

Unveiling the Influence of Social Media on Academic Performance: A Case Study of Nigerian Students

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Abstract:

This study explores the nuanced relationship between social media use and academic performance among Nigerian students in an era of expanding digital connectivity and social media ubiquity. The study uses quantitative methodology to investigate the detrimental effects of social media on academic outcomes. It does this by using online questionnaires and data analysis tools. The results show a complex picture of the situation: although social media provides opportunities for collaboration and academic support, it also presents significant drawbacks, such as distractions, shorter study sessions, and disjointed study habits. In this work, the important role that social media plays in the lives of Nigerian students is discussed, both as a source of disruption and as a tool for academic engagement. The results highlight the value of time management training, digital literacy initiatives, and individual accountability in reducing the detrimental effects of social media on academic achievement. With its valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and students, this research advances our understanding of the dynamic relationship between social media use and academic performance in the Nigerian context. Stakeholders can assist students in navigating the digital landscape while maintaining focus on their academic goals by identifying potential hazards and putting the suggested strategies into practice.

Keyword: Smartphone, Social Media, Academic Performance, Nigerian Students

Introduction

Within the dynamic realm of education and technology, the impact of social media has emerged as a captivating area of research. The ubiquity of smartphones and the widespread availability of internet connectivity have led to the pervasive integration of social media platforms into various aspects of individuals' everyday lives, including the educational endeavors of students. This phenomenon holds significant importance in Nigeria, a nation characterized by a growing youth population and a swiftly expanding digital presence.

The advent of social media platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and WhatsApp, has significantly transformed the manner in which information is distributed and consumed. The platform provides a means for communication, dissemination of information, and social engagement that is unparalleled in terms of its extensive reach and instantaneous nature. Consequently, they have evolved into essential elements of students' everyday schedules. Nevertheless, the prevalence of this phenomenon raises a crucial inquiry: What is the influence of the widespread utilization of social media on the scholastic achievement of the typical Nigerian student?

The primary objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate connection between social media engagement and the academic experiences of Nigerian students. In a society that places great importance on education as a means to achieve future success and financial security, it is crucial to comprehend the ramifications of social media on academic achievement.

This study endeavors to offer a nuanced comprehension of the impact of social media habits on the academic performance, study habits, and learning outcomes of Nigerian students, utilizing an extensive examination of existing literature, empirical analysis, and data-driven insights. Through an in-depth exploration of the unique Nigerian context, this study aims to provide valuable insights that can contribute to the development of educational policies and inform individual practices. The findings of this research have the potential to assist students, educators, and policymakers in making well-informed decisions within the context of the digital era.

The forthcoming sections of this paper will examine the current literature on this subject, delineate the research approach, present the results, analyze their implications, and conclude with actionable suggestions. By undertaking this study, our aim is to enhance the existing knowledge regarding the intricate correlation between social media usage and academic achievement within the educational context of Nigeria.

Literature Review

The impact of social media on academic performance has become a subject of considerable interest on a global scale, highlighting the profound influence of digital platforms on the educational experiences of students. Although there exists a substantial body of literature on the subject, this particular section aims to concentrate on significant discoveries and investigations pertaining to the educational environment in Nigeria.

Globally, scholarly investigations have delved into the intricate correlation between the utilization of social media and scholastic achievement. The study conducted by Junco (2012) yielded significant findings indicating a positive correlation between the utilization of Facebook and academic performance, specifically grade point average (GPA), within the population of college students in the United States. Nevertheless, these findings exhibit a lack of consistency. According to the findings of Kirschner and Karpinski (2010), there exists a correlation between extensive utilization of Facebook and a decline in academic achievement.

The divergent outcomes observed suggest that the influence of social media on academic performance is complex, being shaped by a range of factors such as the manner in which social media is utilized, the students' ability to manage their time effectively, and the specific educational environment in which they are situated.

