

# INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ADULT EDUCATION STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, KWARA

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## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research study is to examine the influence of social media on the academic performance of adult education students in University of Ilorin, Kwara State. Three research questions and one research hypothesis guided the study. To achieve this, the descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population consists of all the 429 full-time undergraduate students. A simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 120 adult education students. A four-point Likert Type Rating Scale Questionnaire type, titled: Influence of social media on the academic performance of adult education student's questionnaire (ISMAPAESQ) was used to collect data from the respondents. The descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage were used to analyse the demographic data while inferential statistics of Chi-square(x<sup>2</sup>) was used in testing the research hypotheses.*

*Research findings showed that a great number of adult education students in the University of Ilorin are addicted to social media and the level of adult education students' utilization of social media is so high. To this end, the study recommended that social media should be used for educational purposes as well; social networking sites should be expanded, and new pages should be created to enhance academic activities and avoid setbacks in the students' academic performance; and students should be monitored by teachers and parents on how they use these sites.*

*This is to create a balance between social media and academic activities of students to avoid setbacks in the academic performance of the students.*

**Keywords:** Influence, Social media, academic performance and adult learners

## INTRODUCTION

Social media is the technologies that made social communication easy and enable discussions among its participants. The word social media means a web-based mobile application that allows people to make, interact with, and share new user-generated or current material, in digital environment. Social media is media for social interaction as a superset beyond social communication.

This online sharing of information also promotes an increase in communication skills among the people especially among the learners/students of educational institutions. Social media exploded as a category of online discourse which enables people to create contents, share them, bookmark them and network at a prodigious rate (Jha & Bhardwaj, 2012, Obi et al 2012)

This has breached the gap that existed in communication where people had to rely solely on traditional methods such as letters

and phone calls as a mode of getting in touch with friends and relatives. Today, information and communication are as easy as walking into a neighbor's residence to deliver a piece of information or vice versa through the use of social media. Social media is fast changing the public discourse in society and is setting trends and agenda in topics that ranges from the environment and politics to technology and education (Asur & Huberman, 2010, Ogedebe & Emmanuel 2012).

Most students expressed enjoyment in creating the advertisement based upon entertainment, creativity, teamwork, and challenge. Photo Voice is an online social media for participatory photography, digital storytelling, and self-advocacy projects with in-depth course reflections, instructors increased interest, engagement, personal meaning, and creativeness with their students. Students' use of blogs, wikis, and social bookmarking has been of particular interest to educators who perceive these technologies as beneficial in higher education (Kumar & Vigil 2011). Twitter was found to not only increase college students' engagement and improve grades, but it also increased interaction with peers and instructors for deeper interpersonal connections.

Using Twitter in classroom environments allowed student interactions to be natural and

immediate, enabled social presence, continued conversations after the semester, and allowed for the construction of meaning through communication (Dunlap & Lowenthal 2009, Olowu & Seri 2012).

According to British broadcast media (2007), social media has become one of the most important means of communication recent times. However, it improves and enhances communication among people regardless of the distance, making it open to easily share information, files, pictures and videos, create blogs and send messages and conduct real time conversations. These systems are referred to as social, simply because they allow communication with friends and co-workers so easily and effectively. It also strengthens the ties between people of those systems. The favorite in the realm of internet sites are Facebook, twitter and other people socially and in the media. They are playing a large impact and influential role in decision making in the occasions from the global economically, politically, socially and educationally. Social networking sites include Twitter, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook Messenger, Blackberry Messenger (BBM), WhatsApp messenger, 2go messenger, Skype, Google talk, Google Messenger, iPhone and Androids.

These networking sites are used by most people to interact with old and new friends, physical or internet friends (Asemah and

Edegoh, 2012). The world has changed rapidly by the evolution of technology, and this has resulted in the use of technology as the best medium to explore a wide area of knowledge. Social media are forms of electronic communication which facilitate interactive base on certain interests. Kaplan and Helen (2010) defined social media as a group of internet-based applications that allows the creation and exchange of user generated content. It is an offshoot of modern digital communication. Social media helps to promote interaction and sharing of information on real time basis. One of the biggest advantages of today's social media is the ease of sending messages to billions of people in different parts of the world at the speed of a heartbeat.

Academic excellence or achievement plays an important role in an individual placement, be it in the academic institutions or job placement. Due to this, many people are concerned with the ways they can enhance their academic achievement. The emphasis on academic excellence, which is also prevalent worldwide, has encouraged many studies about the conditions promoting it. The role of academic achievement as one of the predictors of one's life success and also in the aspect of academic placement in schools to higher institutions as well as the level of employability in one's career is inevitable (Kyoshaba, 2009). Academic performance, which is measured by the

examination results, is one of the major goals of a school. According to Kyoshaba, performance is characterised by performance on tests associated with coursework and the performance of students on other types of examinations. Academic performance or achievement is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. David, Keane, Shelton and Calkins (2011) identified that standardized achievement test scores, teacher's ratings of academic performance, and report card grades are some of the key channels through which students' academic performance can be measured.

