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PERCEPTION OF LECTURERS ON USE AND EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATES: A STUDY OF NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA, NIGERIA.

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Abstract
This study examines lecturers' perception of the extent of use, reasons for use and the effects of social media on academic performance of undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study which was anchored on the Connectivism paradigm generated quantitative data through questionnaire administered on 214 respondents selected through multi-stage probability sampling. Qualitative data was also elicited via in-depth interview of four purposively selected respondents. Findings show that most lecturers' perceive undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, as enjoying unlimited or unrestrained access to various social media platforms. Facebook was identified as the most widely used social media by undergraduates of the institution. The study also reveals the tendency of these undergraduate students to abuse or misuse access to social media with its attendant far reaching negative consequences on their academic performance. The study therefore recommends a deliberate and planned re-orientation of these students by all agents of socialization to expose the negative consequences identified in other to stimulate appropriate use of social media for both academic advancement and overall development of the students.

Keywords: Perception, Social Media, Academic Performance, Information, Communication, Technology

Introduction
Social media are the different digital media platforms powered by web 2.0 which enables members of society to interact in different ways like, sharing information,

pictures, videos, music and messages using electronic devices. Adeboye (2012), cited in Asemah and Edegoh (2012) described social media as a structure made up of individuals or organizations referred to as 'nodes' which are connected by one or more specific types of interdependence. Such interdependencies may include friendship, kinship, common interest, financial exchange, sexual relationships, beliefs, knowledge or prestige.

Social media can also refer to a map of specified ties, such as friendship, between the nodes/individuals or organizations under focus. Thus, the nodes to which an individual is connected are the social contacts of that individual. Such social contacts are usually maintained through social networking sites like Facebook messenger, Yahoo messenger, Blackberry messenger, Badoo, YouTube, 2go, WhatsApp and so on.

According to Adeboye (2012), cited in Asemah and Edogoh (2012) these networking sites are crucial and facilitate peoples' interaction with old and new friends, including physical or internet friends. It is also noteworthy that the social media and or various social networking sites are sometimes simply referred to as 'chatting sites' because one can send and receive messages almost instantly through these arrangements. These are also referred to as instant messaging.

The use of social media has gained tremendous popularity, as well as created large following across different age groups and socio-economic categories, both within and outside Nigeria. This is largely due to advancements in internet technology and availability which broadened the scope of information and communication technology (ICT) across the globe.

In this paper, ICT refer to tools, special devices or media that assist in information production, storage, reception, display and distribution or sharing. It includes such gadgets as computers, micro processors, internet, video discs, optic fibres, satellites, micro waves, digital telephone, and the global system for mobile communication (GSM) among others. Ufuophu and Ayaban (2012) had similarly observed that ICT includes internet, satellites, cable data transmission and computer assisted equipment.

Notable benefits associated with using social media include its ability to encourage creativity among individuals by enhancing greater social interaction through electronic mediums. It also provides greater access to information sources enabling researchers and students to source for academic materials faster. It tends to give students a sense of belonging among users of the same social networking sites. These perceived benefits may also account for increased patronage of the social media especially by students of higher institutions in Nigeria and the general public.

However, arguments have been raised in several quarters about the negative effects of social media use and indeed internet. Uncontrolled access to the internet appears to have brought about several disadvantages arising from over indulgence or excessive use, misuse and abuse by undergraduate students particularly in relation to academic performance. There is therefore, need to further interrogate the issue of social media use from diverse approach to ascertain the true nature of the relationship between

social media use and academic performance of undergraduate students. That is the key interest of this study.

The Problems

According to Friedman (2007) today's social media has made the world a global village with the quick transfer of information overriding the challenges of time and distance. On his part, Lulu (2015) noted that although print, television and radio have remained major sources of information dissemination in Nigeria, there has been in recent times, enormous mobile penetration, data availability, and cheap access giving rise to 16% growth in internet use in the country in 2014 alone. He concluded that there is a total of 37.53% of Nigerians with internet access.

Students constitute an important segment of the growing online community in Nigeria. Social networking sites have attracted students, many of whom have integrated these sites into their daily practices. Students consume a lot of time on these sites uploading or downloading, getting information concerning their career or academic work. Students are always online chatting with friends, watching online movies, doing research. Indeed, social media has become a habit for many students.
However, lack of regulation of the internet has led to its excessive use, misuse and abuse. Mcquail (2008) avers that internet penetrates more homes than ever before. It is a common sight to see youths chatting in sensitive and highly organized places like churches, mosques and lecture halls. Some are so carried away that while they walk along the highways, they keep chatting.

