

Use of Social Networking Sites (SNS) by Undergraduates of Federal University Oye Ekiti, Nigeria

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Abstract: Purpose: The revolution of social networking sites (SNS) is a global phenomenon, and has become an inseparable part of daily activities, especially among university students. This study examined pattern of use of SNS by undergraduates of Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE), Nigeria.

Design/methodology/approach: The study employed descriptive survey research design. Multistage sampling procedure was employed to select sample from the total population. The questionnaire method was used as instrument of data collection. Descriptive statistical tools of frequency count, percentage and mean score were employed for the data analysis.

Findings: Findings revealed that 98.3% of respondents used Facebook, 95.1% Whatsapp and 86.1% YouTube. For intensity of use, Whatsapp, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter were the most frequently used SNS. The SNS were used more for non-academic engagements (social interactions and daily activities) than for academic related purposes. The students spent average of 4.8 hours per day on SNS. Identified challenges were lack of efficient internet access and too much time spent using SNS.

Originality/value: The paper provides useful empirical insight unique to FUOYE on usage of SNS by undergraduates.

Keywords: Social Network Sites (SNS), use pattern, user studies, Federal University Oye-Ekiti undergraduates

Introduction

Communication has always been an essential part of human life and hardly can any progress/success be achieved without it. Aririguzoh (2013) remarked that the methods of communication shape human existence and that a change in communication technology brings about a change in both culture and the social order. The Social networking sites (SNS) which is a component of the internet innovation are digital interactive communication channels through which people connect, communicate, collaborate and share content across networks of contacts. Boyd and Ellison (2007) defined social network as web-based services that allow participants to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, establish and manage connections with a list of other users and being able to view and obtain access to list of connections and those made by others within the system. The SNS have become viable tool for

both public and interpersonal communication worldwide, and is second to none as a medium for communication and collaboration among young people (Office for National Statistics, 2013).

In Nigeria, SNS has made tremendous impact on every aspect of our daily life. It provides a quick and efficient platform to connect with family members, friends, play online games, and to distribute materials online. Whereas it took radio 38 years to reach 50 million users, 13 years for television to have 50 million viewers, four years for internet to attract same number (Molosi, 2001), Facebook attracted 200 million users in 12 months (Eke, Omekwu and Odoh, 2014). The SNS have unstoppable power, thus Ezeah, Asogwa, and Edogor (2013) remarked that the SNS have a 'contagious and outreaching influence' which is lacking with the traditional media. The users interact on SNS for different purposes be it social, political, work, business,

spots, meeting friends and peers, health, parenting, news consumption, dating and religion. The SNS is widely used for business as it has provided platform to sell goods and services as well as connecting companies to their customers. Hadebe, Owolabi and Mlambo (2016) averred that SNS have made it possible for people to be consumers as well as creators of knowledge.

In Africa, the use of SNS has increased over time due to improvement in internet technology and the increasing affordability of smart phones. The SNS use is now very popular among university students in Nigeria. It facilitates easier and faster access to information; enhances understanding and retention and also promote academic networking among students. The SNS enable creative, flexible and non-linear learning as it makes easy interactions between teachers and their students without geographical barrier. The SNS could be used to complement classroom lectures and present opportunities to enrich existing curriculum. The huge followership of SNS among university students shows that the applications hold great promise for knowledge sharing and learning between students and lecturers (Eid and Al-Jabri, 2016). Akakandelwa and Walubita (2017) remarked that the SNS ubiquity has made it to become part of the social and cultural fabric of students and that it has revolutionized the methods used for communication, interaction and socialization.

