

# Effect of Social Media on the Study Habits of Students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri

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**Abstract**—There has been considerable anxiety in society that social media distracts from education and reduces the social skills of young people. Following this, educators have sought ways to mitigate its negative effects on educational attainment while incorporating its positive aspects into the learning process. This study sought to examine the impact of social media on the study habits of students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. The research design involved survey technique where questionnaires were used to collect data from a sample of the student population. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. Spearman's Rho was the specific tool used for analysis. It was presented in frequency tables and bar charts. Findings from variables investigated showed that at  $p < 0.5$ , social media usage had a significant impact on the study habits of students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. This indicated the need for stakeholders in the community to employ counselling and other proactive measures to ensure that students maintained proper focus on their primary assignment for schooling

**Keywords**—Education, social media, study habits, technology.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE use of social media applications has become a widespread phenomenon among all age groups. This appears more widely the case among teenagers and young adults. Within these categories are found students in tertiary institutions like Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Nigeria. Social media has been defined as 'a collection of internet websites, services and practices that support collaboration, community building, participation and sharing'. It has attracted the interest of different people including educators who desire to engage their students [1]. This interest has led to attempts to integrate social media tools into the learning process. Some of such tools (sites) which have become the focus of this effort include social networking sites, video-sharing sites, blogs and microblogs [2]. According to [4], it has been defined as a set of web based broadcast technologies that enable the democratization of content, giving people the opportunity to emerge from consumers of technology to publishers. It is "user generated content that is shared over the internet via technologies that promote engagement, sharing and collaboration" [4]. Whereas traditional media usually involves unidirectional transmission or distribution of content to an audience, social media is more

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often a two way conversation [3]. It has been used prolifically in all areas of society- business, politics, media, advertising, police and emergency services. It has also become a key tool for provoking thought, dialogue around particular social issues. Following this pervasive presence and hence the potential for influence, many corporate bodies invest time and money in creating social network sites (SNS), while others go to great lengths to block their employees' access to these sites. The US military, for example, banned soldiers from accessing MySpace SNS, the Canadian government prohibited employees from Facebook and the US congress proposed legislation to ban youths from accessing SNS in schools and libraries [5]. This was apparently based on the belief that their interaction with these media impacted negatively on their times in those locations associated with study. There has been considerable anxiety that social media distracts from education and reduces the social skills of young people.

Students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education (AIFCE) are not exempt from the distraction and challenges posed by social media. The study seeks to foster an understanding of how this new media impacts these students. Where the influences are negative, this will aid educators fashion solutions that will mitigate them and help the students focus on obtaining good learning outcomes.

### A. Objective of the Study

The major objective was to investigate the impact of social media usage on study habits of students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri with the goal of providing a basis for guidance and counselling towards higher educational attainment. To achieve this, the following minor objectives were pursued:

1. To assess the extent of social media usage among AIFCE students.
2. To ascertain the relationship between social media usage and study habits among AIFCE students.

Furthermore, the hypotheses were formulated to guide the research:

- *Ho1*: there is no significant relationship between the effect of social media usage on students' ability to review lecture notes daily and its effect on amount of daily night sleep gotten by students of AIFCE, Owerri.
- *Ho2*: there is no significant relationship between effect of social media usage on quantity of sleep gotten each night and its effect on punctuality at lectures among students of AIFCE, Owerri.

Existing literature has tended to focus on the effect of social media on student's academic performance. This is notably due to the fact that academic performance is the end result of a

student's academic engagement. Study habits however are the processes that lead to academic performance. There is thus the necessity for this study and the highlighting of effects of social media on academic performance. Research has shown that social media can be a distraction to study [14]. This has been linked to the fact that students' engagement on social media does not effectively allow them to utilise their time. Reference [15] posited that the degree of learning depends on the amount of time the child is actively engaged in learning. It is the time spent in studying that helps students to retain materials learnt which will eventually boost academic performance [9]. This study sought to provide empirical data on the impact of social media on the study habits of AIFCE students, so as to aid stakeholders in the institution achieve this goal.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Theoretical framework

Two theories were adapted for this study. They are *Uses and Gratification theory* and *Time Displacement theory*.