A direct relationship exists between social media usage and the academic performance of adult education students in universities. However, the darker side within technological evolution has resulted in dilemmas such as the setback of real values of life especially among students who form the majority of users interacting through the use of social networking sites.

Online social networking sites focus on building and reflecting social associations among people who share interests and or activities. With so many social networking sites displayed on the internet, students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends.

Many students are now addicted to the online rave of the moment, with Facebook, Twitter etc. Today most youths and students possess Facebook accounts. The reason most of them perform badly in school might not be far-fetched. While many minds might be quick to blame the poor quality of teachers, they might have to think even harder, if they have not heard of the Facebook frenzy (Oche & Aminu .2010). Olubiyi noted that these days' students are so engrossed in the social media that they are almost 24 hours online. Even in classrooms and lecture theatres, it has been observed that some students are always busy pinging, 2going or Facebooking, while lectures are on. Times that ought to be channeled towards learning, academic research and innovating have been crushed by the passion for meeting new friends online, and most times busy discussing trivial issues. Hence most students' academics suffer setbacks as a result of distraction from social media.

In the past, social networking was viewed as a distraction and offered no educational benefit. Blocking this social network was a form of protection for students against wasting time, bullying and privacy protection. In an educational setting, 2go, WhatsApp and BBM chat are seen by instructors and educators as frivolous time wasting and distraction from schoolwork. Cyber bullying has been an issue of concern with social networking sites. An online

survey based on 9-19 years old and above discovered that students received bullying comments online. Social networking often includes a lot of personal information posted publicly and many believe that sharing personal information and the easy communication vehicle that social networking opens the door to sexual predators.

Blackberry Messenger is propriety internet-based instant messenger application included on blackberry devices that allows messaging between blackberry users. It was developed by the manufacturer of the blackberry research in motion (RIM); messages sent via blackberry messenger are sent over the internet and use the blackberry pin system, so communication is only possible between blackberry devices. Pinging allows you to connect to friends using a ping ID, something akin to blackberry pin but easier to remember because you can pick it yourself. Once you've shared your pin or found friends via email or twitter, you can send text, messages, photos, videos and voice memos. Facebook allows anyone who claims to be at least 13 years old to become a registered user of the website (Roblyer 2010 & Ogedebe, 2012)).

Twitter is an online social networking service that enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters known as "tweets. Users can also follow the

updates of friends they “follow,” send them direct messages, reply publicly to friends, or just post questions or comments as their current status (Sorav 2010). In many ways this social network site (twitter) continually provides social network for people of all ages. Parent- child conflicts have also become more of an issue since the sudden escalation of online social networking. Research has shown that students who have a strong sense of communication and closeness with one (or more) parent or guardian have a better chance at academic success. With adolescents hooked on the Internet and other forms of technology and their language changing with new acronyms and code words that can only be learned through this technology, the gap between parents and children has gotten larger.

Many parents do not understand their children and cannot find a way to relate to their virtual worlds.

This, in turn, causes distress in the household and may ultimately lead to a barrier between parent, child, and communication about schoolwork and grades (Greenfield & Subrahmanyam, 2008, Merten & Williams, 2009).

The current generations of teens live in a fast-paced technological world with many different types of communication happening all at the same time. For example, he or she may be on the computer on a SNS, while

also talking on the phone, sending instant messages to a friend, and emailing someone else all at the same time. While there may be some advantages to this, such as the teen learning how to type faster and multi-task many things at once, there may also be a breakdown in much of that communication (Williams, 2008).

Social media opens up new ways for collaboration and discussion in the sense that it offers a great deal of content posting, copying, sharing and search ability by easily using online search tools. Students today use social media anywhere and at any time where internet connection is available in order to meet their educational needs (Dewing, 2010). Students use social media to communicate with their teachers as a group outside of class and to plan school events and what not, it also allowed students to get help on schoolwork from teachers during the evening, weekends, and holidays so that they never fell behind.

Students’ academic life has moved to a different dimension since the introduction of these social media networks and several studies have affirmed that social media plays an important role on students in higher education.

Social media has contributed greatly to facilitating learning in the 21st century. Though social media can increase student learning through student interactions,

challenges arise when social media are incorporated into an academic course.

#### **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Since the advent of social media sites in the 1990s, it is assumed in some quarters that the academic performance of adult students is facing a lot of neglect and challenges. There is a deviation, distraction and divided attention between social networking activities and adult education students' academic work. Adult education students' addictiveness to social networks, students' frequency of exposure to social network, social media network that the students are more exposed to and the influence of social media as a medium of interaction between students are problems which have impact on the academic performance of student.