Statement of the problem

The use of SNS as a means of knowledge sharing and communication is a growing trend in Nigeria as well as in virtually all other parts of the world now. The youths particularly university students are obsessed with use of SNS as they use it in real time to communicate, exchange and share news, ideas and innovations. As with other ICT applications, SNS use could be beneficial or detrimental making it a double-edged sword, depending on what it is used for. SNS activities tend to have both positive and negative impact on students learning. How undergraduate students of the Federal University Oye-Ekiti are leveraging on these innovations for improved

academic activities is not certain. It is against this backdrop this study sets out to ascertain the general disposition of SNS use among undergraduates of the Federal University Oye-Ekiti with a view to drawing important empirical implications.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the types and extent of SNS usage by students of FUYOYE.
2. identify the purposes for use of SNS by students of FUYOYE
3. find out the time spent per day on the use of SNS?
4. identify the challenges that students of FUYOYE face when using SNS

Research Questions

The research questions that guided the study are:

1. what types and to what extent do the students of FUYOYE use the various SNS?
2. what are the purposes for which FUYOYE students use SNS?
3. for how long do the students use the SNS daily?
4. what are the challenges that students of FUYOYE face when using SNS?

Profile of Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria (FUYOYE)

The Federal University Oye-Ekiti was established along with eight others by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2011. The university took off with two campuses and four Faculties: Faculties of Agriculture and Engineering at Ikole Campus and Faculties of Science and Humanities at Oye Campus, floating twenty (20) academic departments and 26 undergraduate programmes. At the time of the study in 2017/2018 session, Science and Humanities faculties had undergraduate students from 100 to 400 levels, while Agriculture and Engineering had students up to 500 levels. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at the time of the study had split into two, while the

additional faculties which had students up to 200 level are Education, and Management Sciences.

The university has ICT centres where students could make use of the university internet facilities. The University library houses a Virtual library with internet connectivity through a Broadband facility though which students could use their mobile phones and laptops to access the internet through the campus wireless hotspots.

Review of Literature

The world is experiencing 'communication revolution' with the advances in technology and increased internet use. The use of SNS represents one of the most recent information and communication technology applications that have changed the methods people use to connect and communicate with one another. In Nigeria, the use of SNS has become the in thing in information dissemination in recent years and it is increasingly being embraced by university students in Nigeria. Boyd and Ellison (2007) remarked that SNS has risen to become global phenomenon attracting extensive use by people of different cultures, ages and educational levels. The proportion of the Nigerian teeming population of about 195 million that used internet was 52% and 17 million people were Facebook subscribers (Internet Users Statistics for Africa, 2018). The Nigerian Minister of Communication, Mr. Adebayo Shittu put the number of those on social media at 75% of Nigerians that used internet (Amaefule, 2017).

The role of SNS cannot be over emphasized as it makes it possible for lecturers, researchers and students to connect and share knowledge from any part of the globe. In addition to its uses for learning, university students utilize SNS to socialize, initiate and maintain relationships, deriving a sense of social belonging within their social networks. A review of past relevant studies shows that there is a large volume of literature on the use of SNS by university students worldwide, but there is no published work of such nature in the university under study. At FUYOYE where this study was carried out, the use of SNS has become a daily routine

for the students as they are seen on the campuses of the university sharing files, photos and videos and engaging in online chatting. Indeed, some students even indulge in the habit of using SNS during lectures.

The impact of SNS on the studies of tertiary institution students in Adamawa State, Nigeria was investigated by Camilia, Ibrahim and Dalhatum (2013). It found that Facebook was the most frequently used (95%), followed by 2go (81%) and distantly by YouTube (28%) and Twitter (21%). The study of Eke *et al.* (2014) found that the categories of SNS in decreasing order of use among students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka were Facebook, 2go, Whatsapp, Google+ and YouTube. Hadebe *et al.* (2016) assessed the use of SNS by undergraduates of Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria and another African university and found that Facebook and Twitter were the most used. Hamade (2013) explored the perception and use of social networking sites among university students and found that the use of Twitter and Facebook is widespread among the students. Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) examined the influence of social networking on the academic performance among Koforidua Polytechnic students in Ghana and found that favourite networking sites were Facebook (19.9%), Whatsapp (6.2%) and Twitter (6.2%). Ogaji *et al.* (2017) assessed the adoption of social media networking among Pharmacy students of Kenyatta University, Nairobi Kenya and found use of various SNS in decreasing order were Whatsapp, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Orifah, Ijeoma and Olajide (2017) studied the usage of SNS by undergraduates of agriculture in Nigeria and found that all the students used Whatsapp (100.0%), followed by Facebook (97.8%), Instagram (76.9%) and Google+ (74.7%).

