses are instantaneous and simultaneous.

6.   *Volatility*: The content can be edited or changed anytime. Therefore, if one likes a specific product and acknowledges it on the platform, the user can always and change his opinion anytime.

Social media has opened up new avenues for people to connect with each other and with the content available on the Internet. People stay connected with friends/family, find people, discuss issues, share opinions, read user reviews through social media. In

addition to staying connected, the users acquire or improve knowledge and gain insights on specific subjects to make better decisions.

The various types or forms of social media that exist on the Internet are; Internet Forums, Magazines, Micro-Blogging, Photographs, Podcasts, Rating, Social Blogs, Social Bookmarking Videos, Weblogs and Wikis (Taprial & Kanwar, 2012).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified the social media into six different types based on their media research. They classified the social media as:
1. Blogs and Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)
2. Collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia)
3. Content Communities (e.g. Youtube)
4. Social Networking Sites (e.g. Facebook)
5. Virtual Game or Social Gaming (e.g. World of Warcraft)
6. Virtual Social Worlds (e.g. Second Life)

This study adopts four of these classes in assessing the relationship between social media and students' academic performance. They are Blogs, Collaborative Projects, Social Gaming and Social Networking Sites.

3.1.1 Blog. A blog is a Web-based distribution of occasional articles, usually in reverse chronological order (OECD, 2007). It is a type of website, commonly maintained by a person with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or videos. A blog can be a journal, diary, 'what's new' page, or connections to different sites. It is normally open to people and many are free to create. It is the work of one person; however group blogs are also available. They are personal web pages and can vary from personal diaries to summaries of relevant information on a particular content area (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Blogs can also offer opportunity to interact with readers. Readers can post comments like with a visitor's book. Blogs can also be regarded as a form of personal publishing on the Internet. Often subject-based or in diary form, typically combine text and graphics, with links to other materials and easy web publishing. Blogs give an appearance of anonymity while allowing for human connection via commenting. They are a permanent record. It can contain personal info (names, birthdays, towns, team names, phone numbers, dorms, etc. However blogs can create avenue for harassment and bullying (through blog postings); libel suits; others can reuse a person's information for criminal or illegal acts (Valie, 2006). Blogs, however, might be a better instrument to achieve idea sharing and collaborative learning, without sacrificing too much on customizing blogging space, tuning its look and feel, and the sense of ownership (Hall & Davison 2007). Some examples of blogs include: My Opera, Plurk, Twitter, Vox, Wooxie, Personal blogs (e.g. lindaikeji blog).

3.1.2 Collaborative Projects. Collaborative projects enable the joint and simultaneous creation of content by many end-users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Fama (1970) (as sited in Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), believed that the main idea underlying collaborative projects is that the joint effort of numerous actors prompts better outcome than individual actor.

Research on collaborative project shows that technology enables the development of critical thinking skills when learners utilise technology tools to prepare, present and publish their projects, particularly with collaborative learning techniques (Cradler, McNabb, Freeman & Burchett, 2002). Computer-mediated communication (CMC) tools such as discussion boards and e-mail (Thomas, 2002) can provide an online environment for small group collaboration where a record of all interactions is automatically saved, thus, enabling learners to reflect on the products and process of collaboration (Al-Rawahi & Al-Mekhlafi, 2015). They can likewise interact and use peer appraisal to support each other (Lee, Groves, Stephens, & Armitage, 1999); CMC can offer support for tracking contributions and monitoring and evaluating individual and group effort (EDUCAUSE, 2010).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2014) identified four types of collaborative projects. The first type is *wikis*. Examples of wikis are: Familypedia, wikiHow, Wikipedia, Wikiquote, Wikitravel.

The second is *social bookmarking sites*, or *collaborative tagging services*. Examples of social bookmarking sites are: CiteULike, Deliciou, Digg, Google Bookmarks, Pinboard.

The third is *online forums* or *message boards*. Examples of online forums are: College confidential, Student edge, The student room, Yahoo groups.

