

## **Perceived Influence of Social Media on Students Academic Performance As Expressed By Secondary School Teachers in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja: Implications for Counselling**

**OTARU, Bernard Meshach PhD**

Nigerian Educational Research & Development Council (NERDC)

Sheda, P.M.B. 91 Garki - Abuja

**benmeshach2018@gmail.com**

**Sheda-Abuja**

**&**

**NWANKWO, Stella Obioma PhD**

Nigerian Educational Research & Development Council (NERDC)

Sheda, P.M.B. 91 Garki - Abuja

**obidiyanwankwo@gmail.com**

### **Abstract**

*This study investigated the perceived influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. A total of 120 teachers participated in the study. One research question was raised while two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The instrument used for data collection for this study was a researcher-designed questionnaire entitled "Influence of social media on academic performance Questionnaire" (ISMAPQ). The findings revealed that social media has a considerable influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. Social media has led students to distraction, spending too much time online surfing instead of reading and studying their books, making more friends, searching and watching adult contents online, being influenced by wrong peer groups hence, making them join secret societies among others. There were significant differences in the influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students as expressed by teachers in FCT, Abuja based on age and no significant difference based on gender. It was therefore recommended among others that counsellors should expose students to the danger inherent in negative uses of social media and analyze the possible result of proper usage of social media.*

### **Introduction**

Advances in Internet technologies have spurred on compelling changes in how we interact, communicate, learn, and build knowledge. For much of the connected world, it permeates nearly every aspect of our existence from shopping and banking, to communication and education among many other pursuits (Tariq, Mehboob, Khan, & Ullah, 2012). Social media is the most recent form of media having many features and characteristics. Social media simply means the interaction among people where they create, share, exchange and comment among themselves in different networks. The use of social media is increasing day by day at a high rate all over the world, becoming a hobby for youths to kill time. It can be accessed anywhere, at any time, where an internet connection is available. It could be in form of communicating, texting, sending images, sharing audio and video content, fast publishing, linking with people all over the world.

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media is internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of content which is user generated. The internet and in particular social media applications such as Twitter, yahoo messenger, Facebook messenger, WhatsApp messenger, Skype, 2go messenger, google talk, google messenger, YouTube and many others, are obviously "overtaking the world" and could be regarded as "a global consumer phenomenon" (Camilia, Ibrahim, & Dalhatu, 2013). The aggressive adoption of social media among the younger generation, according to Vorderer (2016) could be attributed to their up to date knowledge of and comfort with the latest technology and the convenient accessibility to these social networking tools. For instance, they can access social media from their cell phones at any time any place. This encourages them to use social media not only for receiving and retrieving information, but also for being online and connecting with others, and from being consumers and participants to "prosumers" which means that they consume and produce media on the social media platform (Obar & Wildman, 2015).

Innovation in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) particularly mobile- Smartphone technology has significantly redesigned the academic and professional activities of students at all levels in Nigeria vis-à-vis the internet connectivity providing social networking platforms. Social Networking Services (SNS) platforms of websites

and software applications allow users social, educational, professional, political and religious interconnectivity, and content sharing through multimedia communication platforms of Instagram, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter, Skype, LinkedIn, My Space, Google+, WhatsApp among others ( Olatunde, 2014).

The geometric increase in internet connectivity and network improvement from 2G, 3G, 4G, and the projected 5G by 2020 has made SNS an accepted piece in the user's social life and students' academic life (Victor, Victor, Ufodiana, Udo & Abner, 2020). According to the Nigerian Communication Commission (2018) report active mobile phone lines increase from 144,631 million in 2017 to 146 million in 2018. Smartphone users are estimated at 40 million and projected to increase to 140 million by 2025. The increase in SNS and internet connectivity offers students new prospects for self-innovation and educational activities while substituting the customary classroom and library-based research activity for e-research and learning. In more than a decade SNS has witnessed a remarkable surge. Educationalists in technologically advanced nations now substitute traditional classroom lecturing, seminar among others with social media seminars, and online small group work. In Nigeria, such is limited although contemporary data have revealed changing inclinations towards the adoption of e-research and learning as observed that the risk of SNS is becoming addictive among students in Nigeria at all levels of learning, hence, the need to identify factors that influence the use of social media and unproductive diminishing academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria.