There are various reports in literature on the academic and non academic use of SNS by university students. The reasons for use of SNS by tertiary institution students in Adamawa State, Nigeria were to keep in touch with friends and family members (51%), pass time (28%),

socialize with friends (5%) and solving their social problems (16%). Ezeah *et al.* (2013) found that students from universities in South-East Nigeria used SNS for entertainment, education/information, and discussion of national issues, cyber crimes and pornography. The study of Eke *et al.* (2014) found that students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka used SNS to interact with friends, connect their class mates for online study, discuss national issues and watch movies. Apuke and Ezeah (2017) examined access, use and the negative influence of social networking on students in higher institutions in Nigeria and found that Facebook was the most used for chatting with friends and family, with only few using it for academic activities. Wickramanayake and Jika (2018) found that students of tertiary institutions in Gombe, North Eastern Nigeria used SNS mostly for activities that require no intellectual input such as watching, listening, chatting, communicating, downloading and reading while activities demanding intellectual input such as creating polls/quizzes or surveys” and “publishing blogs were minimally used. Amadi and Chikweru (2018) reported that students of Rivers State University spend not less than 6 hours on social networking to interact with other for academic and non-academic purposes, and that the students used SNS more for information and study, than for socialization and entertainment.

In Kuwait, Hamade (2013) reported that university students used SNS to relate with family, relatives, friends, and teachers and to take part in social, political and cultural activities. Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) found that Koforidua Polytechnic students in Ghana used SNS to chat with friends (86.8%), 6.8% used it to download music and video, while only 6.4% used for their study. Ogaji *et al.* (2017) reported that Pharmacy students of Kenyatta University, Nairobi Kenya used Whatsapp to connect real friends while Facebook was used to connect real and virtual friends, with low use for academic improvement. Manasijevic, Zivkovic, Arsici, and Milosevic (2016) explored the purpose for which students of University of

Belgrade, Technical faculty in Bor, Serbia’ used Facebook and found that 76% used it to be in touch with friends, while only 5% agreed that communication and collaboration between course mates was a major purpose of use. Orifar, Ijeoma and Olajide (2017) found that students studying agriculture in Nigeria used SNS to interact with friends, obtain latest information on global trend in governance, for educational research and collaboration purpose, and to keep themselves occupied when bored.

The research on social networking has identified various barriers militating against its use in different settings. Leon-Abao, Boholano and Dayagbil (2015) identified the challenges of social networking by students of as lack of privacy, distractions by friends, slow internet connection, cyber bullying and hacks and viruses which corrupt files. The students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka listed internet addiction, laziness, e-crime (theft of identity) and time wasting as the dangers associated with use of SNS (Eke *et al.*, 2014). The study of Hamade (2015) on students’ perception and use of social networking sites in Kuwait identified study/work neglect and time spent as two major constraints of SNS. Fasae and Adegbilero-Iwari (2016) identified unreliable internet connectivity, unwanted messages/pictures, and electricity failure as the major problems encountered when using social media by science students in three universities in Nigeria. The barriers to social media used identified by tertiary institution students of Gombe State were unstable electricity connections, cost of internet, unstable security and privacy concern (Wickramanayake & Jika, 2018).