The negative effects of social media on the psyche of students are numerous. Very often students over indulge in chatting and pinging to the detriment of other critical activities that are integral part of learning. One of the most common harmful effects of this over indulgence is that students unconsciously and inadvertently resort to chatting signs and abbreviations even while writing formal school work. In some cases students resort to the use of codes and abbreviations that cannot be decoded even by their lecturers in written examinations.

Another worrisome dimension of the menace of social media is the spread of false news. The situation is so bad that news emanating from the social media is now treated like mere and unfounded rumours which should not be taken serious by serious minded persons.

Various other crimes committed through online activities are additional sources of worry. The issue of moral decadence prevailing in most of the social media has reached an alarming dimension. Students now post nude pictures as well as visiting pornography sites rather than academics enriching sites.

The availability of sophisticated cellular phones have complicated the situation, as youths no longer need to visit cybercafé before sending and receiving messages. Attention has been shifted from visible to invisible friends with its enormous attendant danger thereby relegating the great capacity development benefits associated with the internet use. This phenomenon has become a source of worry to

many who believe in capacity building, knowledge and skill acquisition especially in third world nations like Nigeria.

The emergence and growth of social media in Nigeria constitutes a social change product that has in turn generated some measure of social problems. For instance, Famutimi (2013) reported that researchers found that internet over-use makes people live sedentary lifestyle causing them health challenges such as dry eyes, excessive fatigue, and withdrawal from friends, declining interest in hobbies, a decline in personal hygiene and headaches. Similarly, Osayi (2010) had argued strongly that social media networks have contained disadvantages and dysfunctions which include invasion of privacy, loss of social life, high rate of technology based crimes and boost of pornography and allied deviant behaviours.

Furthermore, the emergence of social media as a result of advancement in technology and expansion in internet software has raised worries among academics on its (social media) impact on studies. There is no doubt that academic staff as major stakeholders in the university system are well informed about academic performance of undergraduates they teach and forces that shape such performance. It is against the above background that this study primarily investigates the perception of lecturers on the use and effects of social media on academic performance of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study also examines other issues such as whether students experience divided attention to studies or encounter shortfalls in discipline and self regulation as a result of available opportunities associated with use of social media among other concerns.

Objectives   of the Study
The general objective of this research is to investigate lecturers' perception of use and effects of social media on academic performance of undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
The study has the following specific objectives:
(i)   To find out how lecturers perceive the extent of use of social media by undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
(ii)   To ascertain the perceptions of lecturers about major reasons/purposes for which undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, use social media.
(iii) To ascertain how lecturers perceive the effects of social media on academic performance of undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
(iv) To determine measures required to ensure appropriate use of social media to support academic activities by undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Research Questions
The following research questions guided this research:
(i)   How do lecturers perceive the extent of use of social media by undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?
(ii)   What are the perceptions of lecturers about the major reasons/purpose for which undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, use social media?
(iii) How do lecturers perceive the effects of social media on academic performance of undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

(iv) What measures are required to ensure appropriate use of social media to support academic activities by undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Study Hypothesis
The understated hypothesis was formulated and tested in the course of study:
'There is a significant relationship between the ages of respondents and their perception of whether misuse or abuse of social media by undergraduate students lead to poor academic performance'.

Theoretical Framework
This work is anchored on the Connectivism theory which is the brainchild of George Siemens (2004). Connectivism is a learning theory which asserts that knowledge does not reside in one location, but rather, it is a confluence of information arising out of multiple individuals seeking inquiry related to a common interest and providing feed back to one another. According to Madge (2009), connectivity knowledge network possess four traits of diversity, autonomy, interactivity and openness. With this, connectivism is about students coming together to seek for information which they disseminate among themselves in order to acquire additional knowledge.