The fourth is *review sites*. Examples of review sites include: Epinions, Glassdoor, Judy's Book, RateMyProfessors, RateMyTeachers.com, Trip Advisor

3.1.3 Social gaming. Wikipedia defines social gaming as "playing online games that allow or require social interaction between players". Collins dictionary defines social gaming as "the activity of playing online games with other members of the same online group". The Oxford dictionary defines Social Gaming as "the activity or practice of playing an online game on a social media platform, with a major emphasis on

friends and community involvement". Social Gaming ranges from tending a farm to playing a soldier in combat. Ideas for new games are constantly developed. Some popular social games involve: Adventure, Arcade style games, Casino style games, Role playing.

3.1.4   Social network. Social networks are internet or mobile-based social space where people can connect, communicate, and create and share content with others. Social network is a strong tool for social interaction and connection, where it can improve family ties and friends in a rich social context. Social networks are the main application under the umbrella of social media, which comes with the Web 2.0 era. Social network sites (SNS) are web-based services that enable people to

    i. construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system,
    ii. articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and
    iii. view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2013).

Social networks are becoming major tools for education, and entertainment. Humans love interacting and discovering common areas and interests. In education, two issues prevail; the use of social networks as a tool supporting important educational activities and the negative influence social network inflicts on students behaviours and time management (Al-Tarawneh, 2014). Although SNSs have implemented various technical features, they comprise obvious profiles that display a list of friends who are also users of the network. Profiles are unique pages where one can "type oneself into being" (Sundén, 2003). After joining an SNS, a user is expected to fill out forms comprising progression of questions. The profile is created using the answers to these questions. Most sites also encourage users to upload a profile photo. Some sites allow users to enhance their profiles by adding multimedia content or modifying their profile's appearance (Boyd & Ellison, 2013). Some social networking sites are: Facebook, Flickr, Instagram, MyLife, Myspace SoundCloud.

3.2   Students' Academic Performance

Performance is the observable or measurable conduct in a specific circumstance usually experimental situation (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). This implies that performance measures the aspect of behaviour that can be observed at a specific period. To determine performance, a performance test is conducted. Singer (1981) defined performance test as the type of mental test in which the subject is asked to do something rather than to say something. Performance test is the type of test which throws light on the ability to deal with things rather than symbols (Drever, 1981).

In relation to education, academic performance of a student can be regarded as the observable and measurable behaviour of a student in a particular situation. For example, the academic performance of a student in computer includes observable and measurable behaviour of the student at any point in time during a course. In computer science students' academic performance consists of his scores at any particular time obtained from a teacher-made test. Therefore, we can equate academic performance with the observed behaviour or expectation of achieving a specific statement of educational intention. Academic performance of students consists of scores obtained from teacher-made test, first term examination, mid-semester test, and so on (Yusuf, 2015).

Warnemuende and Samson (2005) noted that people expect that children will succeed as students. When they do not, we are angry, confused, disappointed and scared. Regardless of whether the absence of achievement is in scholarly abilities, social conduct, or both, the acknowledgment that our students are not doing well is de-motivating. Poor academic performance, as pointed by Aremu and Sokan (2003), is a performance that is below an expected standard. Poor academic performance has been observed in school subjects especially mathematics and English language among secondary school students (Adesemowo, 2005). Academic failure is not only frustrating to students and parents, its effects are evident in the society regarding poor and under-skilled manpower in various parts of the society (Aremu, 2000).

3.3   Social Media and Students' Academic Performance

Though there have been many social, economic, and environmental factors that have added to the pressure of university students in the past ten years, the drop-out rate for students is still a major national problem (Bowen, 2008). Current statistics show that students in Nigeria are under increased pressure due to higher academic standards in other countries, and it has become more important than ever for educators to encourage graduation and further education (Bowen, 2008). However, with more and more students being preoccupied with social media and technological social lives, how will this affect their studies? It is estimated that even those students who do graduate high school,

one out of three does not have the knowledge and skills that would lead him or her to the next level, such as college or an advanced trade school (Bowen, 2008). Most school scholars are concerned with English language and advanced literary proficiency. The present generation of teenagers live in an innovative world with various communication media (Williams, 2008). While there might be a few benefits, like learning how to type fast and multitask, there may be limitations (Williams, 2008). Literacy has also declined thus posing the question to educators on what to do to help students improve their reading, writing, speaking and thinking; which are the essential skills for success (Wise, 2009).