In the Nigerian context, the significance of comprehending the relationship between the burgeoning youth population and their increasing engagement with social media cannot be overstated. In their study, Akinbola and Akomolafe (2018) examined the prevalence of social media usage among Nigerian university students. According to the findings, the impact of social media on academic performance was found to be twofold, encompassing both positive and negative aspects. Students identified several advantages, such as the facilitation of information exchange and the provision of academic assistance. Conversely, disadvantages were also noted, primarily pertaining to challenges in effectively managing time. The study conducted by Adeyemi and Adeyemo (2017) aimed to investigate the influence of WhatsApp usage on the scholastic achievements of university students in Nigeria. It was found that WhatsApp had a significant prevalence in educational contexts, wherein its usage extended to activities such as the dissemination of class notes and the facilitation of assignment-related discussions. Nevertheless, the overutilization of WhatsApp for non-academic objectives exhibited a negative correlation with academic achievement.

Methods

This study utilizes a quantitative research methodology in order to examine the influence of social media platforms on the scholastic achievements of Nigerian students. The research methodology employed in this study is a cross-sectional survey approach, which facilitates the collection of data from a diverse sample of Nigerian students. This approach allows for a comprehensive analysis of the patterns of social media usage among these students and the potential impact it has on their academic performance.

The study's target population consists of undergraduate students enrolled in tertiary institutions (University and Polytechnic) in Ekiti State of Nigeria. In order to achieve a sample that is representative of the population, the research employed a stratified random sampling method to select participants from various institutions, academic disciplines, and age groups. In total, 2,105 students participated in completing the questionnaires.

Data were gathered by means of online questionnaires being administered. Due to the high level of proficiency exhibited by the target demographic in utilizing digital platforms, online surveys offer a streamlined and convenient approach to gathering data. The survey was administered via a secure digital platform, with the distribution of the survey link being facilitated through university email lists, social media platforms, and academic institutions.

Research Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire has been specifically designed to gather crucial information pertaining to the following aspects: Demographic characteristics encompassing age, gender, academic discipline, and socioeconomic status. Analysis of Social Media Utilization: Evaluating the frequency and variety of social media platforms employed, the duration of engagement, and the primary objectives of utilization (e.g., academic, social, entertainment). Assessment of Academic Performance: The collection of data pertaining to Grade Point Average (GPA) or scholastic accomplishments, study patterns, and the perceived influence of social media on academic performance.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected from the online questionnaires will be subjected to analysis using statistical software. The analysis will primarily employ descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The data analysis methods that will be employed encompass:

Descriptive analysis involves the process of summarizing and presenting data through the utilization of descriptive statistics, which encompass measures of central tendency and dispersion. Bar charts were employed as a visual tool to depict survey responses, thereby facilitating the identification of patterns in social media usage and its potential association with academic performance.

The study adhered to ethical protocols, which include obtaining informed consent from participants and safeguarding their anonymity and confidentiality.

It is imperative to recognize the potential constraints associated with this particular methodology, including the dependence on self-reported data and the susceptibility to response bias in online surveys. The aforementioned constraints will be taken into account during the analysis and interpretation of the findings.

Results and Discussion

The influence of social media on academic achievement has been a topic of continuous discourse and examination. The objective of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the intricate connection between social media and academic performance, with a particular emphasis on examining the adverse impacts experienced by Nigerian students. The examination of the data uncovers various noteworthy discoveries that provide insight into this matter.

Negative Impacts on Concentration and Time Management

The presence of social media has been observed to have a significant detrimental impact on the academic performance of Nigerian students, primarily due to the evident distraction it presents. The ubiquity of smartphones and the perpetual availability of social media platforms have facilitated a convenient means for students to divert their focus from their scholastic obligations. The results of our study suggest that a significant proportion of the participants expressed that the utilization of social media posed a significant hindrance during designated study periods. As indicated in figures 1 and 2.