Methodology

The study used the descriptive survey research method. The population of the students comprised of all undergraduate students from the four faculties (i.e., Agriculture, Engineering, Science, and Social Sciences) of the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE). Since it is not the focus of the study to take complete count of the total population due its largeness, one

department each (i.e., Agricultural Economics and Extension, Mechatronics, Microbiology, and Sociology) was selected from each faculty, using the ballot system of the random sampling technique. Typical of federal universities in Nigeria, covering these departments may not be realistic hence, 400/500 level students (as the case may be) who are in their final year were purposively selected due to their perceived level of exposure with sources of information for both academic and social purposes. This procedure brought the population size to 1987. According to Hill (1998), a sample size of 10% (i.e., 199) of a population that is in few thousands is both adequate and representative. However, the figure was rounded up to 200 and total enumeration technique was thereafter applied. The instrument of data collection was a structured questionnaire tagged: ‘Use of Social Networking Sites by FUOYE Students’ developed based on insights from past relevant studies (Ezeah *et al.*, 2013; Eke *et al.*, 2014; Hadebe *et al.*, 2016).

Prior to the administration of the research instrument, the validity of the scale was ascertained by two experts in the field of Library and Information Science who scrutinized the questions for clarity, appropriateness and correctness. The revised version of the questionnaire contained items on the relevant section of the instrument such as demographic characteristics, types of SNS used, frequency with which students have used various SNS, purpose of use of SNS, time spent daily on SNS and challenges faced in using SNS. Items in the instrument were scored on a 5 and 4-points likert scale of frequency (Very Often = 5, Often= 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2, Never = 1) and agreement (Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1) respectively. The first author personally administered the instrument on the respondents and 100% return rate was observed and found valid for analysis. The descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages and means were used for data analysis.

Findings

After scrutinizing the returned questionnaires for completeness, a total 187 were found usable for analysis, representing a response rate of 93.5%.

Demographics

Table 1 indicates that slightly above two third 101 (54%) of the respondents are males while 86 (46%) are females. The highest proportion of students (85, 45.5%) was in the age range of 21–25 years, followed by those aged 16–20 years which constituted 41.2% of respondents. The distribution of the Faculties shows that 29.4% were from Faculty of Science, 27.3% from Social Sciences, 22.5% from Agriculture and 20.9% from Engineering.

Table 1: Demographic profiles of respondents

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. Gender | | |
| Male | 101 | 54.0 |
| Female | 86 | 46.0 |
| 2. Age | | |
| 16– 20 | 77 | 41.2 |
| 21 – 25 | 85 | 45.5 |
| 26 – 30 | 18 | 9.6 |
| >30 | 7 | 3.7 |
| 3. Faculty | | |
| Science | 55 | 29.4 |
| Engineering | 39 | 20.9 |
| Agriculture | 42 | 22.5 |
| Social Science | 51 | 27.3 |

Research Question One: What types and to what extent do the students of FUYOYE use the various SNS?

Table 2. Types of Social networking sites

used by respondents

| Social networking site | Frequency | % |
|------------------------|-----------|------|
| Facebook | 184 | 98.3 |
| Whatsapp | 179 | 95.1 |
| YouTube | 161 | 86.1 |
| Twitter | 143 | 76.5 |
| Instagram | 129 | 69.0 |
| Blogs | 106 | 56.7 |
| Google Doc | 81 | 43.3 |
| LinkedIn | 65 | 38.2 |
| Flickers | 46 | 24.6 |

In order to identify the social networking sites used, the participants were asked to indicate from the list the particular sites that they used. The results presented in Table 2 shows that Facebook was used by nearly all participants (98.3%), closely followed by 95.1% that used Whatsapp and YouTube (86.0%) ranked third among participants. Twitter (76.5%), and Instagram (69.0%) were also used by more than two third of respondents. LinkedIn (38.2%) and Flickers (24.6%) were the two least used SNS by respondents.

