SOCIAL MEDIA USE PATTERN AND ITSPERCEIVED EFFECTS ON READING CULTURE OF STUDENTS IN SELECTED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract:

The ability to read, comprehend and internalised what was read is regarded as key to attaining success in all academic endeavours as it promotes acquisition of ideas that may not be available through verbal means. With the advent of information communication technology which ushered in social media that has become widely used in the society, students tend to be more engrossed in social media usage and presence which in turn may affect their reading culture. Considering the side effect of this trend to the academic acvities of students and a means of guiding the policy makers in education industry, there is need to investigate the effects of this invented technology on the reading culture of the students. This study therefore, sought to assess the effects of social media on the reading culture of some students in three selected tertiary institutions in Osun State, South western Nigeria relying on survey research design of a correlational type. Structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection from the respondents drawn from the Faculty of Science, Osun State University, Osogbo, Federal Polytechnic Ede and Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun. The study adopted the multi-stage sampling techniques which involved random selection with sample size of 288. Out of the 288 copies of questionnaire administered, 266 copies were retrieved and were found usable for the analysis. Results showed that respondents 266 (100%) prefers and uses FFacebook compared with other social media platforms. A vast majority of the respondents (Agreed = 57%,

Strongly Agreed = 34.6%) stated they use the social media for academic purpose and access social media daily (170, 63.9%). However, only a meagre number 41 (15.4%) visits the library daily for readingpurpose. More than three quarter of the respondents (Agreed =61.7% and strongly agreed =16.5%) that the social media reduces their reading time. The study therefore, concluded that students in the studied tertiary institutions in Osun State usually utilized social media for various activities which include academics, business and friendship while it recommended that the students should be educated on the effective and positive use of the social media for academic purpose while the management of the institutions are encouraged to regulate the activities to be carried out by the students on the institution based networks.

Keywords: *Social media, Reading culture, Tertiary institutions, tertiary institution students.*

Introduction

Reading is defined by Igbokwe, Obidia and Ezeji (2012) as important components of surviving in life, as it adds value to the quality of life and loads mind with new ideas. It is described as a tool of acquisitive mind; and serves as a vehicle for obtaining ideas that may not be available verbally (Loan, 2009). It serves as a key to success in all academic disciplines. Cole (1994) described reading as tool that energizes the mind and helps to understand the common achievements of the individual niche. Reading has been the passion of the greatest personalities of all times. According to Douglas (2000) every child must become fully competent in reading to succeed in school and other personal engagements. Reading is the bedrock of enjoyment in life and is closely related to vocational efficiency. Students and employees in every field must read to keep abreast of what is happening in their fields. They must rely on written or digital words to convey information and data.

The reading debate in the academia is a continuum. Where a vast majority of authors have maintained that reading is the basic measure of literacy, a more professionally thoughtful others have seen it as the main sauce needed in preparing students for a greater future academic challenge. Therefore, it is being emphasised that students must develop reading habit, skill, and attitude in order to possess a good reading culture. Without the possession of good reading culture, reading will decline and academic performance will in turn decline. Ifedili, (2009), Gumede, (2018), and Whitten, Labby, and Sullivan (2019) have all

affirmed that reading is declining among students of tertiary institutions while factors alluded to this are humongous.

The decline in reading among students could be attributed to technological advancements that have brought about overall changes in family, social, and economic conditions. Poor reading habits occur in students and young people due to some factors bordering on perception of students considering reading as not a relevant leisure activity, not being regarded as a   part of students' social interaction and not considering reading as a solitary pursuit and not an attractive activity compared with interactive activities on the Internet such as chatting, surfing, browsing and etcetera (Douglas 2000; Loan, 2009).

Social media is one of the latest outputs of information and communication technology explorations, where a community of people are linked together, interact, collaborate and share information through online or Internet based platforms which may be an app or web based (Igbokwe, Obidia and Ezeji, 2012). The social media is most often referred to the group of communities of people who assemble online to share information, knowledge, opinion and collaboration (Shehu and Shehu, 2014). According to Kaplan and Halein (2010), social media can be defined as mobile and web-based technological innovations which create platforms for individuals of diverse communities to interact share business ideas, and many more. Its operation is based on many sources to many receivers.

In this 21st century, the source of information is no longer conserved in the traditional sources of monograms, books, newspaper, journals and many others, but available in many Internet based platforms. These platforms include Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, blogs, Instagram and many others. Though, the online communities can provide ample opportunity for academic consultation and support, its misuse can equally bring about unnecessary time wastage (Lusk, 2010). These platforms provide online based current information on any subject matter and provide medium for interaction and other social activities. As earlier posited, new technologies in information and technology normally have resultant effects on reading habits.