According to Stern (2004) connectivism as a learning theory provides insights into dynamics of networks, environment and ecologies that support a continual learning process. In his view, learning is strongly a network process in which a learner aggregates external contents into holistic representation. Learning in connectivism is motivated when a learner connects to the learning network and/or community, appropriate to him or her, access the information for professional or other uses. In connectivism, students make use of the learning networks such as the internet, available to them. They gather information with these networks and this has the tendency to boost their reading capacity and improve their academic performance. Igbafe (2008) asserts that learning communities are described as a node and nodes arise out of the connection points that are found in a network. He also believes that learners may assert that the ability to use connection between fields, ideas and concepts is a core skill.

Study Methodology
The area of study is Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (NAU), whose main campus is located in Awka, the capital city of Anambra State. Currently Nnamdi Azikiwe University operates two campuses at Awka and Nnewi, with three premises at Agulu, Mbaukwu and Ifite-Ogwari. It also has fourteen (14) faculties. However, this study excluded lecturers from faculties and programmes not domiciled in Awka. Thus, the study is limited to ten (10) faculties located at the Awka campus.

 The target population comprised all lecturers of the ten faculties within the Awka campus. According to the data sourced from the University Payroll Unit, the population of lecturers of the ten faculties as at 2014/2015 academic session stood at 2,214. The choice of lecturers as respondents in this study was informed by the fact

that lecturers who teach the students could make objective assessment of their academic performance over time.

The study adopted a survey design. The sample size for the study was two hundred and twenty lecturers (220). This is approximately ten percent (10%) of the study population and adequate for statistical tools employed in data analysis. The multi-stage sampling procedure, a type of probability sampling was adopted for selection of respondents. This method incorporated the cluster and simple random sampling techniques, which have high rates of reliability. The ten (10) faculties in Awka campus each constituted a cluster. They were numbered 1-10 and thus enlisted for the study from where 22 lecturers per faculty were randomly selected (i.e. 10 x22=220) from a sampling frame that comprised all academic staff (lecturers) of each faculty.

Quantitative and qualitative instruments complemented each other for data collection purposes through the use of questionnaire and in-depth interview methods. The questionnaire which administered contained close-ended items which facilitated ease of coding and analyses. The in depth interview sessions in English language, were conducted in the offices of two Deans of faculties and two Head of Departments who were purposively selected. Interview responses were recorded using field note book and tape recorder. Records of the interviews were thereafter transcribed verbatim before coding and analysis. All study participants willingly consented to their participation.

The data collected from the field were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were also analyzed using descriptive statistics such as simple percentages and frequency distribution tables. The qualitative data were analyzed using manual content analysis, a thematic method after thorough editing, the information collected were organised in line with different themes/objectives of the study.

Results/Findings
After sorting and data cleaning processes, two hundred and fourteen (214) questionnaires out of 220 were found to be properly completed and returned and thus used for analysis.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Socio-Demographic Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	146	68.2
Female	68	31.8
Total	214	100
Age Categories		
Younger Respondents (18-38 years old)	32	14.9
Older Respondents (39-59 years old)	148	69.1
Older Respondent (60 years and above)	34	15.9
Total	214	100
Highest Educational Qualification	**Frequency**	**Percentage**

First Degree/HND	32	14.9
Masters	89	41.5
PhD	91	42.5
Total	214	100
Rank/Cadre		
Professorial	32	15
Senior Lecturer	86	40.2
Lecturer 1,2, & Asst Lect/ GA's	96	44.9
Total	214	100
Marital Status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Single	43	20
Married	160	74.7
Divorced	4	1.9
Separated	-	-
Widow/widower	7	3.27
Total	214	100
Religious Affiliation	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Christianity	166	79.4
Islam	19	9.1
African traditional religion	24	11.5
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Section B: Analysis of Research Questions
Research Question 1: Lecturers' Perception of Extent/level of Use of Social Media by Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The responses/findings are presented in tables 2, 3 and 4 below:
Table 2: Respondents Opinion on the Extent to which Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Use Social Media

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
To a large extent (All times)	179	83.6
Average use (Occasional)	24	11.2
Rarely	11	5.1
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The data in table 2 shows that 179 (83.6%) of the respondents affirmed that undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University use social media to a very large extent; only 11 (5.1%) of the respondents were of the opinion that they rarely use social media.

Table 3: Respondent's view on the major social media platform that undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, mostly subscribe to

Responses	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Facebook	93	43.9

Whatsapp	82	38.7
Blackberry messenger	39	17.5
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

Data in table 3 shows that 43.9% of the respondents identified facebook as the most popular social media platform which undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka subscribe.