Additionally, students acknowledged that they frequently encountered a situation where they devoted an excessive amount of time to engaging with social media platforms (Figure 1). Even during lectures hours 36% of participants admitted they engaged with social media regularly while. Once 41% engaged occasionally. Consequently, this behavior resulted in a reduction of time dedicated to studying and fulfilling academic obligations. The lack of proficiency in maintaining efficient time management, particularly during critical periods such as examinations, has been identified as a contributing factor to less than optimal academic achievements.

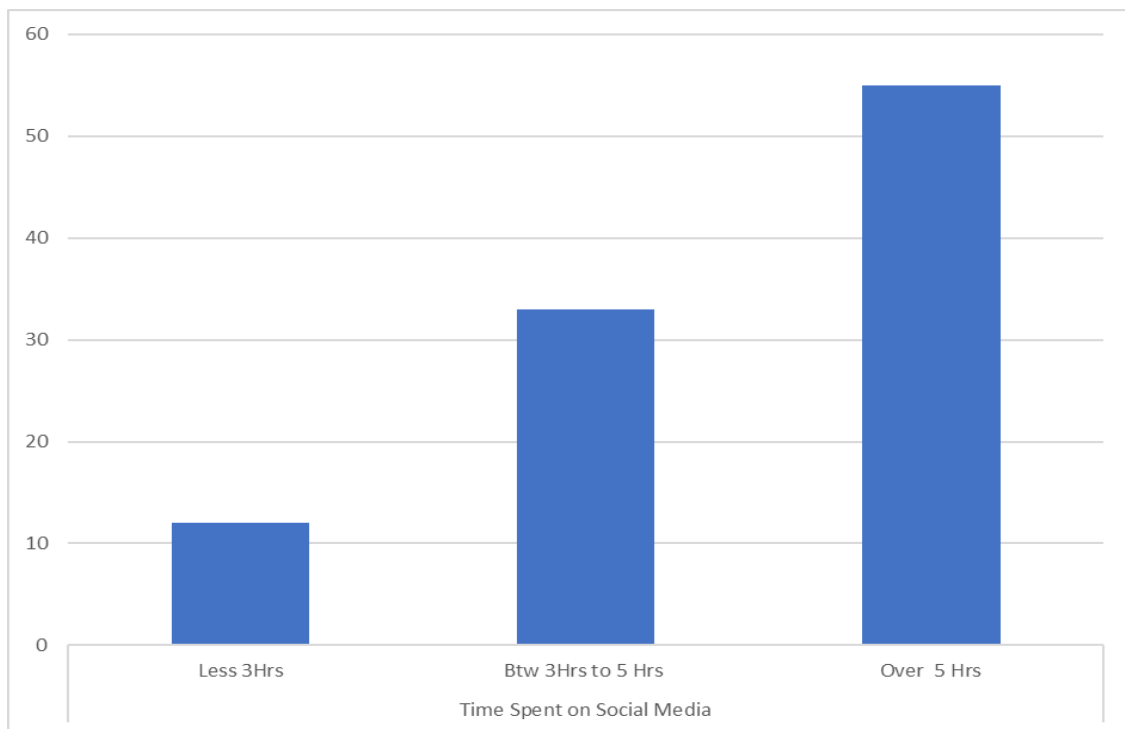


Figure 1: Average Hours Participants Spend on Social Media Daily

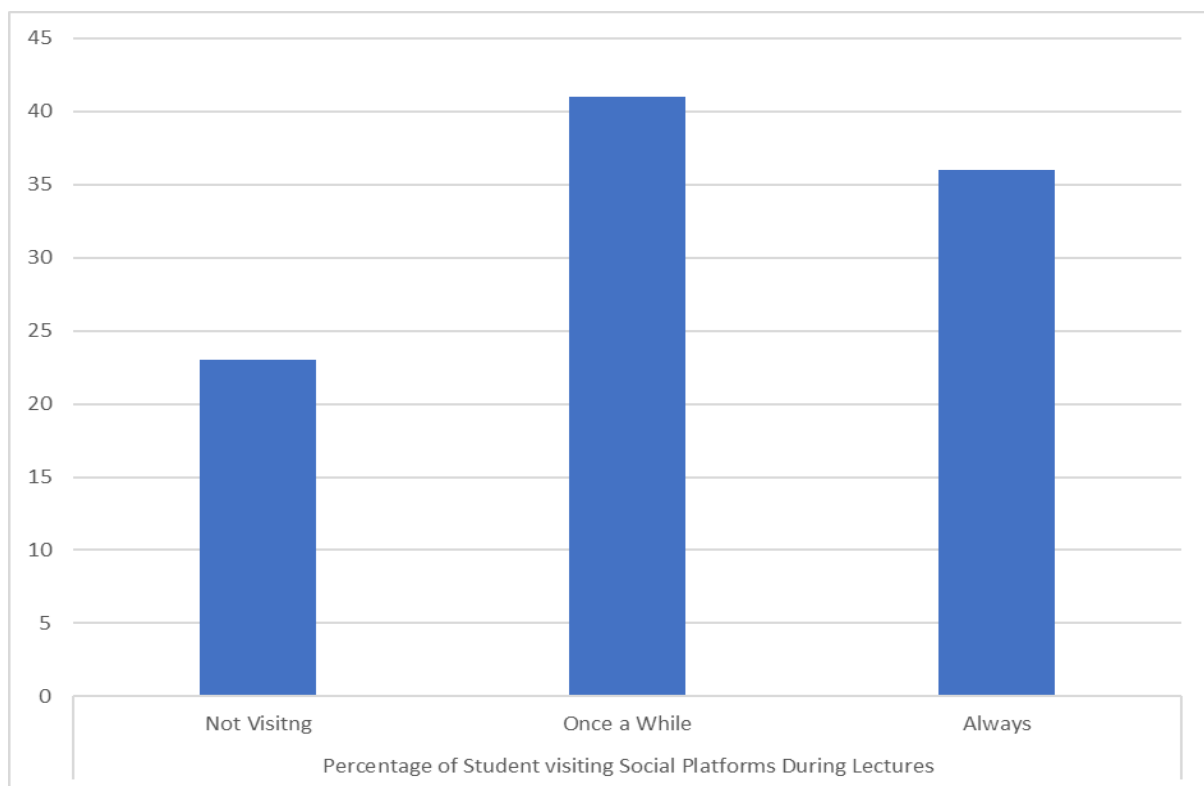


Figure 2: Percentage of Students Visiting Social Platforms While Lectures are ongoing.

The influence on study habits

The research findings also revealed the impact of social media on the study habits of Nigerian students. While it is indeed accurate that a subset of students indicated utilizing social media for academic purposes 37%, a larger proportion (63%) of students were found to be involved in non-academic activities on these platforms (Figure 3). The prevalence of frequent notifications and the allure of the virtual social realm frequently result in fragmented study sessions and diminished levels of concentration. Additionally, the necessity to promptly address messages, monitor updates, and maintain social connections with peers via social media resulted in disruptions that impeded the ability to engage in profound and concentrated learning. The frequent disruptions caused by the allure of social media pose a significant challenge for students in their ability to engage in in-depth research, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