Several studies have been conducted on the impact of ICT technologies on the reading culture of the students. Students are rarely interested in reading for pleasure and enjoyment instead they read only to pass examination. The declining interest in reading culture among our students is a cause for alarm and a challenge to all and sundry.

Therefore, there is the need to be done to alleviate this yawning problem. Unfortunately, reading is taught or included in the curriculum of the tertiary institutions just for a certain units allocated under the GES/GST programme (Igbokwe, Obidia and Ezeji, 2012).

In a study conducted by CopperWiki (2015), reading culture of the students is on decline in India, as students prefer spending time on TV and Internet than reading textbooks. Similar observations had also been reported by Majid and Tan (2007), where 57.6% of the students in Singapore prefer playing on computer or surfing the Internet, whereas only 44.1% prefers reading at their leisure period. Wang, Chen, Liang (2011) reported that there is negative correlation between the social media use and academic performance among the college students in China. The report indicated further that more than half of the students do get busy/engaged online while the class session is on-going.

In Nigeria, some reports have provided insights on the effect of social media on reading culture. Oji (2007), reported that majority of the students do use social media not for academic gains but for fraud, pornography, blackmail, racketeering and many others. Moreover, Ofuani and Gberedio (2009), Loving and Ochoa (2009), Igbokwe, Obidia and Ezeji (2012), Shehu and Shehu (2014) have also reported the impact of the social media on academic performance of the students. For example, Shehu and Shehu (2014) reported that many parents now worried on the addiction of their wards to Facebook as they have little or no time to read again.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to explore the perceived effects of social media on reading culture of students in selected tertiary institutions in Osun State. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1   find out the proportion of students that utilize social media in selected tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria

2   examine the reasons for using the social media among the students in tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria

3   ascertain the time spent on social media platforms by the students in tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria

4   assess the frequency of visit to the school library by the students in tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria

5   find out the perceived effects of social media on reading culture of the students in tertiary institution in Osun State, Nigeria

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique which involved purposively sampling of a representative of the three tiers of tertiary institutions in Osun State viz; a university, a polytechnic and a college of education in the first stage. In the second stage, the Faculty of Science students in each of the selected institutions were selected purposively while in the third stage, a simple random selection of thirty percent (30%) of the population was selected as shown in Table 1. A structured questionnaire was used for the collection of data.. Data collected during the study were analysed using frequency distribution and simple percentages.

Table 1: overview of the study population in the Faculty of Science in the selected tertiary institutions.

Items	Population of the students in Faculty of Science	Percentage (30%) (Sample size)
Osun State University, Osogbo	2,554	85
Federal Polytechnics, Ede	2,363	79
Osun State College of Education, Ila-Oragun	3,121	104
Total	8,038	268

Findings/Results
Demographic information of the respondents

Table 2: The distribution and retrieval of questionnaires in the three selected institutions in Osun State, Nigeria

Name of School	Total number of Questionnaire Administered	Total number of Questionnaire Retrieved	Percentage (%) of retrieval
Osun State University, Osogbo	85	85	100
Federal Polytechnic, Ede	79	77	97
Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun	104	104	100
Total	**268**	**266**	99

A total of two hundred and sixty-eight (268) copies of the questionnaire were distributed in the three selected Institutions; Osun State University, Osogbo (85), Federal Polytechnic, Ede (79) and Osun State College of Education, Ila-Oragun (104). Of the 268 copies of questionnaire, two hundred and sixty-six (266) copies of the questionnaire were retrieved representing 99% of the total administered (Table 2). All the copies of the questionnaire administered at Osun-State University and Osun State College of Education, Ila-Oragun were retrieved. However, seventy-seven out of seventy-nine (97. 47%) copies of the questionnaire administered at Federal Polytechnics, Ede were retrieved.

Demographic information of the respondents

Table 3: Gender distribution of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	88	33.1
Female	178	66.9
Total	**266**	**100**

Table 4: Age distribution of the respondents

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
20 years and above	26	9.8
21-23 years	166	62.4
24-26 years	58	21.8
27 years and above	16	6.0
Total	**266**	**100**

The data in table 3 and table 4 show the gender distribution and age range of the respondents. The data shows that female constituted the larger number of the respondents (66.9%) than males (33.1%). Most of the respondents were within the age range of 21-23 years (62.4%), followed by age range of 24-26 years (21.8%) while the age range above 27 years constituted the least respondents (6.0%). This implies that the students have the same age bracket that is commensurate with their education level.

Objective Question 1: Utilization of social media

Table 5: Respondents on the utilization of the social media in the school

Utilization of social media in the school	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Yes	245	92.1
No	21	7.9
Total	**266**	**100.0**

Table 5 reveals that 245 (92.1%) respondents agreed that they use social media in their institutions while 21 (7.9%) did not use the social media in their institutions.