The social media engages students. Institutions are developing groups on several websites. The enhanced utilisation of Websites is a worldwide phenomenon for a long while. What was leisure for several computer literate people is now a social norm and existence-style for people (Ellison, 2007). Students have recognised these internet sites to have the capacity to communicate with their peers, share information and exhibit their social lives (Ellison, 2007). Khan (2009) observed that social media users regularly experience poor academic performance. Likewise, Englander, Terregrossa and Wang (2010) conclude that social media is negatively connected with student academic performance and its disadvantages out-weigh the advantages. Addicted social media users prefer using the internet to carry out their personal and professional responsibilities which prompts poor academic performance (Nalwa & Anand, 2003). Similarly, Karpinski and Duberstein (2009) noted that social media users dedicated lesser time to their studies compared to non-users and hence had lower grades. Karpinski and Duberstein (2009) also observed that social media is a major distraction of the present generation.

Banquil et al, (2009), Kirschner and Karpinski (2010) and Ndaku (2013) discovered a drop in students' grades and academic performance. Lack of time for studies was observed to be a consequence of social media participation (Banquil et al, 2009; Ndaku, 2013). However, a site-specific culture can both positively and negatively affect the building of social capital. Technology usage, like internet, is a vital factor that can influence students' performance positively or negatively. Shah, Kwak and Holbert (2001) proposed that the type of internet usage by students affect them. They are positively affected by the informative use while having drastic impact of recreational use on them. Internet is beneficial to both students and teachers if used as a tool for creating and sharing knowledge (Oskouei & Chaudhary, 2010). The

dwindling academic performance of Nigerian students has been and is still a source of concern and research interest to educators, government and parents (Asikhia, 2010). Everywhere throughout the country, there is an agreement about the falling standard of education in Nigeria (Adebule, 2004). This is as a result of the great importance that education has on the national development of the country.

3.4   Age and Social Media

Students are the greatest consumers of the Internet, particularly for social interactions (Lin & Subrahmanyam, 2007). Social media have completely changed the way adolescents communicate and share information (Bonds Raacke & Raacke, 2008). It has also become the tool used for almost every project or assignment (Alexander & Salas, 2008). Youngsters have become accustomed to this lifestyle much more than older generations (Lewis, 2008). They use the social media for most of their daily activities compared to older generations who used media like the television or newspaper (Lewis, 2008). A recent survey showed that about 90% of teenagers in the United States have Internet access, and about 70% of these teenagers use social media (Kist, 2008). "Teenagers use the social media as an extension of their personality, to show their friends and the world who they are, what they care about, and to build connections with other like-minded people" (Goodman, 2007). Most Nigerian teenagers visit at least one social networking site about twenty times every day (Peter & Valkenburg, 2009).

There is a contention as to whether or not students should be able to freely use social media for communicating (Tynes, 2009). Parents specifically are strongly cautioned by the media and school officials about the influence of certain websites on teenagers (Tynes, 2009). They may use Internet services like Cyber Nanny to monitor certain websites and keep records of what their children may be looking at on the Internet. Other parents make house rules on when the Internet may be used and how it will be used so that they may monitor their teenagers (Tynes, 2009). Some parents, however, are concerned about their children's social lives and are grateful that they may have an outlet for their potential depression and loneliness (Bryant, Sanders-Jackson & Smallwood, 2006). Bryant, Sanders-Jackson, and Smallwoo (2006) found that about 35% of parents of adolescents reported that they feel that communication with others, in any form, is better than having no communication at all, and therefore are fully supportive of their child's internet use.