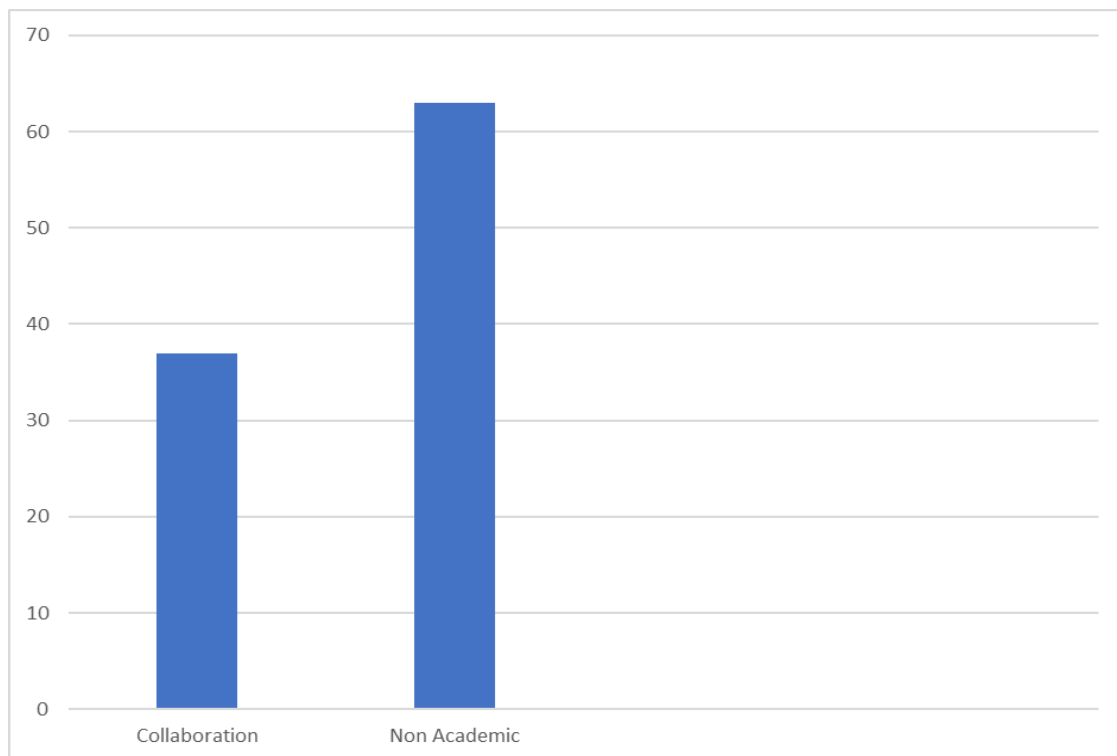


Figure 3: Academic Usage of Social Media

This study highlights the contradictory characteristics of social media within the context of Nigerian students' lives. Although social media platforms can provide valuable support in terms of facilitating information sharing and collaborative efforts on academic tasks, they also pose a substantial obstacle to achieving academic success. It is imperative to acknowledge that students frequently conveyed varied experiences with social media, underscoring the presence of both benefits and drawbacks.

Recommendations and Implications

The following are suggestions and potential consequences.

It is imperative for educators, policymakers, and students to comprehend the adverse impacts of social media on academic performance. Based on the results of our research, we put forth the following suggestions:

1. The integration of digital literacy programs that prioritize responsible and proficient utilization of social media platforms should be contemplated by educational institutions.

2. Provision of Time Management Workshops: It is recommended that students be provided with workshops and resources pertaining to time management in order to effectively balance their activities conducted both online and offline.

3. Personal Responsibility: It is imperative for students to assume personal responsibility in effectively managing their utilization of social media platforms during study periods, as well as prioritizing their academic obligations.

4. Parental Involvement: It is imperative to apprise parents of the potential adverse consequences associated with excessive utilization of social media and to motivate them to actively supervise and provide guidance to their children's online engagements.

Conclusion

The pervasive presence of social media in contemporary society has had a profound impact on the academic performance of Nigerian students, thus necessitating a comprehensive examination of its influence. This study has conducted a thorough analysis of the correlation between the utilization of social media platforms and academic achievements, with particular emphasis on the adverse consequences. The results highlight the complex nature of this relationship, wherein both assistance and hindrance coexist.

The detrimental impact of social media on the academic performance of Nigerian students is readily apparent. Extensive utilization of social media often leads to various repercussions such as distractions, diminished study hours, and fragmented study habits. The proliferation of virtual social worlds and the constant connectivity they offer have posed a considerable obstacle to the maintenance of concentration and profound involvement in academic endeavors.

Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge the paradoxical nature of social media. Although there are inherent difficulties associated with it, technology can also be utilized as a means of facilitating academic assistance, disseminating information, and fostering collaboration. In order to mitigate the adverse effects and maximize the benefits, it is crucial for relevant parties to adopt proactive strategies.

Reference

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