The social media craze has also hit primary and secondary institutions, which cannot remain impartial to these rapidly changing technologies. Putting into consideration how social media became embedded within the young generation lifestyle as a method of communication between the schools, peers and the school administration is worrisome and threatening (Junco, 2012). Researchers found various effects of social media use on college students' experiences. It could be discussed that advancements and popularization of computers and mobile phones have led the community to spend more time on the internet and social media Junco (2014). According to Camilla, Ibrahim and Dalhatu (2013) social media have become one of the most influential communication tools which could be effectively used in the teaching process. Social media use is becoming very popular amongst students as it provides them with the freedom to do whatever they want to do, they create and share content, comment on anything they wish to, connect and chat with their friends as well as make new friends. There are many positive effects associated with social media use amongst students about their academics. Students can connect with various educational groups related to their subject areas and easily access all the important and authentic information shared by others. They can also share some good information they found out on such groups, which in turn will boost their confidence and this will help in the learning process. However, there is also a darker side associated with social media use amongst students. It has been observed that students devote more attention and time to social media than they do for their studies hence affecting their educational performance negatively (Osharive, 2015). Students are losing concentration in their studies due to their addiction to social media use which has resulted in a decline in their educational performance. A good academic performance helps to build a successful and secure future. However, social media has affected students' focus towards learning in such a way that it has started interfering with their educational performance and thus indirectly their future. The availability of different kinds of affordable and inexpensive android mobile phones made it very easy for adolescents to have access to; and been exposed to different content such as pornographic sites where they access, download, exchange and watch pornographic films of different sexual orientations from all over the world. The situation is worsened by the uninformed and carefree attitudes of parents who are mostly oblivious of; and careless and ignorant about these adolescents' activities, needs and challenges.

Maya (2015) revealed that social media use contributes to lower academic performance, low self-perceptions and less interest in school-oriented careers. Academic excellence plays an important role in an individual's life; be it in the family, at social gatherings, at the workplace, in an institution or even among peers.

### **Statement of the Problems**

Over generalizations regarding the influence of social media are not justified. More needs to be discovered about the variables that influence this relationship and about strategies that help students, teacher and schools administrators to harness the full potential of these pervasive technologies. Many parents and teachers are worried that their children and students are spending too much time using social media networks as this has become the new normal. The misuse of social networks and the internet during school hours and when doing homework is the biggest problem affecting the concentration of students and that is reflected, in some cases, poor academic performance because they do not pay attention to their studies. Several types of research have been carried out in recent times to find out the impact of social networking on the academic achievement of students. There are, however, diverse opinion/findings. For Shosanya

(2013) teenagers in Nigeria are in the habit of making and chatting with friends using Social Networking platforms as against visiting them for their academic purposes. Mingle and Adams (2015) declared that despite the benefits that come with the participation of students on social media networks, it could impact negatively their academic performances if not used properly. The studies of Muhingi et al (2015), carried out in Kenya also revealed that secondary school students in Kenya were much more vulnerable to the adverse effects of social networks in a manner consistently and concurrently similar to that found elsewhere worldwide.

Muret; Tezer; Ata; Oma and Hamza (2017) carried out a study on the impact of using social media on academic achievement and attitudes of prospective teachers and the study revealed that prospective teachers' attitudes towards social media influenced academic achievement. Alufohai (2017) carried out a study on the effect of social networking on secondary school students in Edo state. This study looked into how addictive adolescents are to the use of social media. It was found out that female students visit the site more often than male students. Female students spend more time on the net chatting than male students thereby showing the attrition rate and poor educational performance of girls more than the male students in Edo state.