However, some people encourage the use of social media because they allow students to connect with each other and discuss school related issues (Alexander & Salas, 2008). Students can form online groups to plan for a project, have group discussions on class material, or use the social media as a way to keep in contact with an absent student who needs to be updated on academic information (Alexander & Salas, 2008). Sharing inappropriate information or disclosing "too much information" is another concern that many adults have about teens that participate in social media (DeSouza & Dick, 2008). In a study by DeSouza and Dick (2008) on MySpace participation among teenagers, it was observed that about 65% of teenagers who were on MySpace had very personal information on their profile pages. This personal information included where they live, their phone number and email addresses, where they attend school, where they work, and a number of things that they enjoy doing at leisure. Also, many teens, especially females, posted information about their sexual behaviour and their alcohol and substance use (DeSouza & Dick, 2008).

As a student increases in age, the frequency of off-topic discussions also increases. This indicates that while social media may encourage discussions of course content, older students may spend more time than younger students engaging in unrelated discussions (Rithik & Selvaraj, 2013). Generally, Social Media users largely are from Teenagers and Generation Y (internet users age 18-32). They are the most likely groups to use the internet for entertainment and for communicating with friends and family. Internet users ages 12-32 are more likely than older users to read other people's blogs and to write their own; they are also considerably more likely than older generations to use social networking sites and to create profiles on those sites; seek entertainment through online videos, online games, and virtual worlds, and download music to listen to later. Younger internet users often use personal blogs to update friends on their lives, and they use social networking sites to keep communicate with friends.

4. Methodology

This study examined the opinions of students on the impact of social media on their academic performance. The study adopted correlational-survey design. It sought the opinion of people through questionnaire administered to them in order to establish the relationship between social media and students' academic performance.

4.1 Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised twenty-three (23) public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The respondents were SS2 students from these secondary schools. The corresponding student population was four thousand seven hundred and thirty-eight (4738) students.
(Source: Post Primary School Board, Rivers State)

4.2 Sample and Sampling Technique
The proportionate sampling technique was adapted. The researcher will select 20% of the population in four (4) public secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State. The secondary schools are Community Secondary School, Okoro-nu-odu; Government Girls Secondary School, Rumuokwuta; Community Boys' Secondary School, Elelenwo; and Community Secondary School, Rumuapara. A sample size of two-hundred and forty-eight (248) was determined from one thousand, two-hundred and forty-two (1242) SS2 students in the four secondary schools.

4.3 Instrument of the Study

The instrument for the study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section A: Demographic data, which includes age, gender, class and name of school.
Section B: Social Media Usage, which includes the common types of social media used by students and the degree of usage. The degree of usage will be rated on 5-scales of Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely and Never.
Section C: Items to Answer the Research Questions, which were adapted to suite the purpose of the study. The variables to be investigated will be rated on a modified 4-point Likert-scale of strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3) and strongly agree (4).

4.4 Method of Data Analysis

The data was analysed using statistical techniques. The mean and standard deviation of the responses to each item on the questionnaire were calculated and used to answer the research questions. A correlation analysis using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the relationship between social media and students' academic performance. T-test was used

to determine if the level of relationship is significant. Analyses were done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21.0.

5.   Data Presentation

The mean and standard deviation of the various items listed in the questionnaire were computed and interpreted from the data and used in answering the research questions. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Movement Correlation Coefficient to test the relationship between social media and students' academic performance. T-test was used to determine if the level of relationship is significant.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

Number Allocated	248
Number distributed	248
Number Retrieved	246
Number Used	246

5.1   Demographic Analysis

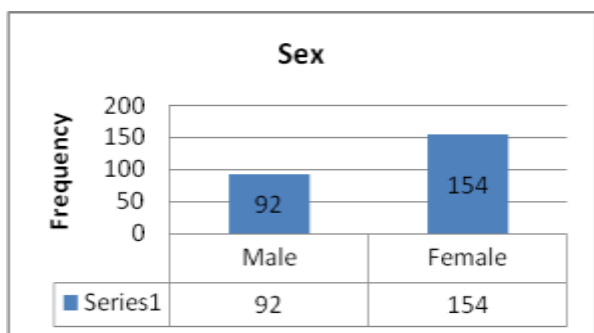Data on the demography was investigated on four characteristics: gender, age, use of social media and length of usage.
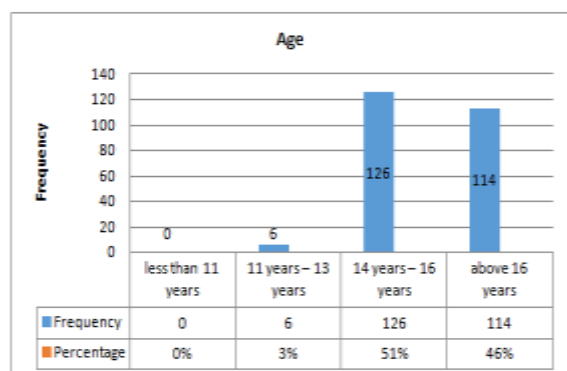