Uses and Gratification theory was first developed in research of the effectiveness of radio in the 1940s. It proposes that social media users are actively choosing specific media according to their needs. Individuals mix and match uses with goals. A variety of psychological and social factors guides and filters this selection [10]. Ruggiero predicted that social media would be transformative, leading to 'profound changes in media users' personal and social habits and roles [11]. Social and psychological factors produce different lifestyles and patterns of media use [12].

Time displacement theory, on the other hand, proposes that people only have limited time and attention. Participation in one communication activity takes away from participation in another. The underlying assumption is that individuals have a limited amount of time which is seen as social capital and if they increase the time they spend on one activity, there will logically be sacrifices in other areas to compensate [13]. The displacement in this case occurs when students replace their academic pursuits for usage of social media. The gratification received in the use of social media includes but are not limited to need for identity, development of social identities, learning how to start and end relationships and acceptable types of humour [10].

### B. Empirical Literature

Reference [7] stated that the chief purposes of study were to acquire knowledge and habits which would be useful in meeting new situations, interpreting new ideas, making judgements, creating new ideas and perfecting skills. There is a high correlation between study habits and academic achievement [9]. Reference [6] explains study habits as well-planned and deliberate patterns of study which have attained a form of consistency in students' daily life cycles and which aid them towards understanding academic subjects and passing examination. Studies have shown that students who do not devote sufficient time to their studies seldom have good study habits [8] and those who had poor study habits

performed poorly in school [6]. Indicators of poor study habits were observed to include poor time management, lack of planning and concentration in studies, poor reading skills, ineffective test-taking techniques and failure to inform teachers of difficulties with school work with request for assistance [9]. There is however paucity of literature on the study habits of students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Reference [16] reporting a study in Kenya correlated social media usage with depleted revision time at night, among students. The study found positive correlations between social media usage and aspects of students' study habits. The issue of night time preference for its use was associated with other complications such as absenteeism and lack of concentration in class because of the need to compensate for lack of sleep. Reference [17] also highlighted the fact that social media usage had a negative influence on the academic performance of students in Kogi State, Nigeria. It concluded that students who spent more time on social media were more likely to perform poorly in their academics than those who did not. Other literature, however, link social media usage with positive academic performance noting that students were able to multi-task as they engaged in social media while carrying out their assignments [18]. Reference [19] posited that there was a negative relationship between social media usage and time management. Attention deficit was evident in students' academic activities when they had spent more time on social networking services. Reference [20] noted that students in Turkey only spent about one hour in daily study and this was associated with time spent on social media. This had a negative impact on student's academic performance and study habits.

Researchers did not have a uniform method of categorising social media users into heavy and light users. Some defined heavy users as those that spent time on SNS for up to 61 minutes or more while light users stayed online for 31 minutes or less [21]. Others described heavy social media users as those who used at least two different types of social media every day while light social media users were those who, either never used any social media or did not use social media more than once a week [22]. For this study, the previous definition relating to time spent on SNS was adopted.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The survey research method was adopted for the study. A random sampling of the student population was carried out and primary data were collected using questionnaires. The population of students of Alvan Ikoku Federal college of Education, Owerri was 11,691 people. For this research, a sample size of 372 was used. This was obtained after calculating for a finite population, while assuming the following parameters: significance level of 0.05, standard deviation of 0.5, standard variety of 1.96 and confidence level of 95%. There was a 100% response rate as the researchers personally distributed and collected questionnaires from students. Data were presented in tables and bar charts, while Spearman's Rho statistical tool was used to analyse the data.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study revealed that social media rate of usage among students of AIFCE, was very high. Almost all respondents in the survey indicated a degree of usage of social media. 71% of students surveyed owned smartphones, while 25% did not. Only 3.4% indicated that they did not know what a smartphone was. The socio demographic data indicated that 31.7% were male while 68.3% were female. 19.2% were National Certificate of Education (NCE) students and 80.8% were (BEd) Degree students. By year of study, 6.8% were first year students, 9.5% were second year, 30.4% were third year while fourth year students were 53.4%. The following relevant data from the study are presented graphically using tables and charts.