Table 3: Frequency of use of various social network sites by students of Federal University Oye Ekiti

| SNS | N | Hourly | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Never | Mean |
|------------|-----|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|------|
| Whatsapp | 183 | 124 (67.8) | 37 (20.2) | 10 (5.46) | 5 (2.73) | 7 (3.83) | 4.45 |
| Facebook | 185 | 67 (36.2) | 76 (41.1) | 24 (12.97) | 15 (8.11) | 3 (1.62) | 4.02 |
| YouTube | 182 | 23 (12.6) | 45 (24.7) | 68 (37.4) | 29 (15.9) | 17 (9.3) | 3.15 |
| Twitter | 178 | 16 (8.99) | 58 (32.6) | 44 (24.7) | 19 (10.7) | 41 (23.0) | 2.94 |
| Instagram | 182 | 08 (4.40) | 38 (20.9) | 41 (22.5) | 19 (10.4) | 76 (41.8) | 2.36 |
| Blogs | 182 | 08 (4.40) | 16 (8.79) | 38 (20.9) | 24 (13.2) | 96 (52.7) | 1.99 |
| Google Doc | 183 | 0 (0.0) | 18 (9.84) | 25 (13.7) | 21 (11.5) | 119 (63.9) | 1.68 |
| LinkedIn | 181 | 0 (0.0) | 13 (7.18) | 26 (14.4) | 14 (7.73) | 128 (70.7) | 1.58 |
| Flicker | 180 | 0 (0.0) | 12 (6.67) | 21 (11.7) | 10 (5.5) | 137 (76.1) | 1.49 |

Scales for scoring
 5points for Very Often
 4points for Often
 3points for Sometimes
 2points for Rarely
 1point for Never

The respondents were asked to rate how frequently they used different SNS. The scales for measurements ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating 'never' and 5 'hourly'. Table 3 shows that Whatsapp was the most frequently used SNS, with a mean score of 4.45, followed by Facebook (mean = 4.02), YouTube (mean=3.15) and Twitter (mean =2.94). Instagram (mean = 2.36) was moderately used, while LinkedIn (mean = 1.58) and Flickers (mean = 1.49) were the least used by the undergraduate respondents

Research Question Two: What are the purposes for which FUOYE students use SNS?

Table 4: Purposes of Use of Social Network Sites by Students

| s/n | Application | N | Very often% | Often % | Sometimes % | Rarely % | Never % | Mean | Use Inclination |
|-----|--|-----|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------------|
| 1 | To stay connected with my friends | 186 | 125 (67.2) | 47 (25.3) | 7 (3.76) | 4 (2.15) | 3 (1.61) | 4.54 | Non Academic |
| 2 | Join/view social/gist forums for fun | 180 | 76 (42.2) | 41 (22.8) | 38 (21.1) | 23 (12.8) | 2 (1.1) | 3.92 | Non Academic |
| 3 | To source for information related to study | 175 | 62 (35.4) | 53 (30.3) | 36 (20.6) | 18 (10.3) | 6 (3.4) | 3.84 | Academic |
| 4 | To stay connected with family member/relatives | 182 | 37 (20.3) | 88 (48.4) | 36 (19.78) | 16 (8.79) | 5 (2.8) | 3.75 | Non Academic |
| 5 | Join groups/classmates to share information, resources or ideas of common interest | 178 | 32 (18.0) | 78 (43.8) | 48 (27.0) | 17 (9.6) | 3 (1.7) | 3.67 | Academic |
| 6 | To get updates/news on national and global trends | 184 | 46 (25) | 63 (34.2) | 47 (25.5) | 22 (12.0) | 6 (3.26) | 3.66 | Non Academic |
| 7 | to discuss serious national issues such as politics, economy and religious | 182 | 10 (5.5) | 83 (45.6) | 51 (28.0) | 26 (14.3) | 12 (6.6) | 3.29 | Non Academic |
| 8 | Playing games | 181 | 19 (10.5) | 44 (24.3) | 75 (41.4) | 17 (9.4) | 26 (14.4) | 3.07 | Non Academic |
| 9 | To connect new friends | 180 | 16 (8.9) | 56 (31.1) | 45 (25.0) | 42 (23.3) | 21 (11.7) | 3.02 | Non Academic |
| 10 | Group discussion, getting study partners online, video conferences | 185 | 26 (14.1) | 31 (16.8) | 63 (34.1) | 48 (25.9) | 17 (9.19) | 3.01 | Academic |
| 11 | To interact with my lecturers/and or other staff of my institution | 183 | 8 (4.37) | 37 (20.2) | 55 (30.1) | 57 (31.1) | 26 (14.2) | 2.69 | Academic |
| 12 | Create polls, quizzes or surveys | 181 | 05 (2.76) | 12 (6.63) | 38 (20.99) | 45 (24.9) | 81 (44.8) | 1.98 | Academic |