Figure 2: Gender Distribution
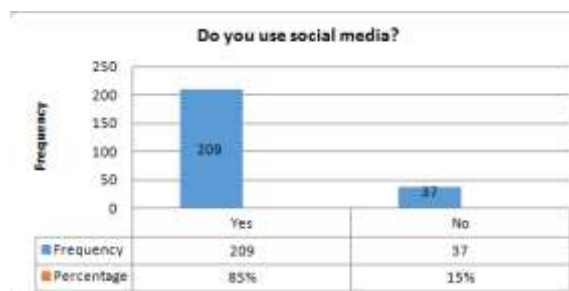

Figure 3: Age Distribution

Figure 4: Social Media Usage

Table 2: Gender Usage of Social Media

	Do you use social media?		Total
	Yes	No	
Sex Male	92	0	92
Female	117	37	154
Total	209	37	246

Table 2 shows the frequency of social media usage of male and female students. From the table it can be observed that all the male respondents use social media, while 37 female students do not use social media.
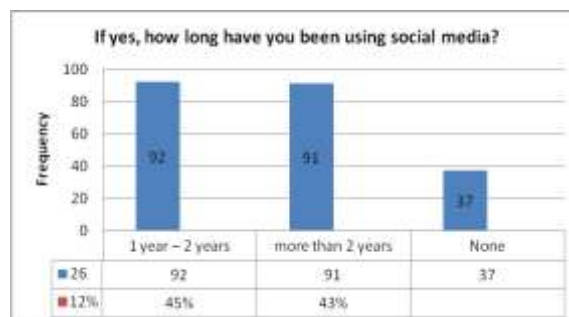

Figure 5: Length of Social Media Usage

5.2   Social Media Usage Frequency

This section gives analysis of how often the students use specific social media. The social media were classified in four sections; blogs, collaborative projects, social gaming and social networks. The responses were grouped on a 4-point scale of always, often, sometimes, rarely and never.
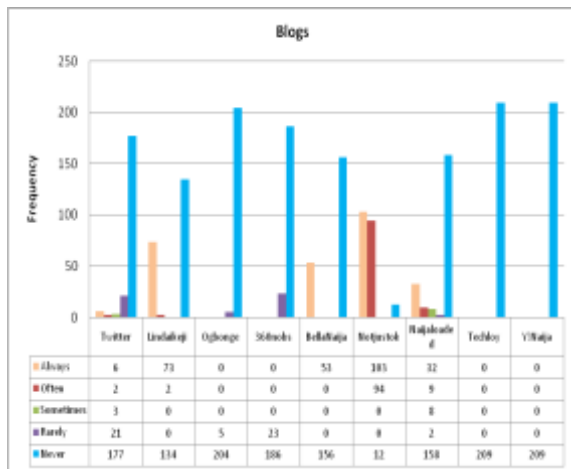
	Twitter	Lindaikeji	Ogbonge	Stdhrools	BellaNaija	Notjustok	Naijaloaded	Techloy	YNaija
Always	6	73	0	0	51	185	12	0	0
Often	2	1	0	0	0	94	9	0	0
Sometimes	3	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	0
Rarely	21	0	5	23	0	8	2	0	0
Never	177	134	204	186	156	12	158	209	209

Figure 6: Frequency of Blogs Usage

	Wikipedia	WikiHow	NonaLand	NaijaPal	Naij	Information Daily	Google Bookmarks	Yahoo groups
Always	87	8	0	8	0	8	0	0
Often	51	8	0	57	101	0	0	8
Sometimes	15	8	0	15	16	8	0	8
Rarely	19	61	0	15	78	8	0	8
Never	5	146	209	112	22	209	209	209