*A. Effect of Social Media Usage on Reviewing Lecture Notes at the End of Each Day*

Of the students sampled, more than half indicated that social media usage affects reviewing their lecture notes at the end of each day. This is illustrated in Table I and Fig. 1.

TABLE I  
DOES SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AFFECT REVIEWING YOUR LECTURE NOTES AT THE END OF EACH DAY?

	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More than ½ of the time	21.5	21.5
½ of the time	32.7	54.2
Valid Less than ½ of the time	22.9	77.1
Never	22.9	100.0
Total	100.0	

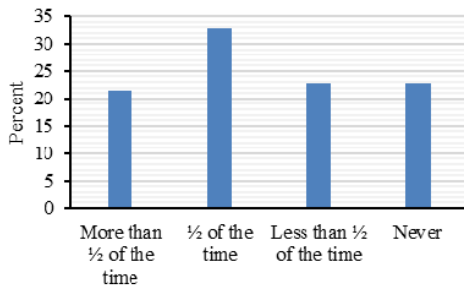


Fig. 1 Analysis of data on social media usage effect on reviewing of lecture notes at the end of the day

*B. Effect of Social Media Usage on Punctuality at Lectures*

The result here showed that cumulatively, social media usage affected the ability of one third of students to submit their assignment on time. This is illustrated in Table II and Fig. 2.

TABLE II  
DOES SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AFFECT YOUR PUNCTUALITY AT LECTURES?

	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More than ½ of the time	7.3	7.3
½ of the time	7.0	14.3
Valid Less than ½ of the time	15.9	30.2
Never	69.8	100.0
Total	100.0	

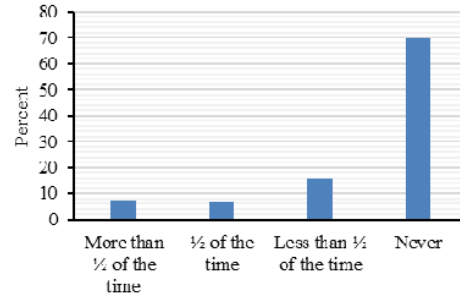


Fig. 2 Analysis of data on effect of social media usage on punctuality at lectures

*C. Effect of Social Media Usage on Getting Sufficient Sleep Every Night*

The results showed that social media usage affects students getting sufficient sleep at night. Cumulatively three quarters of the students indicated that they do not get sufficient sleep at night because of their usage of social media. This is illustrated in Table III and Fig. 3.

TABLE III  
EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE ON GETTING SUFFICIENT SLEEP EVERY NIGHT (7-9 HOURS)

	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More than ½ of the time	26.9	26.9
½ of the time	22.3	49.2
Valid Less than ½ of the time	32.1	81.3
Never	18.8	100.0
Total	100.0	

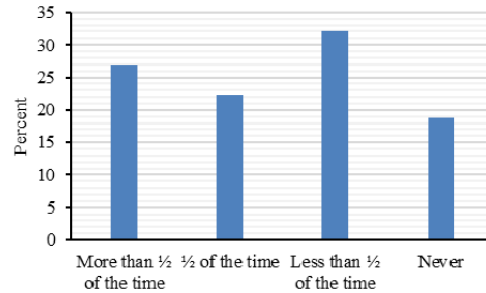


Fig. 3 Analysis of effect of social media usage on getting sufficient night sleep

*D. The Number of Hours Spent on Social Media Daily*

The results showed that majority of the students were heavy users of social media as they spent more than an hour on social media daily. Light users spend less than one hour daily on social media. This is illustrated in Table IV and Fig. 4.

TABLE IV  
HOW MANY HOURS DO YOU SPEND ON SOCIAL MEDIA DAILY?