Table 4: Respondent's views on how frequently undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, use or view the social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Daily use	202	94.4
Once a week	7	3.3
Once a month	5	2.3
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The data in table 4 shows that 202 (94.4%) of the respondents were of the opinion that the students make daily use or view of social media

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Research Question 2: Perception of major reasons/purposes for which undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, use social media.
The findings are shown in table 5 below

Table 5: Respondent's views on major reasons for which undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, use social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
To enhance creativity among students	12	5.6
Greater social interaction	106	49.5
It provides greater access to information sources	74	34.6
It gives a sense of belonging among users	22	10.3
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The data in table 5 shows that majority of respondents were of the opinion that students merely use social media for greater social interaction.
Research Question 3: Perception of Effects of Social Media on Academic Performance among Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
Results of data collected in respect of above research question are shown in tables 6-9 below.

Table 6: Respondent's assessment of overall effects of social media on undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
It has more of negative effect	115	53.7

It has more of positive effect	58	27.1
It has both positive and negative effects	41	19.2
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The data in table 6 shows that 115 (53.7%) of the respondents were of the opinion that social media has more of negative effect on undergraduates, only 58 (27.1%) of the respondents thinks that it has some positive effect.

Table 7: Lecturers perception of the major effects of social media on academic performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Gives rise to poor reading culture and low grades	111	53.9
Promotes academic excellence	44	21.4
Stimulates involvement in unruly behaviour/endless chatting	13	6.3
Used as vehicle for examination malpractices	38	18.4
Total	206	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

From the data in table 7 shows that 111 (53.9%) of the respondents see poor reading culture and low grades as major effect of social media on academic performance of undergraduates. Only 44 (21.4%) were of the opinion that it promotes academic excellence.

Table 8: Respondent's response on whether social media contributes to sexual aberrations among undergraduates

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
No	19	8.5
Yes	180	84.5
Don't know	15	7.0
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The data in table 8 shows that 180 (84.5 %) of the respondents affirmed that social media contribute to sexual aberrations among undergraduates.

Table 9: Respondent's view on the type of sexual activities in which undergraduates mostly engage in on account of exposure to social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Anal sex	12	5.9
Masturbation	5	2.5
Vaginal sex	23	11.3
Exposure to pornographic materials	163	80.3
Total	203	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The data in table 9 illustrates that majority of respondents (163 or 80.3 %) identified exposure to pornographic materials. as the major type of sexual activities which undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, mostly engage in on account of misuse and abuse of social media.

Research Question 4: Measures Required for Ensuring Appropriate Use of Social Media to Support Academic Activities by Undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Table 10: Respondent's opinion on ways to ensure appropriate use of social media

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Parental guidance and orientation	59	27.6
Government to create a platform and regulatory agency	55	25.7
Religious leaders living up to their expectations	23	10.7
Educational institutions to properly educate students on appropriate use of social media for academic purposes	77	36.0
Total	214	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

The data in table 10 shows that majority of respondents (36%) believe that schools should enlighten or educate students on proper use of social media. However, 59 (27.6 %) of the respondents echoed the need for parental guidance and orientation, while 55 (25.7 %) of the respondents wanted the government to create a platform and regulatory agency to institute measures to forestall over indulgence, misuse and abuse of social media and internet access.

Test of Hypothesis

'There is a significant relationship between the ages of respondents and their perception of whether misuse or abuse of social media by undergraduates lead to poor academic performance'.

To test above hypothesis, a cross tabulation between the ages of the respondents and the question "do you think that misuse or abuse of social media by undergraduates leads to poor academic performance?" was done (see table 11 below).

Table 11: Cross tabulation of Age of Respondents and their Perception of whether misuse or abuse of social media by undergraduates lead to poor academic performance.

Age Category	Do you think that misuse or abuse of social media by undergraduates lead to poor academic performance?"					
	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Younger respondents	30	15.9	2	7.69	32	14.9

Older respondents	158	84.0	24	92.3	182	85
Total	**188**	**100.0**	**26**	**100.0**	**214**	**100.0**

χ2= .844, df=1,p=.039

The above table indicates that there is no significant difference (χ2= .844, df=1, p=.039) between the age of respondents and their perception of whether misuse or abuse of social media by undergraduates lead to poor academic performance. Therefore, the study rejects the hypothesis.