The continuous downwards spiralling in academic performance, the rise in cases of drop-outs, the increase in most of the unacceptable, immoral, and antisocial behaviours perpetrated by students in secondary schools today, which include truancy, massive failures, exam malpractices, improper dress codes, cultism (such Malian cults) indiscriminate sexual relationships with the opposite as well as same-sex and most violent behaviours and rape can mainly be attributed to the influence of the social media. It was against this background that the researcher is conducting this study to look at the perceived influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students as expressed by secondary school teachers in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Though some studies have been done on the impact of social media on educational standards and performance in Nigeria and other countries of the world, they mostly concentrated on higher institutions of learning.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the perceived influence of social media on students' academic performance as expressed by secondary school teachers in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja: implication for counselling. It is expected that the results will provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon at hand, especially within the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. This will help the school counsellors, administrators and teachers to recognize the extent to which secondary students' use social media and in what ways it might impact their academic engagement and performance, and accordingly make more informed decisions concerning the use of social media for academic purposes and advancement.

### **Research Question:**

The following research question was raised to guide the conduct of the study

1. Do social media influence the academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as perceived by teachers?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study:

1. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as perceived by teachers based on Age
2. There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as perceived by teachers based on gender

### **Methodology**

#### **Design**

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey method. The descriptive survey method was used to conduct the study since it enabled the researcher to gather information about the population of the study.

#### **Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedure**

The population for this study comprises all secondary school teachers in Gwagwalada area council, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, while the target population consists of teachers in selected secondary schools from Gwagwalada metropolis. According to FCT Secondary Education Board (2017), there is an estimated total of 7623 teachers in the Gwagwalada metropolis. This figure includes male and female teachers. For a population size of this magnitude, the Research Advisor (2006) at 95% confidence level and 5.0% margin of error recommended sample size of 384. However, the researcher increased the sample size by 10% to allow for more participants and cater for possible attrition during the administration of the instrument. Therefore, 420 secondary school teachers participated in the study.

A two-stage sampling technique was employed to select respondents for the study. At stage one; a purposive sampling procedure was used to select 6 Government Secondary schools from the number of schools in Gwagwalada. At the second stage, simple random sampling was used to select twenty teachers across the senior secondary classes from each of the selected secondary schools. Therefore, a total number of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents were selected from the six secondary schools.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used for collecting data for this study was titled “Perceived Influence of Social Media on Academic Performances of Secondary School Students as expressed by teachers” (ISMAPSSSTQ). The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and the items were derived from the reviewed literature. The instrument has two parts (Section A & B). Section A consists of demographic information and Section B has 10 items.

The responses were structured using a 4-point Likert-type rating scale with the following grading: Strongly agree (SA) =4 points, Agree (A) =3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 point and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1 point. The mean score is 2.5 (4+3+2+1/4). This implies that for section B of the instrument, any mean score between 2.5 and above will be adjudged as the perceived influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja and vice versa.

### **Psychometric Properties**

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, it was given to experts in Educational Research Centre (ERC), Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, (NERDC) Sheda- Abuja to vet. The experts made corrections and suggestions which were taken into consideration. The experts adjudged the instrument valid. To establish the reliability of the instrument, it was administered to a representative sample of (20) respondents twice at an interval of four weeks. The two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Formula. A correlation coefficient of 0.88 was derived which shows that the instrument was reliable for the study.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics; percentage and mean score were used to analyze participants’ demographic data, research question and t-test hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

### **Results**

This section presents the result of the analysis of data obtained from the field. The study investigated the perceived influence of social media on the academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. The demographic data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages.

#### **Section A: Demographic Information**

**Age:** 20-30 years 34 (28%); 31-40 years 39 (33%) and 41-50years 47 (39%).

**Gender:** Male 58 (48%) and Female 62 (52%).

**Research Question:** Do social media influence the academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as perceived by teachers?

**Table 1:** Mean Analysis Influence on the Academic Performances of Secondary School Students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as perceived by teachers?