Figure 7: Frequency of Collaborative Projects Usage

	Adventure	Puzzle	Combat or Action e.g. fighting	Simulations or Racing	Sport	Educational	Role playing e.g. story line
Always	0	0	109	8	70	0	8
Often	0	0	2	11	21	0	8
Sometimes	0	0	0	14	8	0	8
Rarely	0	0	0	10	10	0	8
Never	209	209	98	134	118	209	204

Figure 8: Frequency of Social Gaming Usage

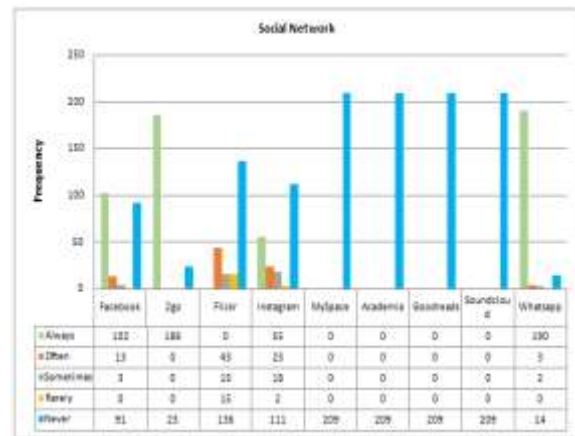|	Facebook	2go	Flixir	Instagram	Myspace	Academia	Goodreads	Soundcloud	Whatsapp
Always	122	186	0	55	0	0	0	0	190
Often	13	0	45	25	0	0	0	0	3
Sometimes	3	0	25	18	0	0	0	0	2
Rarely	0	0	16	2	0	0	0	0	0
Never	91	25	138	111	209	209	209	209	14

Figure 9: Frequency of Social Network Usage

5.3 Answers to Research Questions

The mean $(\bar{x})$ and standard deviation of the responses were used in proffering answers to the research questions. The decision rule is to accept the $\bar{x} \geq 2.5$ and to reject the $\bar{x} < 2.5$.
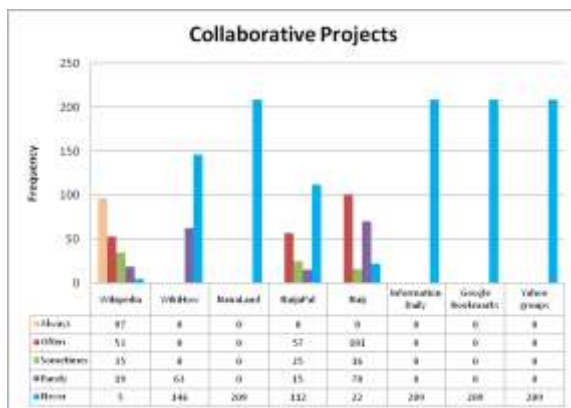
Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
Blogs			
It is my routine habit to use twitter in my daily life.	1.82	.780	Reject
I engage in academic discussions on blogs and this has improved my academic performance.	2.55	.740	Accept
Students share study material on blogs that helps other students which are weak in studies.	2.34	.988	Reject
I prefer to express my ideas and feelings on blogs.	2.67	.733	Accept
I use materials gotten from blogging sites to complement what I have been taught in class.	1.64	.482	Reject
Collaborative Projects			
I like working with other students on group projects.	3.04	.308	Accept
I am motivated when I participate in online forums.	2.31	.581	Accept
Engaging in academic forums reduces my rate of understanding.	1.93	.286	Reject
I solely rely on information gotten from Wikipedia to do my assignments without consulting other sources.	3.75	.803	Accept
The usage of Wikipedia for research has helped improve my grades.	3.78	.552	Accept
Social Gaming			
I play online games during or approaching a busy time of study (e.g. lots of assignments, exam periods)	2.26	.589	Reject
I think that playing online games gives me a better chance of improving my performance in assignments and/or exams.	2.33	.720	Reject
The use of social games makes me think and reason better.	3.70	.620	Accept
I perform better academically while spending time on social games.	2.25	.559	Reject
I prefer having fun through social games than spend time on my academics.	3.78	.552	Accept
Social Network			
Social network positively affect my study timings in routine life.	2.31	.390	Accept
I timely submit my assignments while spending time on social network.	2.31	.390	Accept
Groups and pages related to studies created on social network help me in my study.	3.78	.552	Accept
I find it flexible to focus on studies by logging into my social network as it helps me to remain in contact with classmates.	2.39	.588	Accept
I perform better academically while spending time on social networks.	2.26	.660	Reject
Age			
Age has impact on the use of social media.	3.78	.438	Accept
Social media is not relevant to adults.	2.25	.618	Reject
The younger generation are the most active users of social media.	3.78	.552	Accept
Social media become boring as I grow older.	2.16	.637	Reject
I become knowledgeable through the use of social media as I grow older.	2.36	.659	Accept