Table 6: Types of social media preferred by the respondents

Types of social media	*Prefer Frequency (%)*	*Not prefer Frequency (%)*
Twitter	122 (45.9)	144 (54.1)
Facebook	266 (100)	0 (0)
Zgo	41 (15.4)	223 (83.8)
Youtube	85(32.0)	181 (68.0)
WhatsApp	248 (93.2)	18 (6.8)

Table 6 shows the type of social media preferred by the respondents. All the respondents preferred Facebook (100%) while 248 (93%) equally preferred WhatsApp and about half preferred twitter (46%). However, 2go (15%), and YouTube (32%) were not preferred.

Objective 2: What are the reasons for using the social media

Table 7: Reasons for using the social media by the respondents

VARIABLES	*SD*	*D*	*A*	*SA*	*Mean*	*SDV*
I use social media for **academic purposes**	0 (0)	21(7.9)	153(57.5)	92(34.6)	3.27	0.6
Social media encourages me to develop **good reading ability**	18(6.81)	36(13.5)	152(57.1)	60(22.6)	2.95	0.8
I use social media for **pornographic purposes**	207(77.8)	56(21.1)	3(1.1)	-	1.23	0.5
I use social media **to make friends**	-	38(14.3)	133(50.0)	95(35.7)	3.21	0.7

VARIABLES	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	SDV
I use social media **for business activities**	38(14.3)	56(21.1)	95(35.7)	77(28.9)	2.79	1.0
I use social media for **communicating** with people	-	20(7.5)	113(42.5)	133(50.0)	3.42	0.6
I use social media for solving my **class assignment**	-	38(14.3)	93(35.0)	135(50.8)	3.36	0.7
Social media is used for **gathering information about my projects**	38(14.3)	107(40.2)	-	121(45.5)	3.17	1.0

SD = Strongly disagree; D=Disagree; A=Agree; SA= Strongly Agree;
SDV = Standard deviation

Table 7 shows the reasons for using the social media by the respondents. One hundred and fifty-three (57.5%) of the respondents stated that they use social media for the purpose of academic while ninety-two (34.6%) strongly affirmed that the social media are used for academic purpose . One hundred and fifty-two (57.1%) and sixty (22.6%) of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that the social media encouraged them to develop good reading ability (57.1%). Similarly, the majority of the respondents agreed that that the social media are used for making friends (50% agreed; 35.7% strongly agreed). The majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they use social media for business activities and communicating people (A = 42.5%, SA = 50%).

One hundred and thirteen (42.5%) and one hundred and thirty-three respondents (50%) agreed and strongly agreed that they use social media for communicating people. However, not up to half of the respondents (45.5%) use social media for gathering information about their project.. Though, the majority of the respondents agreed that they use social media for solving class assignment (35% agree; 50.8% strongly agree), there was divergent view on the use of the social media for gathering information for the project write up. Only three respondents (1.1%) agreed to using social media for pornographic purpose.

Objective 3: How much time do you spend on social media networking?

Table 8: Mode of accessing the social media by the respondents

Mode of accessing social media	Frequency	Percentage
Phone	137	51.5
Personal Computers	38	14.3
Cybercafe	37	13.9
Smart devices e.g. Smart phones, IPADs, PDAs	54	20.3
Total	266	100.0

Table 9 shows that most of the respondents (51.5%) use their phones to access social media, followed by Smart devices e.g. Smart phones, IPADs, PDAs(20.3%), personal computers (14.3%) and the least is cybercafé (13.9%).

Table 9: The frequency of accessing the social media by the respondents

Frequency of accessing the social media	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	170	63.9
Twice a week	40	15.0
Weekly	38	14.3
Monthly	18	6.8
Total	266	100.0

Table 9 shows the frequency of accessing the social media by the respondents. Majority of the respondents (63.9%) usually access the social media daily while only few proportion accessed it once weekly (14.3%) or monthly (6.8%).

Objective 4: How often do you stay in the library?

Table 10: Frequency of the respondents' visit to the library

Frequency of visit	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	41	15.4
Twice a week	96	36.1
Weekly	36	13.5
Monthly	55	20.7
Not at all	38	14.3
Total	266	100.0

The frequency of the visit of the respondents to the library is presented in Table 10. Visiting the library twice a week (36.1%) was predominant among the respondents, followed by monthly (20.7%), and

daily (15.4%) in that order. While some have never visit the library (14.3%), and least were those who visits the library weekly (13.5%).

Objective 5:
What are the perceived effects of social media on reading culture?