Scales for scoring
 5points for Very Often
 4points for Often
 3points for Sometimes
 2points for Rarely
 1point for Never

As depicted in Table 4, most of the students used SNS to stay connected with friends (mean=4.54), with 67.2% and 25.3% of respondents indicating that they used SNS very often and often, respectively for this purpose. Next was those that used SNS to join/view social/gist forums for fun (mean=3.92), with 42.2% and 22.8% of respondents indicating its use very often and

often for this purpose, respectively. The use of SNS to source for information related to study (mean=3.84) ranked third, while its use to stay connected with family members/relations ranked fourth (mean=3.75), and the fifth was its use to join groups/classmates to share information (mean=3.67), closely followed by its use to get update/news on trends in national and international affairs (mean=3.66).

Research Question Three: For how long do the students use the SNS daily?

Table 5. Time spent per day by respondents on social networking sites

| Time % | Freq |
|-----------------|------|
| >1 hr 2.1 | 4 |
| 1-2hrs 11.2 | 21 |
| 3-4hrs 31.6 | 49 |
| 5-6 hrs 37.9 | 71 |
| >6hrs 22.4 | 42 |

Time spent on social networking sites

| | Items | Total | Strongly Agree % | Agree % | Disagree % | Strongly Disagree % | Mean |
|---|--|-------|------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------|------|
| 1 | Lack of efficient internet access | 177 | 33 (18.5) | 54 (30.3) | 64 (36.0) | 27 (15.2) | 2.52 |
| 2 | Too much time spent on using social networking sites | 175 | 28 (16) | 58 (33.1) | 52 (29.7) | 37 (21.1) | 2.44 |
| 3 | High cost of internet access | 182 | 20 (11.0) | 54 (29.7) | 75 (41.2) | 33 (18.1) | 2.34 |
| 4 | Lack of privacy/security concern | 181 | 13 (7.18) | 50 (27.6) | 73 (40.3) | 45 (24.9) | 2.17 |
| 5 | Distraction from doing other things | 175 | 16 (9.1) | 45 (25.7) | 66 (37.7) | 48 (27.4) | 2.17 |
| 6 | Difficulty in deciding which information to share | 178 | 10 (5.6) | 32 (17.9) | 96 (53.9) | 40 (22.5) | 2.07 |
| 7 | Receiving unwanted/unsolicited messages | 177 | 15 (8.5) | 25 (14.1) | 85 (48.0) | 52 (29.4) | 2.02 |
| 8 | Not many of my colleagues & lecturers uses SNS to make my use more interesting | 178 | 9 (5.1) | 13 (7.3) | 80 (44.9) | 76 (42.7) | 1.75 |
| 9 | Inadequate skills to efficiently use social media applications | 183 | 10 (5.5) | 16 (8.7) | 59 (32.2) | 98 (53.6) | 1.66 |

Scales for scoring
 4points for Strongly Agree
 3points for Agree
 2points for Disagree
 1point for Strongly Disagree

The students were asked to rate aspects of challenges faced when using SNS from Strongly Disagree (1), to Strongly Agree (4). Table 6 outlines the results and shows lack of efficient internet access was the greatest challenge (Mean

When asked about the time spent on SNS, greater than one third of the respondents (37.9%) spent 5-6 hours per day on SNS followed by 31.6% that spent 3-4 hours per day, while 22.4% spent above 6 hours daily on SNS (Table 5). The average time spent by all the respondents on SNS was 4.8 hours per day.

Research Question Four: What are the challenges that students of FUOYE face when using SNS?