Discussions and Summary of Findings

This study examines lecturers' perception of the use and effects of social media on academic performance of undergraduates of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. It found that most lecturers are of the opinion that students are highly involved in the use of social media. Majority of the respondents identified Facebook as the major or popular social media of choice to students. This finding is similar to the position held by Ajayi and Adesote (2015) to the effect that Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are amongst the most visited websites in Nigeria. Skyler (2015) also contends that there are over 11.2 million Facebook social network users in Nigeria which is about 6% of the total population of users.

Most of our respondents saw the need to maintain greater social interaction as the driving force for use of social media among students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The study further found that although social media has its positive and negative aspects, majority of the respondents were of the view that with respect to academic performance of undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, the social media has had more negative effects resulting in poor reading culture and low examination grades. All the interviewees also affirmed that students do not make adequate use or get educational materials and related information on their assignments from the social media. This observation is also similar to the views of Ani (2012) who described the situation as cultural imperialism (fuelled by social media), whereby youths now see their culture as outdated and often abandon time cherished communication, linguistic and other cultural heritage for violent cultures, pornography and western modes of dressing. All of these constitute distractions for result oriented academic pursuit.

On the issue of whether social media contribute to sexual aberrations among undergraduates, most of the respondents agreed that social media greatly contribute to sexual activities among undergraduates. They identified the dominant type of sexual aberrations which students engage in as access to pornographic materials and sites.

Furthermore, majority of the respondents agree that appropriate use of social media is required to support academic activities, as well as improve the academic performance of undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. They were of the view that educational institutions should take up the responsibility of properly educating/enlightening students on appropriate use(s) of social media. This will enable undergraduates as leaders of tomorrow learn to use social media positively and productively to support academic pursuits.

Conclusions

The social media all over the world has become a powerful tool for the production, dissemination and storage of information. However, its use has also become a major source of worry to the larger society and lecturers in particular as this study demonstrates, that social media has tremendous propensity to consciously destabilize students' academic performance by their unnecessary over indulgence in its use. Very often, students are involved in chatting and pinging to the detriment of other critical activities that form integral part of academic work.

The study which specifically examines the use and effects of social media on academic performance of undergraduate students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, from the perception of lecturers found that while lecturers see the use of social media as very popular among their students, they however observed that students use them more to maintain social contacts and less for academic work. If this trend continues unabated, social media in the country will definitely lose its relevance and may contribute more to socio-economic and academic stagnation of the younger generation.

In order to minimize such negative effects, far reaching measures are recommended. It has become very imperative to educate students on proper use of information and communication technologies. There is also need for regulatory measures to check what students do with social media/internet access such that news emanating from the social media will be reliable and not mere unfounded rumours.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka and other institutions of higher learning should devise strategies to enforce prohibition of the unethical practice of chatting and pinging while lectures are going on. Close circuit cameras (CCTV) should be installed in classrooms to help to monitor and get defaulters who will be punished to deter others and generally improve concentration of both lecturers and students during classes.
2. Lecturers should go the extra miles in scrutinizing script of their students and be courageous to punish those who indulge in the use of chatting abbreviations in their school work.
3. Lecturers should also stimulate the intellectual development of their students by giving them regular take home assignments which will keep them busy academically with little or no time to waste on chatting or watch pornographic videos.
4. The government should create a platform and or strengthen relevant regulatory agencies to screen what students can access via the internet. The law enforcement agencies should work assiduously to unmask the identity of unscrupulous elements that post pornographic materials and punish them accordingly to serve as deterrents to others. Social media network provider should be compelled to block such pornographic sites in Nigeria.
5. The Nigeria Telecommunication Commission (NCC) and other regulatory agencies as well as internet access/service providers' should quickly address

the issues of false news peddling through the social media by tracking the identity of the peddlers and punishing them .

6. Parental guidance and proper orientation and upbringing of children is very crucial. Religious leaders and mass media outfits should live up to their roles in proper socialization and education of young minds on proper use of social media.

7. Because local media forms have remained resilient with minimal negative effects on users, a deliberate process of harnessing and integrating them into modern communication platforms, as Okafor, Nwankwo, Oli and Oguamanam (2016) canvassed is strongly recommended for further appraisal and adoption. Such synergy will optimise the gains from both media forms.

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