Figure 10: Answers to Research Questions

5.4 Test of Hypotheses

This section gives an analysis of the hypotheses testing. The result is based on correlations and it is a two-tailed, non-directional study. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the

relationship between social media and students' academic performance. T-test was used to determine if the level of relationship is significant. The decision rule is to reject the null hypotheses where $p \leq 0.05$ significant level and accept the null hypotheses where $p > 0.05$. All five hypotheses were tested in the null form.

	Hypotheses	Sig	Correlation	Extent of Relationship	Decision
Ho₁	There is no significant relationship between blogs and students' academic performance.	0.000	-.264	Weak negative relationship	Reject null hypothesis
Ho₂	There is no significant relationship between collaborative projects and students' academic performance.	0.000	.297	Weak positive relationship	Reject null hypothesis
Ho₃	There is no significant relationship between social gaming and students' academic performance.	0.000	.586	Strong positive relationship	Reject null hypothesis
Ho₄	There is no significant relationship between social networks and students' academic performance.	0.000	-.702	Strong negative relationship	Reject null hypothesis
Ho₅	Age does not significantly influence the use of social media.	0.000	.801	Strong positive relationship	Reject null hypothesis

Figure 11: Hypotheses Testing Result

5.4   Discussion of Findings

The analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of social media and students' academic performance, as well as age and the use of social media.

Blogs and Students' Academic Performance
The outcome of the analysis on the relationship between blogs and students' academic performance shows a weak negative relationship between the two variables. This contradicts the work of Yang and Chang (2012) that blogs are associated with positive attitudes towards academic achievement in course subjects and in online peer interaction. They also observed in their study that students showed positive motivation to learn from peer work, regardless of whether blogs were interactive or solitary (Yang & Chang, 2012). Hall and Davison (2007) also observed that composing blog comments involves stepping back, reflecting, and analysing, which enables individuals to become more thoughtful and mindful of their work. However blogs can create avenue for harassment and bullying (through blog postings); libel suits; others can reuse a person's information for criminal or illegal acts (Valie, 2006).

Collaborative Projects and Students' Academic Performance
From the analysis on the relationship between collaborative projects and students' academic performance, a positive relationship exists between the two variables. Al-Rawahi and Al-Mekhlafi's (2015)

investigation on the effect of online collaborative project-based learning on the language performance and attitudes of intermediate level students at the College of Applied Sciences in Oman discovered that the main positive effect of online collaborative project-based learning was clear on students' writing skill. Collaborative online learning does benefit from scaffolding that supports collaborative planning and feedback from peers (Hume, 2015). Research on collaborative project shows that technology enables the development of critical thinking skills when learners utilise technology tools to prepare, present and publish their projects, particularly with collaborative learning techniques (Cradler, McNabb, Freeman & Burchett, 2002).

Social Gaming and Students' Academic Performance
The study revealed a strong positive relationship between social gaming and students' academic performance. This contradicts the works of Ip, Jacobs and Watkins (2008) who carried out a study on Gaming frequency and academic performance. They observed that examination marks in fact negatively correlate gaming frequency – i.e. frequent gamers generally achieve lower marks than less frequent gamers (Ip, Jacobs and Watkins, 2008). Salimi (2016) and Motamedi and Bakhtiary (2014) are also of the opinon that social gaming negatively affects students performance. However, supporting this work, Salimi (2016) observed in his study that the grades of frequent gamers performed better than those who did not play games. This could be based on the fact that games (especially war, combats and arcade games as well as role playing games) require a lot of critical thinking.