Instead of students reading their books, they spend their time chatting and making friends via the social media and this might definitely have influence on their academic performance, because when you do not read, there is no way you can perform well academically. It is speculated that an average Nigerian youth spend about 6-7 hours on internet daily. Some do all night browsing thereby developing lesser time to studies in comparison to non-users and consequently having lower grade point average. Despite the tremendous influence of social media on academic performance of students, no study has been conducted on the impact of social

media on the academic performance of adult education students in University of Ilorin, Kwara State.

This study is significant to the teachers, parents and students. This study will help the teachers at the school to know the influence that social media has on their students, so as to assist them to enlighten and create awareness to the students on the possible influence it has on them. The study is of significant to parents in the sense that they will know the possible effects this social media usage has on their children, so as to serve as watchdog to their children on the usage of the social networking site. The study will enable the adult learners to be aware that, apart from the social benefits of this social networking site, using the sites more than necessary will pose possible dangers to their health. It will be relevant in assisting adult learners in understanding the diversity of social media.

It will provide relevant material for adult learners and other researchers undertaking similar research. The study will help researchers with more information on the influence of social media on student's academic performance.

#### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of the study is to examine the impact of social media on the academic performance of adult students in

University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to;

1. determine the level of student's addictiveness to social media and its influence on their academic performance.
2. Identify the exposure of students to social media networks and the influence on their academic performance.
3. access the level of student's utilization of social media and its influence on their academic performance.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

The following research questions were raised:

1. Does the level of student's addictiveness to social media have influence on their academic performance?
2. What is the level of exposure of adult students to social media and its influence on their academic performance?
3. What is the level of student's utilization of social media and the influence on their academic performance?

#### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

The following hypotheses are generated by the researcher and were tested in this study:

HO<sub>1</sub>. There is no significant difference in the influences of social media on academic performance of adult learners.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

Descriptive survey design is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. This design is considered appropriate because it will enable the researcher to generate data through the standardized collection procedures based on highly structured research instruments and well-defined study concepts and related variables. The population of this research study consists of all the full-time adult education undergraduate students in University of Ilorin. The total population of adult education students from 100level to 400level consists of 429 adult education undergraduate full-time students.

Simple random sampling is defined as the randomly selected sample from a larger population given the entire individual in the sample an equal chance to be selected. The target population for this study consists of adult education students randomly selected from 100level to 400 level, making a total of 120 adult education students.

A constructed students' Questionnaire (ISMAPAESQ)" was used to gather relevant information from the respondents. The questionnaire would be divided into two

sections (A and B). Section 'A' consists of information on personal data of respondents while Section 'B' consisting of questions that elicit responses from the respondents with response options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The reliability of this instrument was addressed by using pilot study test that is the instrument was administered to a sample of students that were not part of the population of the study. The data were divided into two and reliability was determined using Cronbach Alpha Level and (0.85) was obtained. This result shows that the instrument was reliable.

A total of 120 copies of the questionnaires were distributed to elicit responses from the respondents and retrieved on the spot by the researcher. The questionnaire would be analyzed using the descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage, and inferential statistics of Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ). Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages was used in analyzing demographic variables and research questions while the inferential statistics of Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) was also used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

### Analysis of Demographic Information of the Students

This section presents the results of data obtained from the respondents in

percentages. The variables were gender, age, level and department.

**Table 1:** Percentage Analysis of the Distribution of Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	65	54.16
	Female	55	45.83
	<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>120.00</b>
Level	100	20	16.66
	200	15	12.50
	300	45	37.50
	400 <b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>33.33</b> <b>120.0</b>
Age	16-20yrs.	60	50.00 20.83 29.16
	21-25yrs.	25	
	25 and above.	35	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	

Table 1 shows the respondents' characteristics. It can be seen that male respondents are 65% (54.16) and the female respondents are 55% (45.83) which indicates that there were more male respondents than the female respondents. Also, it was shown that 20% (16.66) of the respondents are in 100 level, 15% (12.50) are in 200 level, 45% (37.50) of the respondents are in 300 level and 40% (33.33) of the respondents are in 400 level.

**Research Question 1:** Does the level of adult students' addictiveness to social media network have influence on their academic performance?



**Table 2:** Mean response on the adult students’ addictiveness to social media network and their academic performance

S/N	Adult students’ addictiveness to social media network and their academic performance	Mean
1	Addiction to social media networks is a problematic issue that affects my academic life.	3.04
2	Online networking distracts me to concentrate on my studies.	2.51
3	I usually spend more hours online than reading time	2.08
4	There is no improvement in my grades since I became engage into social networking sites	2.80
5	Addiction to social media networks is a problematic issue that affects my academic life.	2.50

From table 2, result shows the response on the influence of student’s addictiveness to social network and academic performance. With a benchmark mean of 2.5, any item with a mean of below 2.5 is not considered as one of the influences of student’s addictiveness to social network and academic performance. Thus, from the table, it can be seen that all the items are agreed by the respondents as on the influence of student’s addictiveness to social network and academic performance.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of exposure of adult students to social media network and their academic performance?