Table 11: Effects of social media on reading culture of the respondents

VARIABLES	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	SDV
Social media reduces my time of reading	20 (7.5)	38(14.3)	164(61.7)	44(16.5)	2.87	0.8
Social media add to my value	19(7.1)	36(13.5)	170(63.9)	41(15.4)	2.88	0.8
Social media promotes my reading culture	197(7.1)	54(20.3)	65(24.4)	128 (48.1)	3.14	1.0
Social media interfere with my reading activities	5 (1.9)	126(47.4)	61(22.9)	74(27.8)	2.77	0.9
Social media distract my attention during reading	20(7.5)	95(35.7)	107(40.2)	44(16.5)	2.66	0.8

Table 11 presents the perception of the students on the effects of social media on their reading culture. Most of the respondents agreed (61.7%) and strongly agreed (16.5%) that the social media do reduce their reading time. On whether the social media do interfere with the reading activities, 47.4% of the respondents disagreed while 22.9% and 27.8% agreed and strongly agreed that social media do interfere with their reading activities bringing this category of respondents to more than fifty percent. Almost half (40.2%) of the respondents agreed that social media do distract their attention during reading while 35.7% of the respondents disagreed. 16.55% and 7.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and strongly disagreed respectively. There were opinions on the promotion of reading culture by social media tending to positive perception. thus, less than half of the respondents strongly agreed (48.1%) and agreed (24.4%) that the social media do promote the reading culture.

Discussion of findings
High rate of social media utilisation was found. The high rate of using social media in school by the respondents is expected when considering the global current trend of events in the use of ICT. Wang, Chen & Liang (2011) also reported that two-third of the students in China placed premium on social media than reading their books. Facebook featured as preferred social media followed by WhatsApp, twitter and

2go. Studies by Kalpidon, Castia and Morris (2011) and Shehu and Shehu (2014) also revealed such pattern. However, unlike their studies, all the respondents in the present study preferred Facebook to any other social media.

It was found that social media is used for academic purposes and solving assignments . contrary to earlier studies in different parts of Nigeria, Ikpaahidi (2008), Oji (2007),Ezeji (2012), Shehu and Shehu (2014) averred that students normally used social media for antisocial activities such as fraud, pornography, blackmail, and racketeering. In the present study, less than half of the respondents used social media for friend making, and business. Only 1.1% of the respondents used social media for pornography. Despite the wide use of the social media for academic purposes by the respondents, less than half used the social media for project writing.

Responses from most of the respondents indicated that they usually accessed the social media daily using phones. It was obviously found that most of the respondents spend much of their time on social network than visiting library. Visit to the library is becoming less popular among the students.

Social networking sites have been known to be popular among tertiary institution students who spend appreciable amounts of their time on-line rather than reading their books (Loving and Ochoa, 2010). Ezeji (2012) citing Ikpaahindi (2008) averred that information and communication technology especially Internet technology is having adverse effect on the reading culture of Nigerians. This is because it discourages lazy students from engaging in serious reading. Many students prefer to spend most of their time with their Internet enabled mobile phone chatting, or in the cyber cafes browsing, playing games, chatting with friends, instead of using the Internet for academic purposes. In a similar study carried out by Shehu (2014) in Zaria, Kaduna State observed that the time spent on social network site is worrisome as that make them spent less time reading.

According to Shabo and Usofia (2009), reading habit is quite clearly diminishing these days among youths. This is an ugly trend which has been reported globally and is quite disheartening. Most of the students rely on social networking for their academic purpose only when they have an assignment to write, or test or exam.

The majority of the respondents in this study agreed that social media have profound effects on their reading culture raging from interference to distraction. In a study conducted by Igbokwe, Obidia and

Ezeji, (2012) on effects of social media on reading habits of secondary school students in Southeastern Nigeria, 89 percent of the students use less, than or equal to one hour for writing their homework and assignment. Exactly 93 percent of the respondents devote less or equal to one hour to each of reading of textbooks and reading of magazines or newspapers. Online activities take about 77 percent of the respondents a minimum of one and half hours.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings from this study clearly showed that the students in the studied tertiary institutions in Osun State usually utilize the social media for various activities which include academic purposes, business, solving assignments, and friendship. Though, the students claimed that the social media had added value to them, it was obvious that their activities on social media had limited their reading culture and visit to the library. The engagement in social media also distracts and interferes with their reading.

Based on the above observations, the following recommendations were suggested;

i. The students should be educated on the effective and positive use of social media for academic purposes by their various libraries through purposive information literacy programmes

ii. The management of the institutions should regulate the activities to be carried out by the students on institution based networks by tying internet connection to the campuses of the institution and restricting access to some timewasting apps and websites on the networking.

iii. The management of the institutions should also equip the libraries to fascinate frequent visit by the students through the provision of good ambience in the librry, upgraded collection, furniture and conviniency.

iv. The parents may need to be enlightened on the need to counsel their wards on the dangers of addiction to social media.

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