Social Network and Students' Academic Performance
The study also revealed a strong negative relationship between social network and students' academic performance. This confirms the study of Adebiyi, Akinbode, Okuboyejo, Agboola and Oni (2015) who discovered that social network statistically has a significant negative effect on academic performance. However, Ogundijo (2014) observed that time spent on SNSs did not significantly influence academic performance of secondary school students, and that participation in class by students was not a significant predictor of their average academic performance (in Mathematics and English). The number of friends that students have on social networking sites have a positive, significant influence on the time spent on SNSs, and the number of posts that students put on social networking sites was not a significant predictor of participation in class (Ogundijo, 2014). Yang and

Tang (2003) observed that advising network was positively related to student performance both in the class and on the forum, while adversarial variables were negatively correlated with almost all students' performance.

Age and the use of Social Media

One last finding from this study is that age has a strong positive impact on the use of social media. Students are the greatest consumers of the Internet, particularly for social interactions (Lin & Subrahmanyam, 2007). Generally, Social Media users largely are from Teenagers and Generation Y (internet users age 18-32). Most Nigerian teenagers visit at least one social networking site about twenty times every day (Peter & Valkenburg, 2009). "Teenagers use the social media as an extension of their personality, to show their friends and the world who they are, what they care about, and to build connections with other like-minded people" (Goodman, 2007). As a student increases in age, the frequency of off-topic discussions also increases. This indicates that while social media may encourage discussions of course content, older students may spend more time than younger students engaging in unrelated discussions (Rithik & Selvaraj, 2013). Younger internet users often use personal blogs to update friends on their lives, and they use social networking sites to keep communicate with friends.

6.   Summary

This study focused on the influence of social media on the academic performance of students. Five research questions and five hypotheses were developed. The work was founded on the Theory of Social Constructivism, which believes that learning is not just an internal process, neither is it an inactive adjustment of behaviour, rather it is a social construct mediated by language through social discourse. The study adopted correlational-survey design on a sample size of two-hundred and forty-eight (248). A structured questionnaire consisting of three sections was designed and distributed to 248 respondents. 246 of the 248 copies of the questionnaire distributed were returned. Of the 246 copies of the questionnaire returned, 209 accepted that they use social media and their responses were used in proffering answers to the research questions and testing the hypotheses. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while Pearson Correlation and T-test were used in testing the hypotheses. The result found a significant relationship between the dimensions of social media and students' academic performance, and age has a significant influence on the use of social media,

7.   Recommendations

From the research, analysis and conclusions above, the followings recommendations are put forward:

1. Students should be better educated on the use of blogs and its effect on their performance. They should be advised on curtailing the use and its intended purpose to avoid dwindling academic performance.
2. Students should be encouraged to participate in collaborative projects. This will help them share ideas on various educational topics.
3. Students should also be advised on the use of social gaming especially during examinations. Games are most times addictive, and involve a lot of thinking especially when it involves competition. If it is utilised effectively it will better improve their academic performance.
4. Students are also to be educated on the use of social networks. They should be educated on how to properly manage their study time in other to avoid distractions from social networks.
5. Students should be monitored by parents and teachers as the increased desire for social media is deeply getting into them at this age. They should be taught how to create a balance between the use of social media and academics.

8.   Contribution to Knowledge

The major contribution is the dimensions through which social media was used in examining the academic performance of students. It considered blogs, collaborative projects, social gaming and the most commonly discussed social network. Blogs, collaborative projects and social gaming have received little attention among scholars, and these three dimensions of social network should be thought of as constructs that could affect academic performance.

9.   Suggestion for Further Studies

This research is limited to a specific set of schools. Further studies should be carried out in private secondary schools in Rivers State. Likewise, similar studies should be carried out in other states in the country. Content Communities and Virtual Social Worlds can also be used as dimensions of social media.

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