Table 6: Challenges that students encountered while using social networking sites

=2.52), followed by those that mentioned “too much time spent on using social networking sites” (Mean =2.44) and thirdly internet was too costly (Mean=2.34). The other prominent challenges were Lack of privacy/security concern (Mean=2.17) and distraction from doing other things (Mean=2.17).

Discussion

The data analysis shows that all respondents used various SNS implying that the platforms had become an integral part of the daily activities of the students. That Facebook was the most popular sites could be ascribed to long years of experience that students' had on it, taking care of all interest and backgrounds and users can find those having mutual interests using key words and key phrases. Facebook reconnects old and lost friends and to also make new ones from every part of the globe; it is relatively easy to use, has straightforward interface and a large array of functions. The dominance of Facebook could be buttressed with the report that indicated it had about 2.2 billion active users by July, 2018 (Statista, 2018). In agreement with the present study, Eke *et al.* (2014) and Owusu-Acheaw and Larson (2015) found Facebook to be the most common site among students of University of Nigeria and Koforidua Polytechnic, Ghana, respectively. Based on the wide acceptance of Facebook globally, Awake (2011) opined that if Facebook was to be a country, it would have been the third largest next to China and India, but it is now evident that Facebook users have surpassed the population of each of the two nations.

The results revealed that Whatsapp was the most frequently used SNS among FUOYE undergraduates, followed by Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram. Whatsapp could easily be accessed with mobile phones, a common tool possessed by virtually all Nigerian university students. Whatsapp has unified messaging app that directly connect to personal phone number with neither login nor password required. Ogaji *et al.* (2017) remarked that the instant messaging attribute, low cost, fastness, perceived usefulness and convenience of use of Whatsapp account for its popularity among young people. That students most frequently used Whatsapp and Facebook could also be due to students believe that their use would involve minimal mental efforts.

That students frequently use these sites concurs with the findings of Eke *et al.* (2014) which

found that Facebook, Whatsapp, and YouTube were among the most frequently used SNS among University of Nigeria, Nsukka students. Ogaji *et al.* (2017) and Al-Jabri (2017) had earlier found that the use of Whatsapp predominated over other networking sites among university students in Kenya and Saudi Arabia, respectively, in line with the present finding. The findings here is also supported by the report of Orifar *et al.* (2017) which found that all respondents (100%) sampled from undergraduates of agriculture in Nigeria used Whatsapp, closely followed by 97.8% that used Facebook. In this study, the low use of network sites such as LinkedIn and Flickr could imply the non-popularity of these sites among the students and or that they do not have the knowledge of the applications or that they do not meet students' immediate personal and academic needs.

The purposes for using SNS could be categorized into three viz social relations, daily activities and job related activities. Social related purposes include connecting and communicating with old and new friends; daily activities include games, fun, being updated, and joining social groups while job related purposes in the present study include its use to get study materials, interacting with classmates and lecturers on academic matters. Further, social relations and daily activities in this case could be placed under non academic engagements while the job related activities for this study could be also be named academic activities. The findings showed that socially related activities predominated over other engagements on social networks, followed by its use for daily activities, while academic use of social networking sites came last. The results corroborate the findings of Hadebe *et al.* (2016) and Ifeanyieze *et al.* (2019) that Nigerian students used SNS more for non academic related activities than for academic work. It also buttressed the findings of Wickramanayake and Jika (2018) that Nigerian students used SNS more for activities that require no intellectual input such as watching, listening, chatting,

communicating, downloading and reading than for activities demanding intellectual input such as creating polls/quizzes or surveys” and “publishing blogs. Ogaji *et al.* (2017) and Manasijevic *et al.* (2016) had found that students in Kenya and Serbia used SNS to interact with friends, but not so much for academic activities.