Item No	The use of social media influences students into	Mean	Decision
1	Spending too much time online outside school work chatting	3.93	1 <sup>st</sup>
3	Distraction from studying	3.91	2 <sup>nd</sup>
4	Sending erotic messages	3.80	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2	Making more friends	3.73	4 <sup>th</sup>
5	Sexual perversion	3.69	5 <sup>th</sup>
7	Gang activities	3.66	6 <sup>th</sup>
6	improved communication skills	2.50	7 <sup>th</sup>
9	Sharing vital information with classmates	2.47	8 <sup>th</sup>
10	Improved writing skills and good comprehension.	2.43	9 <sup>th</sup>
8	The use of what apps, Facebook, youtube, Instagram at the same time	2.39	10 <sup>th</sup>

Table 1 shows the mean and rank order analysis of response on perceived influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. The results on the table revealed that items 1, 3, 4, 2, 5 and 7 ranked as the top 6 items. Items 1 which states that “Spending too much time online outside school work chatting” with a mean score of 3.93 ranked 1<sup>st</sup>; item 3 which states “distraction from studying” with a mean score of 3.91 ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>; Items 4 which states “sending erotic messages with a mean score of 3.80 ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>. The results on the table further shows that item 2 which states “making more friends” with a mean score of 3.73 ranked 4<sup>th</sup> while item 5 and 7 which states “sexual perversion” and “Gang activities” ranked 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded from the result that social media has a considerable influence on students academic performances as expressed by senior secondary schools teachers in Gwagwalada area council, Abuja. Social media commonly distracts students studies, enhances the uncontrollable urge to chatting and surfing the net to make more friends and other pervasive activities among others.

**Research Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the perceived influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as expressed by teachers based on Age.

**Table 2:** Analysis of Variance (ANOV) on the Influence of Social Media on Academic Performances of Secondary School Students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as perceived by Teachers based on Age

Age Range	Sum of squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal.F-value	Crit. F-ratio	P-Value
Between-group	5522.155	2	3277.58			
Within-group	28762.551	116	54.960	1.50	2.60	.311
Total	34284.706	118				

Table 2 shows the data on the Analysis of Variance result showing the difference in response of respondent’s influence of social media on academic performance of secondary school students based on age. The table shows that the calculated f-value of 1.50 is less than the critical t-value of 2.60 (p-value .311 > 0.05 level of significance). Therefore, the null which states there is no significant difference in the influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as expressed by teachers based on age was accepted. This means that teachers of different age ranges do not differ in their perception of the influence of social media on the academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja.

**Research Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in the influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as perceived by teachers based on gender

**Table 3:** Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of the perceived Influence of Social Media on Academic Performances of Secondary School Students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as expressed by Teachers based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	58	27.32	3.55	118	7.41*	1.96	0.02
Female	62	29.66	3.72				

\*Significant<0.05

Table 3 shows the data on the means, standard deviations and t-value of respondents' influence of social media on academic performance based on gender. The table shows that the calculated t-value of 7.41 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 (p.value 0.02 < 0.05 level of significance) on this basis, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant difference in the perceived influence of social media on academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja as expressed by teachers based on gender was rejected. This means that teachers of different gender difference in their perception of the influence of social media on the academic performances of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that students' involvement in the use of social media has influenced them tremendously in spending too much time online outside school work chatting, a distraction from studying, Sending erotic messages, sending erotic messages, making more friends, sexual perversion and gang activities. This implies that students are making use of social media negatively at the expense of a lot of benefits they could derive from a positive use of it. Students are always seen with their phones, tablets, iPad etc. Sometimes, students will be engrossed with the sexual content or message they are reading or viewing on their phones which makes them concentrate less on where they are heading to, which may lead to an accident. In line with the finding of this study Adegboyega (2019) opined that some students watch and exchange pornographic movies and view nude pictures whenever they are alone and will likely put all they have watched into practice at the least opportunity. Other students spend most of their quality time, which they should have devoted to reading online that would help them academically, to downloading online sexual content and pornography. Some students view all these social media addictions as normal which results in them always being online.