	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-½ hour	7.9	7.9
½ -1 hour	20.8	28.8
Valid 1 - 2 hours	21.9	50.7
2 - 3 hours	16.2	66.8
> 3 hours	33.2	100.0
Total	100.0	

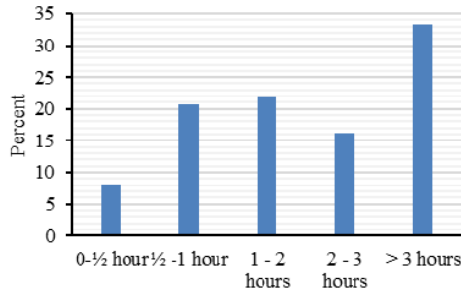


Fig. 4 Analysis of number of hours spent on social media daily

#### E. Test of Research Hypotheses

*Ho1:* This states that ‘*there is no significant relationship between effect of social media usage on ability to review lecture notes daily and the effect of social media usage on quantity of sleep gotten each night among students of AIFCE, Owerri*’. The variables in focus were ordinal variables, thus Spearman’s Rho correlation analysis tool was used to test the nature of the relationship. The result of the analysis as presented in Table V showed a correlation coefficient value of .195 indicating that a weak positive relationship exists. The significance value was .000 which indicates a very high significance value at  $p > 0.5$ . The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and alternate hypothesis accepted. This is that ‘*there is significant relationship between effect of social media usage on ability to review lecture notes daily and the effect of social media usage on quantity of sleep gotten each night among students of AIFCE, Owerri*’.

TABLE 5  
RESULTS OF SPEARMAN RHO CORRELATION ANALYSIS TEST ON SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND STUDY HABITS

		Does social media usage affect you getting sufficient sleep every night (7-9 hours?)
Does social media usage affect you reviewing your lecture notes at the end of each day?	Correlation Coefficient	.195**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	363

TABLE VI  
RESULTS OF SPEARMAN RHO CORRELATION ANALYSIS TEST ON SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND STUDY HABITS-2

		Does social media usage affect you getting sufficient sleep every night (7-9 hours?)
Does social media affect your punctuality at lectures?	Correlation Coefficient	.129*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014
	N	367

*Ho2:* The second research hypothesis was: ‘*There is no significant relationship between effect of social media usage on quantity of sleep gotten each night and the effect of social media usage on punctuality at lectures among students of AIFCE, Owerri*’. The result of the analysis as presented in Table VI showed a correlation coefficient value of .129 indicating a weak positive relationship exists. The significance value was .014. This indicates a very significant relationship at

$p > 0.5$ . The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted: ‘*There is significant relationship between effect of social media usage on quantity of sleep gotten each night and the effect of social media usage on punctuality at lectures among students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri*’.

#### V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study revealed that social media usage was prevalent among students of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education. Results also indicated that social media usage negatively affected students’ revision of their lecture notes daily, as well as submission and carrying out of study assignments. This is not surprising as half of the students indicated they spent two hours on social media usage daily. This categorizes them as heavy users of social media. Light users (students who spent less than one hour on social media daily) were less than one tenth. Also, the majority of the students indicated that social media usage affected their ability to get sufficient sleep at night. This agreed with [16] which revealed that students most preferred time for social media engagement was at night. This affected their ability to revise their lecture notes during the night period. It can therefore be concluded that social media usage negatively affected students study habits. This is also corroborated by other studies [20], [19], [17]. This is supported by [14], which found that in Oman social media can lead to distractions.

As a result of the foregoing, it is recommended that

- i. The government, parents, educators, teachers, guidance counsellors and other stakeholders in education should fashion strategies for close monitoring of social media usage particularly during lectures.
- ii. Seminars, symposiums and discussions should be organized regularly to inform students of the dangers of spending too much time on social media.
- iii. Further research should be carried out to find out the factors which make social media a strong force amongst this target population with the goal of providing mitigating solutions for the negative effects.

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