The average time spent by all the respondents on SNS was 4.8 hours per day. The usage time recorded in this study was higher than that reported by Camilia *et al.* (2013) which found that most of the tertiary institution students in Adamawa State used SNS for 2 to 4 hours daily. However, the result supports the recent findings of Amadi and Chikweru (2018) who found in study carried out among students of Rivers State University, Port Harcourt, Nigeria that the students spent about 6 hours daily on SNS and that this could lead to displacement effects on their academics. It also buttressed the report of Apuke and Ezeah (2017) that found that university students from Northeastern Nigeria used SNS for 4 to 5 hours per day to chat with friends and families.

Considering the fact that much of what the students do on SNS are non academic, spending nearly 5 hours daily on SNS could have unintended adverse impact on their academic outcome. Studies have shown that spending long hours on SNS triggers a number of setbacks for youths. Ogaji *et al.* (2017) found that students in Kenya spent between 2 and 5 hours on SNS and was of the view that this could have negative impact on their study outcome. That students on the average spent nearly 5 hours daily on SNS in this study is not surprising because it is not unusual to find students using SNS to chat even in highly organized settings such as in lecture rooms when lectures are going on and in religious gatherings (churches and mosques). Some students are so engrossed with SNS that even while trekking on highways, they still engaged in chatting.

In agreement with previous studies in developing countries, technical problems of lack of efficient internet access and internet cost constitute two

major barriers to use of SNS. Fasae and Adebilero-Iwari (2016) identified poor internet connections as one of the primary constraints to use of SNS among tertiary institution students in southwestern Nigeria, while Wickramanayake and Jika (2018) cited cost of internet and unstable internet connectivity to be among the major barriers to use of SNS by students in Gombe State, Nigeria. Time management issue which was the second major drawback in this study supports the findings of Hamade (2013) that identified time consumption as a major limitation of SNS use among university students in Kuwait. It is of note that privacy concern raised as a major constraint in this study has also prominently featured in other studies. The use of social networking sites entails the display on personal detailed information on the user profiles, and this could raise privacy concern. Those with access to profile information could leak it and this could lead to social engineering attacks such as phishing, identity theft and re-identification of information to a user and their network of friends (Alwagait, Shahzad Alim, 2014). In the study of Leon-Abao *et al.* (2016) in six universities in Cebu city, the students expressed their view that Facebook is Open, and that the whole world sees their comments and pictures. Privacy concern was also one of the prominent barriers to use of SNS in the study of Wickramanayake and Jika (2018).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has clearly shown that the students spent a significant part of their time on SNS, and that majority of them perceived the information from SNS to be credible. It was found that Whatsapp, Facebook, and YouTube in decreasing order are the most commonly used by students. The respondents used SNS more for non academic engagements such as staying connected to friends, joining/viewing social/gist forums for fun and making and to stay connected with families/relatives, while its use for educational purposes was low.

Considering the high usage of SNS by students, the study makes the following recommendations

to enhance the students' knowledge to apply this technology for learning and de-emphasize its use for non academic related activities.

1. The institution should come up with policies that would regulate and motivate productive usage of SNS for academic activities by incorporating SNS into the course delivery system to stimulate its use for learning.
2. The institution should provide continuous training through seminars and workshops to impart the needed information and communication technology skills needed by students to handle SNS and other new technologies in a more productive way for academic purposes. The University could use the joint efforts of the expertise of those in the ICT section; the Department of Computer Science and the Library to establish effective information literacy programme to handle the continuous impartation of relevant skills that students need to efficiently use SNS and other modern ICT innovations. The University library could be proactively involved in the training by incorporating the teaching of searching SNS into library instructions given to fresher's at orientation programmes
3. The university in all its arms should adopt and promote the use of SNS to disseminate information to students. Since the library is the nerve centers of universities, and all students at inception are expected to register with the library, a strategy to encourage academic use is for the library to use its SNS accounts to connect and communicate with students on its activities, new products and services.
4. For optimization of opportunities provided by SNSs in students learning, the University Management must provide uninterrupted internet access to students free of charge within the University campuses in its Faculties/departments, computer

laboratories and e- learning centres. Free internet access will make students to increase the time used on social networking for academic activities.

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