The result of this study is in line with Kirshner and Karpinski (2010) research on Facebook Students' academic performance revealed that social media is commonly used among youth/students who exhibit carefree attitudes and luxurious living. They generally flout laws, easily copy bad attitudes; and are usually disrespectful to parents and teachers, and are not serious about their academic works/studies. Also, Adegboyega (2019) posited that students are oftentimes observed using their mobile phones to communicate and do other social activities during school hours when they are expected to be engaged in meaningful activities. More than 48% of Nigerian students whose age range from 12 to 17 years use the internet and nearly half log on it daily (Alufohai, 2017). Maeve (2014) also stated that the advent of social media on mobile phones, iPad and other devices has made Nigerian students addicted to these gadgets and that they no longer have time for reading and preparing for their examinations. Ibrahim (2012) explained that the neglect of educational benefits has endangered students to becoming victims of sexual predators, cyberbullying and harassment, posting or downloading of inappropriate pictures and other materials which have affected them negatively in their reading habits and social life due to the amount of time dedicated to the social world. Findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students as expressed by teachers in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja based age. This means teachers of different age range see no difference in the factors that Influence students on the use of social media on academic performance. More than 48% of Nigerian secondary school students within the age range of 12 to 17 years use the internet and nearly half log on to it on daily basis ((Victor, Victor, Ufodiama, Udo & Abner, 2020). In line with the finding of this study, Shosanya (2013) corroborated that teenagers in Nigeria are in the habit of making and chatting with friends using Social Networking platforms as against visiting them for their academic purposes. In line with the above, there is no significant difference in the influence social media have on the academic performance of secondary school students as expressed by teachers in FCT, Abuja based on age. The finding of this study contradicts the study of Sylvia, Moonhee and Sangwon (2013) which showed that different social media applications were perceived differently and that social media usage patterns and age affect these perceptions.

The finding of this study is in support of Alufohai (2017) who carried out a study on the effect of social networking on secondary school students in Edo state. This study looked into how addictive boys and girls are in the use of social media. It was found out that female students visit the site more often than male students. Female students spend more time on the net chatting than male students thereby showing the attrition rate and poor educational performance of girls more than the male students in Edo state. In the same vein, Rafferty (2009) posited that there is a significant difference between girls' and boys' usage of social media. The study noted that boys are also more likely to watch sexually explicit pictures and videos

than girls and to talk about sexual activity publicly. The result of the findings may be attributed to the fact that students in foreign countries are exposed to technology and the internet at earlier stages of life than students in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the study revealed that social media has more negative than positive influences on the academic performance of secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. They are more engrossed in searching and, surfing the net, always online at the detriment of their academic task. Also, there was no significant difference in the influence of social media on the academic performance of secondary school students as expressed by teachers in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja based age and there was a significant difference in the influence of social media on academic performance of secondary school students as expressed by teachers in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja based gender.

### **Implications for Counselling**

The findings of this study have implications for counselling practice. Counselling is skilled and principled use of relationship to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources. It is a supportive and empathic professional relationship that provides a framework for the exploration of emotions, behaviours and thinking patterns and facilitation of healthy change directed towards people experiencing difficulties as they live through the normal stages of life-span development.

Counsellors should help students through a range of strategies by developing safe, stable and nurturing relationships between students, their parents and guardians to reduce the availability and harmful use of social media and reduce the negative pressure peers place on one another. Counsellors help to guide policy development that supports the ethical use of technology to aid in supporting students' holistic development. Therefore, school counsellors need to assist in developing policies for potential and prescribed interactions on social media that take place between educators, students, and families. Counsellors need to provide teaching life skills like assertive skills, decision-making skills and also give students information on how to handle peer pressure and make positive use of social media. Counsellors can provide preventive measures for students by organizing workshops, orientation programs, seminars, student week, talk shows and information materials which will be placed at strategic places in the school environment, which will show the positive and negative influences of social media and peer pressure.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Counsellors should expose students to the danger inherent in negative uses of social media, analyze the possible result of proper usage of social media that will assist them in their academic pursuit, and tell them about some educative sites which can help them in all areas.
2. Counsellors could provide information specifically on the safe and respectful use of technology, as well as the consequences of the negative use of social media to students of different age and gender.
3. The school counsellors should regularly organize talk shows and seminars for students on the proper usage of social media to improve academic performance

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