**Table 3:** Mean response on the level of exposure of students to social media network and their academic performance of Adult Education

S/N	Exposure of Students to Social Media Network and their academic performance of adult education	Mean
1	I usually have unlimited access to Facebook, and this has affected my academic performance.	2.54
2	I engage in academic discussions on twitter, and this has improved my academic performance.	2.61
3	I make use of What Sapp to disseminate knowledge to my classmate	2.18
4	I solely rely on information gotten from Wikipedia to do my assignments without consulting other sources.	2.80
5	I usually have unlimited access to Facebook, and this has affected my academic performance.	2.60

From table 3, result shows the response on the exposure of students to social media network and their academic performance of Adult Education. With a benchmark mean of 2.5, any item with a mean of below 2.5 is not considered as one of the exposure of students to social media network and their academic performance of Adult Education.

**Research Question 3:** What is the level of adult students’ utilization of social media and students’ academic performance?

**Table 4:** Mean response on level of adult students’ utilization students’ academic performance

S/N	Use of social media and Students’ Academic Performance	Mean
1	The usage of Wikipedia for research has helped improved my grades	3.04
2	Engaging in academic forums on yahoo reduces my rates of understanding.	2.54

3	I use materials gotten from blogging sites to compliments what I have been taught in class	2.53
4	I will not perform well in my academics even if I stop using social media.	2.80
5	The usage of Wikipedia for research has helped improved my grades	3.00

From table 4, the result shows the response on the uses of social media and students’ academic performance of Adult Education. With a benchmark mean of 2.5, any item with a mean of below 2.5 is not considered as one of the uses of social media and students’ academic performance. Thus, from the table, it can be seen that all the items are agreed by the respondents as on the exposure of students to social media network and their academic performance.

**HYPOTHESIS TESTING**

One research hypothesis postulated for this study was tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference on the influence of social media on academic performance of adult learners.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Perceived influences of social media on academic performance of adult education students based on level.

Sources	Sum of Squares	df.	Mean Square	F	p-value
Between Groups	129.649	2	64.825	2.82	.09

Within Groups	1338.662	17	25.744		
Total	1468.311	19			

**P>0.05**

From table 5, result shows the df (2, 59) and F value yielded 2.518 which is not significant at 0.05 alpha level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected since the P-value .014 is greater than 0.05 (.144 > 0.05). This means that there is a significant difference in the Perceived influences of social media on academic performance of adult education students based on level. ( $F_{(2, 59)} = 2.518$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ).

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This study examined the influence of social media on academic performance of Adult Education students in the University of Ilorin, Kwara State. The finding of the study revealed that influence of social media on the academic performance of adult education in university of Ilorin, Kwara State as perceived by students. The finding of the study revealed that the level of addictiveness of adult learners to social media has influence on their academic performance. This is in line with Oche & Aminu (2010) that students are tempted to abandon their homework and reading times in preference for chatting online with friends.

The time they are supposed to read and prepare for their examinations, they will be doing irrelevant things which will result in their poor academic performance. Also, the

level of the adult education students' exposure to social media has influence on their academic performance. According to Olubiyi (2012), students spend almost 24 hours online doing irrelevant things instead of facing their studies. They are fond of pinging in lecture rooms when lectures are ongoing which cause distractions and poor academic performances. In essence, the levels of student's utilization of social media have negative influence on their academic performance.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This study examined the influence of social media on academic performance of Adult Education students in the University of Ilorin, Kwara State. Related literature review was made considering scholars' explanation of the subject matter. Relevant data for the study was generated through research instruments constructed by the researcher. The research hypothesis was formulated and tested for the purpose of the study. The research hypothesis formulated in the study was tested using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Therefore, based on the findings from this study, it was concluded that adult learners should be conscious of the way they should be using social media so that it will not prompt negative effects on their academic rather they should use them to bring positive effect on their academic performances.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study recommended that more strict and meticulous supervision and examining procedures should be adopted in the teaching and learning of adult education using social media in order to check student's activities during class. Public enlightenment programs should be launched by the government and various stockholders and school administrators to reach out to both urban and rural students on the influence that these unchecked and excess use of social media has on their person and academics, either through seminars, workshops, teaching etc.

The study recommended the strict enforcement of Nigerian policy on Education service rule on electronic devices usage in schools, promotion of social media usage for academic purpose, counseling for addicted students and the use of the right grammar and spelling when participating on social networks. Institutions and Curriculum planners should enact a law which indicate that social media should encourage broader discussions of course content, older students may spend more time than younger students engaging in unrelated discussions that notwithstanding.

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